

CHAPTER IV - Papal Persecutions

Thus far our history of persecution has been confined principally to the pagan world. We come now to a period when persecution, under the guise of Christianity, committed more enormities than ever disgraced the annals of paganism. Disregarding the maxims and the spirit of the Gospel, the papal Church, arming herself with the power of the sword, vexed the Church of God and wasted it for several centuries, a period most appropriately termed in history, the "dark ages." The kings of the earth, gave their power to the "Beast," and submitted to be trodden on by the miserable vermin that often filled the papal chair, as in the case of Henry, emperor of Germany. The storm of papal persecution first burst upon the Waldenses in France.

Persecution of the Waldenses in France

Popery having brought various innovations into the Church, and overspread the Christian world with darkness and superstition, some few, who plainly perceived the pernicious tendency of such errors, determined to show the light of the Gospel in its real purity, and to disperse those clouds which artful priests had raised about it, in order to blind the people, and obscure its real brightness.

The principal among these was Berengarius, who, about the year 1000, boldly preached Gospel truths, according to their primitive purity. Many, from conviction, assented to his doctrine, and were, on that account, called Berengarians. To Berengarius succeeded Peer Bruis, who preached at Toulouse, under the protection of an earl, named Hildephonsus; and the whole tenets of the reformers, with the reasons of their separation from the Church of Rome, were published in a book written by Bruis, under the title of "Antichrist."

By the year of Christ 1140, the number of the reformed was very great, and the probability of its increasing alarmed the pope, who wrote to several princes to banish them from their dominions, and employed many learned men to write against their doctrines.

In A.D. 1147, because of Henry of Toulouse, deemed their most eminent preacher, they were called Henericians; and as they would not admit of any proofs relative to religion, but what could be deduced from the Scriptures themselves, the popish party gave them the name of apostolics. At length, Peter Waldo, or Valdo, a native of Lyons, eminent for his piety and learning, became a strenuous opposer of popery; and from him the reformed, at that time, received the appellation of Waldenses or Waldoys.

Pope Alexander III being informed by the bishop of Lyons of these transactions, excommunicated Waldo and his adherents, and commanded the bishop to exterminate them, if possible, from the face of the earth; hence began the papal persecutions against the Waldenses.

The proceedings of Waldo and the reformed, occasioned the first rise of the inquisitors; for Pope Innocent III authorized certain monks as inquisitors, to inquire for, and deliver over, the reformed to the secular power. The process was short, as an accusation was deemed adequate to guilt, and a candid trial was never granted to the accused.

The pope, finding that these cruel means had not the intended effect, sent several learned monks to preach among the Waldenses, and to endeavor to argue them out of their opinions. Among these monks was one Dominic, who appeared extremely zealous in the cause of popery. This Dominic instituted an order, which, from him, was called the order of Dominican friars; and the members of this order have ever since been the principal inquisitors in the various inquisitions in the world. The power of the inquisitors was unlimited; they proceeded against whom they pleased, without any consideration of age, sex, or rank. Let the accusers be ever so infamous, the accusation was deemed valid; and even anonymous informations, sent by letter, were thought sufficient evidence. To be rich was a crime equal to heresy; therefore many who had money were accused of heresy, or of being favorers of heretics, that they might be obliged to pay for their opinions. The

dearest friends or nearest kindred could not, without danger, serve any one who was imprisoned on account of religion. To convey to those who were confined, a little straw, or give them a cup of water, was called favoring of the heretics, and they were prosecuted accordingly. No lawyer dared to plead for his own brother, and their malice even extended beyond the grave; hence the bones of many were dug up and burnt, as examples to the living. If a man on his deathbed was accused of being a follower of Waldo, his estates were confiscated, and the heir to them defrauded of his inheritance; and some were sent to the Holy Land, while the Dominicans took possession of their houses and properties, and, when the owners returned, would often pretend not to know them. These persecutions were continued for several centuries under different popes and other great dignitaries of the Catholic Church.

Persecutions of the Albigenses

The Albigenses were a people of the reformed religion, who inhabited the country of Albi. They were condemned on the score of religion in the Council of Lateran, by order of Pope Alexander III. Nevertheless, they increased so prodigiously, that many cities were inhabited by persons only of their persuasion, and several eminent noblemen embraced their doctrines. Among the latter were Raymond, earl of Toulouse, Raymond, earl of Foix, the earl of Beziers, etc.

