



A few Pages from a sainted Life.



THE reign of Louis the fourteenth of France was drawing rapidly to a close. The ability and success with which he had governed the kingdom, in his earlier days, seemed to have forsaken him. Condé and Turenne, perhaps the two greatest soldiers of the age were no longer with the army. Colbert was no longer managing the finances, and the early splendor of the King's reign was now, at the close of his long and eventful life, forgotten in the reverses, the humiliation, the want and needfulness of the country.

The Standard of Christian morals had fallen beyond uplifting ; a contempt for religion was manifested by those who held the reins of government ; Atheism had gained a foothold in the land, and the Pulpit, though it held a Massillon, a Fénelon, a Bourdaloue and a Bossuet, failed to stay the progress of frenzied madness that swept like a tidal wave over the seeming God-abandoned country, and left to the once glorious nation but the wreckage of its former self, and to history its darkest and most forbidding page — the French Revolution.

It was in those days early in the Spring of 1712 when the destiny of France was yet in the balance, that there came fourth one morning from the gates of the city of Marseilles the aged humble and care-worn figure of a priest. He had once been above the ordinary height, but now was slightly stooped with age. His forehead was broad and furrowed by the finger of time ; his nose was straight and shapely ; his face was deeply tanned and his silvery hair fell almost to his