

pel the authorities to give the Waldensians the privilege of leaving their country forever. So great had been the destruction that only 7,000 were left to attempt to make the journey over the Alps. Nearly one hundred of these perished in the snow in crossing Mont Cenis. From thence they were scattered in various parts of France, Switzerland and Germany, the larger part remaining in Switzerland in sight of their beloved mountains, and Protestantism seemed blotted out from sunny Italy forever.

But such was not the decree of Providence. Milton's prayer was yet to be answered. The "martyr'd blood" was yet to yield its "hundred fold" "o'er all th' Italian fields." Throughout the Waldensian world the 16th of August, 1689, is counted a sacred day. It is to them more than a "4th of July," and more than the "landing at Plymouth Rock." That day gave as grand an exhibition of Christian faith to the world as it has ever seen. It was more like the faith of Israel as it crossed the Red Sea and started for the promised land. In this case it was the instinct of patriotism, the love for those beautiful valleys under their old cathedral Monte Viso that made the hearts of the heroes strong. Although the scattered Vaudois were under strict surveillance in the countries through which they had been dispersed, they managed to make an arrangement for a secret meeting on the shores of Lake Geneva. Under cover of night on the 16th of August, two hundred years ago, under the leadership of their beloved pastor, Henri Arnaud, the homesick refugees, much less than a thousand in number, with no friends on earth who could or would help them, embarked in small boats at Nions with the purpose of landing on the hostile French shore, to force their way through the rugged defiles of Savoy and over the Cottian Alps, and to trust in God alone to give them back the valleys of their forefathers. Rudely armed and half clothed they started, 800 fighting men. Under strict discipline they marched as swiftly as possible past hostile villages, paying for food whenever the inhabitants would sell it to them. They were fortunate at first in anticipating the soldiery, but every turn in the rough way showed them their extreme peril. Beleaguered and half-starved they toiled over Mont Cenis Pass by a circuitous route, and at last looked far down upon the valleys of their birth. But their difficulties were here just beginning. The Duke of Turin, on hearing of their approach, sent out an army 2,500 strong, composed of 15 companies of regulars and 11 of militia. At the bridge of Salabertraun the troops met the little band of half-starved patriots, the most of whom had never handled a musket in battle before. When the stubborn fight was over 600 of the Italian army lay dead on the field, while the victorious Waldensians had lost only 15. This was on the 24th of August, 1689. The chagrin of the authorities at this signal defeat led them to send out the Marquis de Catinat with 20,000 troops. The long, cold winter stared