A friar, named Peter, having been murdered in the dominions of the earl of Toulouse, the pope made the murder a pretense to persecute that nobleman and his subjects. To effect this, he sent persons throughout all Europe, in order to raise forces to act coercively against the Albigenses, and promised paradise to all that would come to this war, which he termed a Holy War, and bear arms for forty days. The same indulgences were likewise held out to all who entered themselves for the purpose as to such as engaged in crusades to the Holy Land. The brave earl defended Toulouse and other places with the most heroic bravery and various success against the pope's legates and Simon, earl of Montfort, a bigoted Catholic nobleman. Unable to subdue the earl of Toulouse openly, the king of France, and the queen mother, and three archbishops raised another formidable army, and had the art to persuade the earl of Toulouse to come to a conference, when he was treacherously seized upon, made a prisoner, forced to appear barefooted and bareheaded before his enemies, and compelled to subscribe an abject recantation. This was followed by a severe persecution against the Albigenses; and express orders that the laity should not be permitted to read the sacred Scriptures. In the year 1620 also, the persecution against the Albigenses was very severe. In 1648 a heavy persecution raged throughout Lithuania and Poland. The cruelty of the Cossacks was so excessive that the Tartars themselves were ashamed of their barbarities. Among others who suffered was the Rev. Adrian Chalinski, who was roasted alive by a slow fire, and whose sufferings and mode of death may depict the horrors which the professors of Christianity have endured from the enemies of the Redeemer.

The reformation of papistical error very early was projected in France; for in the third century a learned man, named Almericus, and six of his disciples, were ordered to be burnt at Paris for asserting that God was no otherwise present in the sacramental bread than in any other bread; that it was idolatry to build altars or shrines to saints and that it was ridiculous to offer incense to them.

The martyrdom of Almericus and his pupils did not, however, prevent many from acknowledging the justness of his notions, and seeing the purity of the reformed religion, so that the faith of Christ continually increased, and in time not only spread itself over many parts of France, but diffused the light of the Gospel over various other countries.

In the year 1524, at a town in France, called Melden, one John Clark set up a bill on the church door, wherein he called the pope Antichrist. For this offence he was repeatedly whipped, and then branded on the forehead. Going afterward to Mentz, in Lorraine, he demolished some images, for which he had his right hand and nose cut off, and his arms and breast torn with pincers. He sustained these cruelties with amazing fortitude, and was even sufficiently cool to sing the One hundredth and fifteenth Psalm, which expressly forbids idolatry; after which he was thrown into the fire, and burnt to ashes.

Many persons of the reformed persuasion were, about this time, beaten, racked, scourged, and burnt to death, in several parts of France, but more particularly at Paris, Malda, and Limosin.

A native of Malda was burnt by a slow fire, for saying that Mass was a plain denial of the death and passion of Christ. At Limosin, John de Cadurco, a clergyman of the reformed religion, was apprehended and ordered to be burnt.

Francis Bribard, secretary to cardinal de Pellay, for speaking in favor of the reformed, had his tongue cut out, and was then burnt, A.D. 1545. James Cobard, a schoolmaster in the city of St. Michael, was burnt, A.D. 1545, for saying 'That Mass was useless and absurd'; and about the same time, fourteen men were burnt at Malda, their wives being compelled to stand by and behold the execution.

A.D. 1546, Peter Chapot brought a number of Bibles in the French tongue to France, and publicly sold them there; for which he was brought to trial, sentenced, and executed a few days afterward. Soon after, a cripple of Meaux, a schoolmaster of Fera, named Stephen Poliot, and a man named John English, were burnt for the faith.

Monsieur Blondel, a rich jeweler, was, in A.D. 1548, apprehended at Lyons, and sent to Paris; there he was burnt for the faith by order of the court, A.D. 1549. Herbert, a youth of nineteen years of age, was committed to the flames at Dijon; as was also Florent Venote in the same year.

In the year 1554, two men of the reformed religion, with the son and daughter of one of them, were apprehended and committed to the castle of Niverne. On examination, they confessed their faith, and were ordered to execution; being smeared with grease, brimstone, and gunpowder, they cried, "Salt on, salt on this sinful and rotten flesh." Their tongues were then cut out, and they were afterward committed to the flames, which soon consumed them, by means of the combustible matter with which they were besmeared.

The Bartholomew Massacre at Paris, etc.

On the twenty second day of August, 1572, commenced this diabolical act of sanguinary brutality. It was intended to destroy at one stroke the root of the Protestant tree, which had only before partially suffered in its branches. The king of France had artfully proposed a marriage, between his sister and the prince of Navarre, the captain and prince of the Protestants. This imprudent marriage was publicly celebrated at Paris, August 18, by the cardinal of Bourbon, upon a high stage erected for the purpose. They dined in great pomp with the bishop, and supped with the king at Paris. Four days after this, the prince (Coligny), as he was coming from the Council, was shot in both arms; he then said to Maure, his deceased mother's minister, "O my brother, I do now perceive that I am indeed beloved of my God, since for His most holy sake I am wounded." Although the Vidam advised him to fly, yet he abode in Paris, and was soon after slain by Bemjus; who afterward declared he never saw a man meet death more valiantly than the admiral.

