

and the power of the Counts of Toulouse received a fatal blow at the battle of Muret, in which Peter Arragon lost his life in a deadly hand to hand combat.

Count Raymond VI. did not long survive this disaster. The body of this debauchee, fratricide, traitor, and excommunicated perjurer, for two centuries lay unburied in the deserted cloister of the Knights of St. John at Toulouse.

Blessed Foulques, St. Dominic, Honorius III. and Gregory IX., profiting by the triumph of the Catholic army, made use of its success to restore peace, and to force upon Raymond VII. at the proper time to submit to just political and religious laws. But the young Raymond, seduced by the senseless talk of some neighboring noblemen, and deceived by the perfidious advice of the King of England, did not yield to the pacific desires of the Popes, but on the contrary, openly rebelled against God and the church.

Simon de Montfort had died, and the Count of Toulouse tried to profit by the want of experience of Amaury, son of Montfort, in order to renew the prestige of his house, and to recover the possessions of his family lost by his weak father. Vain endeavors! God is not mocked with impunity. Raymond soon found that he had to face, not a few poorly equipped French noblemen, as it had been in the days of his father, but the King of France himself at the head of a powerful army.

Raymond VII. was ignominiously defeated. Conquered, disarmed and made a prisoner, he was obliged to humble himself before God and man in the church of Notre Dame at Paris, just as it happened to his father at St. Giles, on account of the assassination of Blessed Peter of Castelnau. He was

imprisoned in the Louvre, and only succeeded in breaking his chains after the conditions of peace had been accepted by him, under the eyes of Queen Blanche and her august son Louis IX. He had to consent that his daughter Joanna should be united in marriage with Alphonse of Poitiers, second son of the King of France, and that the provinces of Toulouse and the Provence would be ceded to the crown if his daughter, his only heir, would die without offspring.

How much blood, how many foul murders, especially the death of the blessed martyrs of Avignonnet, rest upon the memory of this disgraced prince!

William of Puylaurens, notwithstanding the fact that he was his chaplain, and that he tries to find excuses for his master, imputing his crimes to his weakness of character, is filled with shame and horror on account of them.

And thus it came to pass that this wretched man, bearing upon his forehead the brand of his cruelty and perfidy, died, dishonored and disgraced, at Milhau, not far from Rodez, in Rouergue, whilst his daughter Joanna, and her husband, the Count of Poitiers, accompanying St. Louis, are waging war against the infidels.

Toulouse does not even possess the remains of its last Count, for his body was brought to Fontevrault and buried there.

And who could believe it?

From the old trunk of this accursed race, nearly dead, from the degenerate descendants of these ancient counts established by Charlemagne, springs forth a lily, pure and immaculate, the glory and honor of her country, of her family and of Carmel, St. Joanna of Toulouse. Her memory and the perfume of her holiness survive all the disgraces of her ancestors, and force