

Protestant Holland to Catholic Spain, and after trial and sentenced to death, he was led to a platform of the public square of the Hague, and there in the presence of a great and silent multitude this grand old man, who had maintained the independence of Holland in the midst of the monarchical states of Europe, bowed down his head on the block and the executioner struck it off at a single blow. This wicked appeal to religious prejudice gave the excuse to try a noble patriot for treason and prevented a weak populace from asserting their defence for fear of the charge that they favored a hostile religious sect.

The massacre of St. Bartholomew and those which followed it, which it is customary to attribute to the Church of Rome, were the crimes of the powerful Lorraine family, who aspired to the throne of France at the approaching dissolution of the then reigning House of Valois. The Guises headed the Catholic League and fearing the growing strength and towering genius of Henry of Navarre they fired France, then five-sixths Roman Catholic, by appealing to them on the score that Navarre, whose mother, Jeanne D'Albert, had reared him a Protestant would threaten Catholicism should he ever gain the crown of France; and so bloodshed and hatred reigned in France from that time until all the House of Valois had died, and after, until Henry IV, upon the advice of Maximilian de Bethune, Duke of Sully, his Prime Minister, became a Catholic king for the peace and safety of his country. So we readily attribute to the Church those crimes which should lie at the door of ambitious princes or unscrupulous statesmen who have relied for their chances of success upon appeals to the sectarian prejudices of the people.

Now, if we are to come to the consideration of this question with preconceived prejudices we cannot do right. We should desire to be fair and to be right. Let us be right rather than popular. It is an easy thing to go with the crowd, but that is not the course for a dignified religious assembly of trained men, anxious to guide public opinion. Let us not be afraid of losing our belief in some cherished notion, but try to get at the truth whether it will destroy popular ideas as to the Church of Rome or not. It is better to know the truth than to believe something that is not so.

I have here the Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius X, published throughout the Catholic world on the occasion of the celebration of the resurrection of Our Lord at Easter, 1908. This is the document which is commonly known as the *Ne Temere* decree. *Ne Temere* means "lest rashly." It is a general review of the dangers of modern religious philosophy and a warning to the clergy to be not hasty or rash in taking up with every new doctrine that the schools of the philosophers may enunciate and defining the position of the Church on various matters of theological controversy. In this decree is contained a special declaration on the subject of the celebration of the sacrament of holy matrimony. In order that this sacrament may be validly celebrated between Roman Catholics, it is pointed out that it is necessary to go before a priest of the Church. When you understand that in that church it is treated as a holy sacrament you can also appreciate that there must be a celebration of the event according to the rites of the Church. The Church of Rome treats marriage as a union consecrated, whereby the parties undertake to accept their relation as established for life "until death do