The soldiers were appointed at a certain signal to burst out instantly to the slaughter in all parts of the city. When they had killed the admiral, they threw him out at a window into the street, where his head was cut off, and sent to the pope. The savage papists, still raging against him, cut off his arms and private members, and, after dragging him three days through the streets, hung him by the heels without the city. After him they slew many great and honorable persons who were Protestants; as Count Rochfoucault, Telinius, the admiral's son-in-law, Antonius, Clarimontus, marquis of Ravely, Lewes Bussius, Bandineus, Pluvialius, Burneius, etc., and falling upon the common people, they continued the slaughter for many days; in the three first they slew of all ranks and conditions to the number of ten thousand. The bodies were thrown into the rivers, and blood ran through the streets with a strong current, and the river appeared presently like a stream of blood. So furious was their hellish rage, that they slew all papists whom they suspected to be not very staunch to their diabolical religion. From Paris the destruction spread to all quarters of the realm.

At Orleans, a thousand were slain of men, women, and children, and six thousand at Rouen.

At Meldith, two hundred were put into prison, and later brought out by units, and cruelly murdered.

At Lyons, eight hundred were massacred. Here children hanging about their parents, and parents affectionately embracing their children, were pleasant food for the swords and bloodthirsty minds of those who call themselves the Catholic Church. Here three hundred were slain in the bishop's house; and the impious monks would suffer none to be buried.

At Augustobona, on the people hearing of the massacre at Paris, they shut their gates that no Protestants might escape, and searching diligently for every individual of the reformed Church, imprisoned and then barbarously murdered them. The same cruelty they practiced at Avaricum, at Troys, at Toulouse, Rouen and many other places, running from city to city, towns, and villages, through the kingdom.

As a corroboration of this horrid carnage, the following interesting narrative, written by a sensible and learned Roman Catholic, appears in this place, with peculiar propriety.

"The nuptials (says he) of the young king of Navarre with the French king's sister, was solemnized with pomp; and all the endearments, all the assurances of friendship, all the oaths sacred among men, were profusely lavished by Catharine, the queen-mother, and by the king; during which, the rest of the court thought of nothing but festivities, plays, and masquerades. At last, at twelve o'clock at night, on the eve of St. Bartholomew, the signal was given. Immediately all the houses of the Protestants were forced open at once. Admiral Coligny, alarmed by the uproar jumped out of bed, when a company of assassins rushed in his chamber. They were headed by one Besme, who had been bred up as a domestic in the family of the Guises. This wretch thrust his sword into the admiral's breast, and also cut him in the face. Besme was a German, and being afterwards taken by the Protestants, the Rochellers would have brought him, in order to hang and quarter him; but he was killed by one Bretanville. Henry, the young duke of Guise, who afterwards framed the Catholic league, and was murdered at Blois, standing at the door until the horrid butchery should be completed, called aloud, 'Besme! is it done?' Immediately after this, the ruffians threw the body out of the window, and Coligny expired at Guise's feet.

"Count de Teligny also fell a sacrifice. He had married, about ten months before, Coligny's daughter. His countenance was so engaging, that the ruffians, when they advanced in order to kill him, were struck with compassion; but others, more barbarous, rushing forward, murdered him.

"In the meantime, all the friends of Coligny were assassinated throughout Paris; men, women, and children were promiscuously slaughtered and every street was strewed with expiring bodies. Some priests, holding up a crucifix in one hand, and a dagger in the other, ran to the chiefs of the murderers, and strongly exhorted them to spare neither relations nor friends.

"Tavannes, marshal of France, an ignorant, superstitious soldier, who joined the fury of religion to the rage of party, rode on horseback through the streets of Paris, crying to his men, 'Let blood! let blood! bleeding is as wholesome in August as in May.' In the memories of the life of this enthusiastic, written by his son, we are told that the father, being on his deathbed, and making a general confession of his actions, the priest said to him, with surprise, 'What! no mention of St. Bartholomew's massacre?' to which Tavannes replied, 'I consider it as a meritorious action, that will wash away all my sins.' Such horrid sentiments can a false spirit of religion inspire!

"The king's palace was one of the chief scenes of the butchery; the king of Navarre had his lodgings in the Louvre, and all his domestics were Protestants. Many of these were killed in bed with their wives; others, running away naked, were pursued by the soldiers through the several rooms of the palace, even to the king's antichamber. The young wife of Henry of Navarre, awaked by the dreadful uproar, being afraid for her consort, and for her own life, seized with horror, and half dead, flew from her bed, in order to throw herself at the feet of the king her brother. But scarce had she opened her chamber door, when some of her Protestant domestics rushed in for refuge. The soldiers immediately followed, pursued them in sight of the princess, and

killed one who crept under her bed. Two others, being wounded with halberds, fell at the queen's feet, so that she was covered with blood.

"Count de la Rochefoucault, a young nobleman, greatly in the king's favor for his comely air, his politeness, and a certain peculiar happiness in the turn of his conversation, had spent the evening until eleven o'clock with the monarch, in pleasant familiarity; and had given a loose, with the utmost mirth, to the sallies of his imagination. The monarch felt some remorse, and being touched with a kind of compassion, bid him, two or three times, not to go home, but lie in the Louvre. The count said he must go to his wife; upon which the king pressed him no farther, but said, 'Let him go! I see God has decreed his death.' And in two hours after he was murdered.

"Very few of the Protestants escaped the fury of their enthusiastic persecutors. Among these was young La Force (afterwards the famous Marshal de la Force) a child about ten years of age, whose deliverance was exceedingly remarkable. His father, his elder brother, and he himself were seized together by the Duke of Anjou's soldier. These murderers flew at all three, and struck them at random, when they all fell, and lay one upon another. The youngest did not receive a single blow, but appearing as if he was dead, escaped the next day; and his life, thus wonderfully preserved, lasted four score and five years.

"Many of the wretched victims fled to the water side, and some swam over the Seine to the suburbs of St. Germaine. The king saw them from his window, which looked upon the river, and fired upon them with a carbine that had been loaded for that purpose by one of his pages; while the queen-mother, undisturbed and serene in the midst of slaughter, looking down from a balcony, encouraged the murderers and laughed at the dying groans of the slaughtered. This barbarous queen was fired with a restless ambition, and she perpetually shifted her party in order to satiate it.

"Some days after this horrid transaction, the French court endeavored to palliate it by forms of law. They pretended to justify the massacre by a calumny, and accused the admiral of a conspiracy, which no one believed. The parliament was commended to proceed against the memory of Coligny; and his dead body was hanged in chains on Montfaucon gallows. The king himself went to view this shocking spectacle. So one of his courtiers advised him to retire, and complaining of the stench of the corpse, he replied, 'A dead enemy smells well.' The massacres on St. Bartholomew's day are painted in the royal saloon of the Vatican at Rome, with the following inscription: Pontifex, Coligny necem probat, i.e., 'The pope approves of Coligny's death.'

"The young king of Navarre was spared through policy, rather than from the pity of the queen-mother, she keeping him prisoner until the king's death, in order that he might be as a security and pledge for the submission of such Protestants as might effect their escape.

"This horrid butchery was not confined merely to the city of Paris. The like orders were issued from court to the governors of all the provinces in France; so that, in a week's time, about one hundred thousand Protestants were cut to pieces in different parts of the kingdom! Two or three governors only refused to obey the king's orders. One of these, named Montmorin, governor of Auvergne, wrote the king the following letter, which deserves to be transmitted to the latest posterity.

"SIRE: I have received an order, under your majesty's seal, to put to death all the Protestants in my province. I have too much respect for your majesty, not to believe the letter a forgery; but if (which God forbid) the order should be genuine, I have too much respect for your majesty to obey it."

At Rome the horrid joy was so great, that they appointed a day of high festival, and a jubilee, with great indulgence to all who kept it and showed every expression of gladness they could devise! and the man who first carried the news received 1000 crowns of the cardinal of Lorraine for his ungodly message. The king also commanded the day to be kept with every demonstration of joy, concluding now that the whole race of Huguenots was extinct.

Many who gave great sums of money for their ransom were immediately after slain; and several towns, which were under the king's promise of protection and safety, were cut off as soon as they delivered themselves up, on those promises, to his generals or captains.

At Bordeaux, at the instigation of a villainous monk, who used to urge the papists to slaughter in his sermons, two hundred and sixty-four were cruelly murdered; some of them senators. Another of the same pious fraternity produced a similar slaughter at Agendicum, in Maine, where the populace at the holy inquisitors' satanical suggestion, ran upon the Protestants, slew them, plundered their houses, and pulled down their church.

The duke of Guise, entering into Blois, suffered his soldiers to fly upon the spoil, and slay or drown all the Protestants they could find. In this they spared neither age nor sex; defiling the women, and then murdering them; from whence he went to Mere, and committed the same outrages for many days together. Here they found a minister named Cassebonius, and threw him into the river.

At Anjou, they slew Albiacus, a minister; and many women were defiled and murdered there; among whom were two sisters, abused before their father, whom the assassins bound to a wall to see them, and then slew them and him.

The president of Turin, after giving a large sum for his life, was cruelly beaten with clubs, stripped of his clothes, and hung feet upwards, with his head and breast in the river: before he was dead, they opened his belly, plucked out his entrails, and threw them into the river; and then carried his heart about the city upon a spear.

At Barre great cruelty was used, even to young children, whom they cut open, pulled out their entrails, which through very rage they gnawed with their teeth. Those who had fled to the castle, when they yielded, were almost hanged. Thus they did at the city of Matiscon; counting it sport to cut off their arms and legs and afterward kill them; and for the entertainment of their visitors, they often threw the Protestants from a high bridge into the river, saying, "Did you ever see men leap so well?"

At Penna, after promising them safety, three hundred were inhumanly butchered; and five and forty at Albia, on the Lord's Day. At Nonne, though it yielded on conditions of safeguard, the most horrid spectacles were exhibited. Persons of both sexes and conditions were indiscriminately murdered; the streets ringing with doleful cries, and flowing with blood; and the houses flaming with fire, which the abandoned soldiers had thrown in. One woman, being dragged from her hiding place with her husband, was first abused by the brutal soldiers, and then with a sword which they commanded her to draw, they forced it while in her hands into the bowels of her husband.

At Samarobridge, they murdered above one hundred Protestants, after promising them peace; and at Antsidor, one hundred were killed, and cast part into a jakes, and part into a river. One hundred put into a prison at Orleans, were destroyed by the furious multitude.

The Protestants at Rochelle, who were such as had miraculously escaped the rage of hell, and fled there, seeing how ill they fared who submitted to those holy devils, stood for their lives; and some other cities, encouraged thereby, did the like. Against Rochelle, the king sent almost the whole power of France, which besieged it seven months; though by their assaults, they did very little execution on the inhabitants, yet by famine, they destroyed eighteen thousand out of two and twenty. The dead, being too numerous for the living to bury, became food for vermin and carnivorous birds. Many took their coffins into the church yard, laid down in them, and breathed their last. Their diet had long been what the minds of those in plenty shudder at; even human flesh, entrails, dung, and the most loathsome things, became at last the only food of those champions for that truth and liberty, of which the world was not worthy. At every attack, the besiegers met with such an intrepid reception, that they left one hundred and thirty-two captains, with a proportionate number of men, dead in the field. The siege at last was broken up at the request of the duke of Anjou, the

king's brother, who was proclaimed king of Poland, and the king, being wearied out, easily complied, whereupon honorable conditions were granted them.

It is a remarkable interference of Providence, that, in all this dreadful massacre, not more than two ministers of the Gospel were involved in it.

The tragical sufferings of the Protestants are too numerous to detail; but the treatment of Philip de Deux will give an idea of the rest. After the miscreants had slain this martyr in his bed, they went to his wife, who was then attended by the midwife, expecting every moment to be delivered. The midwife entreated them to stay the murder, at least till the child, which was the twentieth, should be born. Notwithstanding this, they thrust a dagger up to the hilt into the poor woman. Anxious to be delivered, she ran into a corn loft; but hither they pursued her, stabbed her in the belly, and then threw her into the street. By the fall, the child came from the dying mother, and being caught up by one of the Catholic ruffians, he stabbed the infant, and then threw it into the river.

From the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, to the French Revolution, in 1789

The persecutions occasioned by the revocation of the edict of Nantes took place under Louis XIV. This edict was made by Henry the Great of France in 1598, and secured to the Protestants an equal right in every respect, whether civil or religious, with the other subjects of the realm. All those privileges Louis the XIV confirmed to the Protestants by another statute, called the edict of Nismes, and kept them inviolably to the end of his reign.

On the accession of Louis XIV the kingdom was almost ruined by civil wars.

At this critical juncture, the Protestants, heedless of our Lord's admonition, "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword," took such an active part in favor of the king, that he was constrained to acknowledge himself indebted to their arms for his establishment on the throne. Instead of cherishing and rewarding that party who had fought for him, he reasoned that the same power which had protected could overturn him, and, listening to the popish machinations, he began to issue out proscriptions and restrictions, indicative of his final determination. Rochelle was presently fettered with an incredible number of denunciations. Montauban and Millau were sacked by soldiers. Popish commissioners were appointed to preside over the affairs of the Protestants, and there was no appeal from their ordinance, except to the king's council. This struck at the root of their civil and religious exercises, and prevented them, being Protestants, from suing a Catholic in any court of law. This was followed by another injunction, to make an inquiry in all parishes into whatever the Protestants had said or done for twenty years past. This filled the prisons with innocent victims, and condemned others to the galleys or banishment.

Protestants were expelled from all offices, trades, privileges, and employes; thereby depriving them of the means of getting their bread: and they proceeded to such excess in this brutality, that they would not suffer even the midwives to officiate, but compelled their women to submit themselves in that crisis of nature to their enemies, the brutal Catholics. Their children were taken from them to be educated by the Catholics, and at seven years of age, made to embrace popery. The reformed were prohibited from relieving their own sick or poor, from all private worship, and divine service was to be performed in the presence of a popish priest. To prevent the unfortunate victims from leaving the kingdom, all the passages on the frontiers were strictly guarded; yet, by the good hand of God, about 150,000 escaped their vigilance, and emigrated to different countries to relate the dismal narrative.

All that has been related hitherto were only infringements on their established charter, the edict of Nantes. At length the diabolical revocation of that edict passed on the eighteenth of October, 1685, and was registered the twenty-second, contrary to all form of law. Instantly the dragoons were quartered upon the Protestants throughout the realm, and filled all France with the like news, that the king would no longer suffer any

Huguenots in his kingdom, and therefore they must resolve to change their religion. Hereupon the intendants in every parish (which were popish governors and spies set over the Protestants) assembled the reformed inhabitants, and told them they must, without delay, turn Catholics, either freely or by force. The Protestants replied, that they 'were ready to sacrifice their lives and estates to the king, but their consciences being God's they could not so dispose of them.'

Instantly the troops seized the gates and avenues of the cities, and placing guards in all the passages, entered with sword in hand, crying, "Die, or be Catholics!" In short, they practiced every wickedness and horror they could devise to force them to change their religion.

They hanged both men and women by their hair or their feet, and smoked them with hay until they were nearly dead; and if they still refused to sign a recantation, they hung them up again and repeated their barbarities, until, wearied out with torments without death, they forced many to yield to them.

Others, they plucked off all the hair of their heads and beards with pincers. Others they threw on great fires, and pulled them out again, repeating it until they extorted a promise to recant.

Some they stripped naked, and after offering them the most infamous insults, they stuck them with pins from head to foot, and lanced them with penknives; and sometimes with red-hot pincers they dragged them by the nose until they promised to turn. Sometimes they tied fathers and husbands, while they ravished their wives and daughters before their eyes. Multitudes they imprisoned in the most noisome dungeons, where they practised all sorts of torments in secret. Their wives and children they shut up in monasteries.

Such as endeavored to escape by flight were pursued in the woods, and hunted in the fields, and shot at like wild beasts; nor did any condition or quality screen them from the ferocity of these infernal dragons: even the members of parliament and military officers, though on actual service, were ordered to quit their posts, and repair directly to their houses to suffer the like storm. Such as complained to the king were sent to the Bastile, where they drank the same cup. The bishops and the intendants marched at the head of the dragons, with a troop of missionaries, monks, and other ecclesiastics to animate the soldiers to an execution so agreeable to their Holy Church, and so glorious to their demon god and their tyrant king.

In forming the edict to repeal the edict of Nantes, the council were divided; some would have all the ministers detained and forced into popery as well as the laity; others were for banishing them, because their presence would strengthen the Protestants in perseverance: and if they were forced to turn, they would ever be secret and powerful enemies in the bosom of the Church, by their great knowledge and experience in controversial matters. This reason prevailing, they were sentenced to banishment, and only fifteen days allowed them to depart the kingdom.

On the same day that the edict for revoking the Protestants' charter was published, they demolished their churches and banished their ministers, whom they allowed but twenty-four hours to leave Paris. The papists would not suffer them to dispose of their effects, and threw every obstacle in their way to delay their escape until the limited time was expired which subjected them to condemnation for life to the galleys. The guards were doubled at the seaports, and the prisons were filled with the victims, who endured torments and wants at which human nature must shudder.

The sufferings of the ministers and others, who were sent to the galleys, seemed to exceed all. Chained to the oar, they were exposed to the open air night and day, at all seasons, and in all weathers; and when through weakness of body they fainted under the oar, instead of a cordial to revive them, or viands to refresh them, they received only the lashes of a scourge, or the blows of a cane or rope's end. For the want of sufficient clothing and necessary cleanliness, they were most grievously tormented with vermin, and cruelly pinched with the cold, which removed by night the executioners who beat and tormented them by day. Instead of a bed, they were allowed sick or well, only a hard board, eighteen inches broad, to sleep on, without any covering but their wretched apparel; which was a shirt of the coarsest canvas, a little jerkin of red serge, slit on each side up to the armholes, with open sleeves that reached not to the elbow; and once in three years they

had a coarse frock, and a little cap to cover their heads, which were always kept close shaved as a mark of their infamy. The allowance of provision was as narrow as the sentiments of those who condemned them to such miseries, and their treatment when sick is too shocking to relate; doomed to die upon the boards of a dark hold, covered with vermin, and without the least convenience for the calls of nature. Nor was it among the least of the horrors they endured, that, as ministers of Christ, and honest men, they were chained side by side to felons and the most execrable villains, whose blasphemous tongues were never idle. If they refused to hear Mass, they were sentenced to the bastinado, of which dreadful punishment the following is a description. Preparatory to it, the chains are taken off, and the victims delivered into the hands of the Turks that preside at the oars, who strip them quite naked, and stretching them upon a great gun, they are held so that they cannot stir; during which there reigns an awful silence throughout the galley. The Turk who is appointed the executioner, and who thinks the sacrifice acceptable to his prophet Mahomet, most cruelly beats the wretched victim with a rough cudgel, or knotty rope's end, until the skin is flayed off his bones, and he is near the point of expiring; then they apply a most tormenting mixture of vinegar and salt, and consign him to that most intolerable hospital where thousands under their cruelties have expired.

Martyrdom of John Calas

We pass over many other individual martyrdoms to insert that of John Calas, which took place as recently as 1761, and is an indubitable proof of the bigotry of popery, and shows that neither experience nor improvement can root out the inveterate prejudices of the Roman Catholics, or render them less cruel or inexorable to Protestants.

John Calas was a merchant of the city of Toulouse, where he had been settled, and lived in good repute, and had married an English woman of French extraction. Calas and his wife were Protestants, and had five sons, whom they educated in the same religion; but Lewis, one of the sons, became a Roman Catholic, having been converted by a maidservant, who had lived in the family about thirty years. The father, however, did not express any resentment or ill-will upon the occasion, but kept the maid in the family and settled an annuity upon the son. In October, 1761, the family consisted of John Calas and his wife, one woman servant, Mark Antony Calas, the eldest son, and Peter Calas, the second son. Mark Antony was bred to the law, but could not be admitted to practice, on account of his being a Protestant; hence he grew melancholy, read all the books he could procure relative to suicide, and seemed determined to destroy himself. To this may be added that he led a dissipated life, was greatly addicted to gaming, and did all which could constitute the character of a libertine; on which account his father frequently reprehended him and sometimes in terms of severity, which considerably added to the gloom that seemed to oppress him.

On the thirteenth of October, 1761, Mr. Gober la Vaisse, a young gentleman about 19 years of age, the son of La Vaisse, a celebrated advocate of Toulouse, about five o'clock in the evening, was met by John Calas, the father, and the eldest son Mark Antony, who was his friend. Calas, the father, invited him to supper, and the family and their guest sat down in a room up one pair of stairs; the whole company, consisting of Calas the father, and his wife, Antony and Peter Calas, the sons, and La Vaisse the guest, no other person being in the house, except the maidservant who has been already mentioned.

It was now about seven o'clock. The supper was not long; but before it was over, Antony left the table, and went into the kitchen, which was on the same floor, as he was accustomed to do. The maid asked him if he was cold? He answered, "Quite the contrary, I burn"; and then left her. In the meantime his friend and family left the room they had supped in, and went into a bed-chamber; the father and La Vaisse sat down together on a sofa; the younger son Peter in an elbow chair; and the mother in another chair; and, without making any inquiry after Antony, continued in conversation together until between nine and ten o'clock, when La Vaisse took his leave, and Peter, who had fallen asleep, was awakened to attend him with a light.

On the ground floor of Calas's house was a shop and a warehouse, the latter of which was divided from the shop by a pair of folding doors. When Peter Calas and La Vaisse came downstairs into the shop, they were extremely shocked to see Antony hanging in his shirt, from a bar which he had laid across the top of the two

folding doors, having half opened them for that purpose. On discovery of this horrid spectacle, they shrieked out, which brought down Calas the father, the mother being seized with such terror as kept her trembling in the passage above. When the maid discovered what had happened, she continued below, either because she feared to carry an account of it to her mistress, or because she busied herself in doing some good office to her master, who was embracing the body of his son, and bathing it in his tears. The mother, therefore, being thus left alone, went down and mixed in the scene that has been already described, with such emotions as it must naturally produce. In the meantime Peter had been sent for La Moire, a surgeon in the neighborhood. La Moire was not at home, but his apprentice, Mr. Grosle, came instantly. Upon examination, he found the body quite dead; and by this time a papistical crowd of people were gathered about the house, and, having by some means heard that Antony Calas was suddenly dead, and that the surgeon who had examined the body, declared that he had been strangled, they took it into their heads he had been murdered; and as the family was Protestant, they presently supposed that the young man was about to change his religion, and had been put to death for that reason.

The poor father, overwhelmed with grief for the loss of his child, was advised by his friends to send for the officers of justice to prevent his being torn to pieces by the Catholic multitude, who supposed he had murdered his son. This was accordingly done and David, the chief magistrate, or capitol, took the father, Peter the son, the mother, La Vaisse, and the maid, all into custody, and set a guard over them. He sent for M. de la Tour, a physician, and MM. la Marque and Perronet, surgeons, who examined the body for marks of violence, but found none except the mark of the ligature on the neck; they found also the hair of the deceased done up in the usual manner, perfectly smooth, and without the least disorder: his clothes were also regularly folded up, and laid upon the counter, nor was his shirt either torn or unbuttoned.

Notwithstanding these innocent appearances, the capitol thought proper to agree with the opinion of the mob, and took it into his head that old Calas had sent for La Vaisse, telling him that he had a son to be hanged; that La Vaisse had come to perform the office of executioner; and that he had received assistance from the father and brother.

As no proof of the supposed fact could be procured, the capitol had recourse to a monitory, or general information, in which the crime was taken for granted, and persons were required to give such testimony against it as they were able. This recites that La Vaisse was commissioned by the Protestants to be their executioner in ordinary, when any of their children were to be hanged for changing their religion: it recites also, that, when the Protestants thus hang their children, they compel them to kneel, and one of the interrogatories was, whether any person had seen Antony Calas kneel before his father when he strangled him: it recites likewise, that Antony died a Roman Catholic, and requires evidence of his catholicism.

But before this monitory was published, the mob had got a notion that Antony Calas was the next day to have entered into the fraternity of the White Penitents. The capitol therefore caused his body to be buried in the middle of St. Stephen's Church. A few days after the interment of the deceased, the White Penitents performed a solemn service for him in their chapel; the church was hung with white, and a tomb was raised in the middle of it, on the top of which was placed a human skeleton, holding in one hand a paper, on which was written "Abjuration of heresy," and in the other a palm, the emblem of martyrdom. The next day the Franciscans performed a service of the same kind for him.

The capitol continued the persecution with unrelenting severity, and, without the least proof coming in, thought fit to condemn the unhappy father, mother, brother, friend, and servant, to the torture, and put them all into irons on the eighteenth of November.

From these dreadful proceedings the sufferers appealed to the parliament, which immediately took cognizance of the affair, and annulled the sentence of the capitol as irregular, but they continued the prosecution, and, upon the hangman deposing it was impossible Antony should hang himself as was pretended, the majority of the parliament were of the opinion, that the prisoners were guilty, and therefore ordered them to be tried by the criminal court of Toulouse. One voted him innocent, but after long debates the majority was for the torture and wheel, and probably condemned the father by way of experiment,

whether he was guilty or not, hoping he would, in the agony, confess the crime, and accuse the other prisoners, whose fate, therefore, they suspended.

Poor Calas, however, an old man of sixty-eight, was condemned to this dreadful punishment alone. He suffered the torture with great constancy, and was led to execution in a frame of mind which excited the admiration of all that saw him, and particularly of the two Dominicans (Father Bourges and Father Coldagues) who attended him in his last moments, and declared that they thought him not only innocent of the crime laid to his charge, but also an exemplary instance of true Christian patience, fortitude, and charity. When he saw the executioner prepared to give him the last stroke, he made a fresh declaration to Father Bourges, but while the words were still in his mouth, the capitol, the author of this catastrophe, who came upon the scaffold merely to gratify his desire of being a witness of his punishment and death, ran up to him, and bawled out, "Wretch, there are fagots which are to reduce your body to ashes! speak the truth." M. Calas made no reply, but turned his head a little aside; and that moment the executioner did his office.

The popular outcry against this family was so violent in Languedoc, that every body expected to see the children of Calas broke upon the wheel, and the mother burnt alive.

Young Donat Calas was advised to fly into Switzerland: he went, and found a gentleman who, at first, could only pity and relieve him, without daring to judge of the rigor exercised against the father, mother, and brothers. Soon after, one of the brothers, who was only banished, likewise threw himself into the arms of the same person, who, for more than a month, took every possible precaution to be assured of the innocence of the family. Once convinced, he thought himself, obliged, in conscience, to employ his friends, his purse, his pen, and his credit, to repair the fatal mistake of the seven judges of Toulouse, and to have the proceedings revised by the king's council. This revision lasted three years, and it is well known what honor Messrs. de Grosne and Bacquancourt acquired by investigating this memorable cause. Fifty masters of the Court of Requests unanimously declared the whole family of Calas innocent, and recommended them to the benevolent justice of his majesty. The Duke de Choiseul, who never let slip an opportunity of signaling the greatness of his character, not only assisted this unfortunate family with money, but obtained for them a gratuity of 36,000 livres from the king.

On the ninth of March, 1765, the arret was signed which justified the family of Calas, and changed their fate. The ninth of March, 1762, was the very day on which the innocent and virtuous father of that family had been executed. All Paris ran in crowds to see them come out of prison, and clapped their hands for joy, while the tears streamed from their eyes.

This dreadful example of bigotry employed the pen of Voltaire in deprecation of the horrors of superstition; and though an infidel himself, his essay on toleration does honor to his pen, and has been a blessed means of abating the rigor of persecution in most European states. Gospel purity will equally shun superstition and cruelty, as the mildness of Christ's tenets teaches only to comfort in this world, and to procure salvation in the next. To persecute for being of a different opinion is as absurd as to persecute for having a different countenance: if we honor God, keep sacred the pure doctrines of Christ, put a full confidence in the promises contained in the Holy Scriptures, and obey the political laws of the state in which we reside, we have an undoubted right to protection instead of persecution, and to serve heaven as our consciences, regulated by the Gospel rules, may direct.