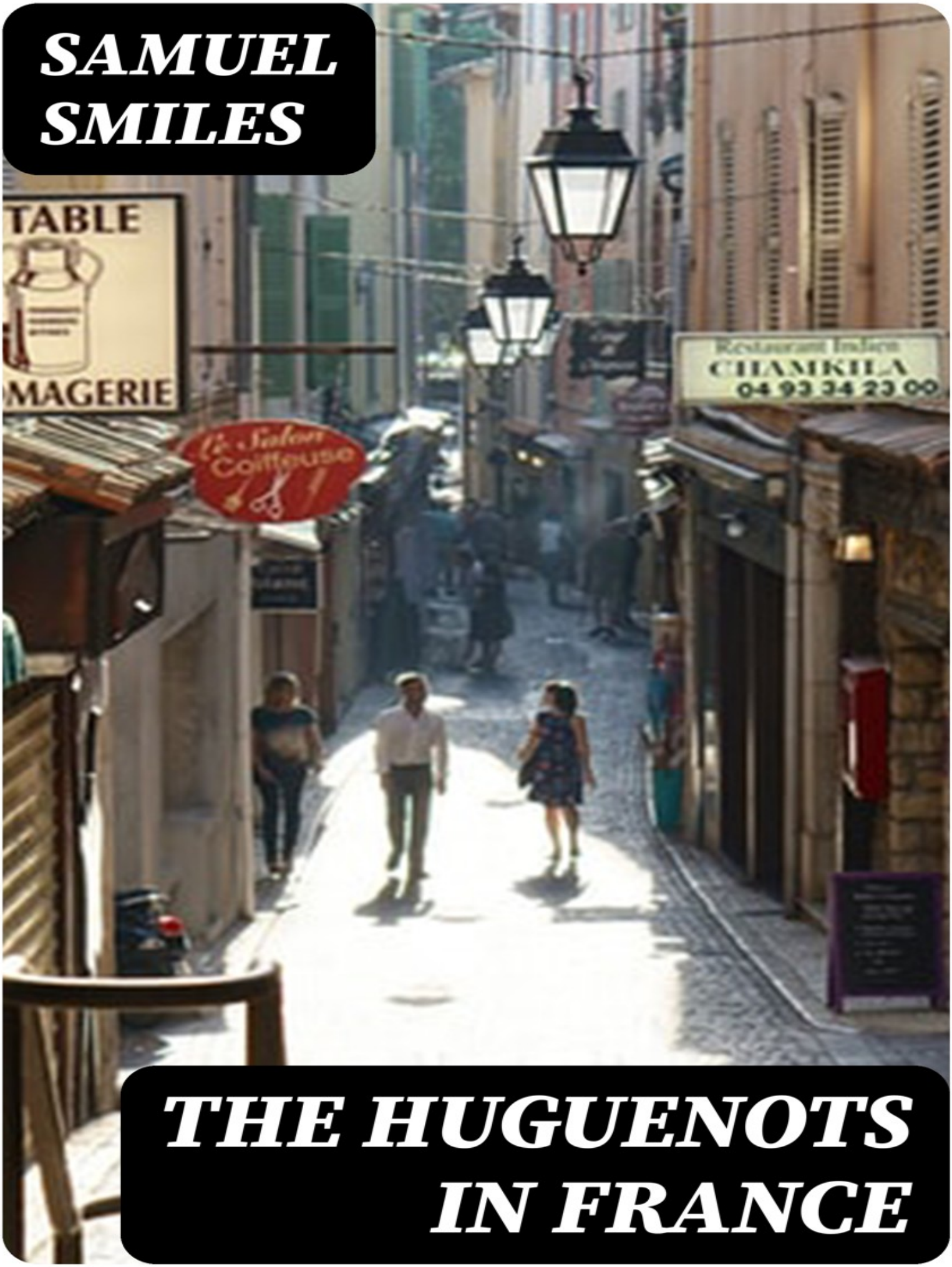
SAMUEL SMILES



THE HUGUENOTS IN FRANCE

Samuel Smiles

The Huguenots in France

EAN 8596547355670

DigiCat, 2022
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PREFACE.

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In preparing this edition for the press, I have ventured to add three short memoirs of distinguished Huguenot Refugees and their descendants.

Though the greatest number of Huguenots banished from France at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes were merchants and manufacturers, who transferred their skill and arts to England, which was not then a manufacturing country; a large number of nobles and gentry emigrated to this and other countries, leaving their possessions to be confiscated by the French king.

The greater number of the nobles entered the armies of the countries in which they took refuge. In Holland, they joined the army of the Prince of Orange, afterwards William III., King of England. After driving the armies of Louis XIV. out of Ireland, they met the French at Ramilies, Blenheim, and Malplacquet, and other battles in the Low Countries. A Huguenot engineer directed the operations at the siege of Namur, which ended in its capture. Another conducted the siege of Lille, which was also taken.

But perhaps the greatest number of Huguenot nobles entered the Prussian service. Their descendants revisited France on more than one occasion. They overran the northern and eastern parts of France in 1814 and 1815; and last of all they vanquished the descendants of their former persecutors at Sedan in 1870. Sedan was, prior to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the renowned seat of Protestant learning; while now it is known as the scene of the greatest military catastrophe which has occurred in modern history.

The Prime Minister of France, M. Jules Simon, not long ago recorded the fateful effects of Louis XIV.'s religious intolerance. In discussing the perpetual ecclesiastical questions which still disturb France, he recalled the fact that not less than eighty of the German staff in the late war were representatives of Protestant families, driven from France by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

The first of the appended memoirs is that of Samuel de Péchels, a noble of Languedoc, who, after enduring great privations, reached England through Jamaica, and served as a lieutenant in Ireland under William III. Many of his descendants have been distinguished soldiers in the service of England. The second is Captain Rapin, who served faithfully in Ireland, and was called away to be tutor to the young Duke of Portland. He afterwards spent his time at Wesel on the Rhine, where he wrote his "History of England." The third is Captain Riou, "the gallant and the good," who was killed at the battle of Copenhagen. These memoirs might be multiplied to any extent; but those given are enough to show the good work which the Huguenots

and their descendants have done in the service of England.
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INTRODUCTION.

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Six years since, I published a book entitled *The Huguenots: their Settlements, Churches, and Industries, in England and Ireland*. Its object was to give an account of the causes which led to the large migrations of foreign Protestants from Flanders and France into England, and to describe their effects upon English industry as well as English history.

It was necessary to give a brief *résumé* of the history of the Reformation in France down to the dispersion of the Huguenots, and the suppression of the Protestant religion by Louis XIV. under the terms of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

Under that Act, the profession of Protestantism was proclaimed to be illegal, and subject to the severest penalties. Hence, many of the French Protestants who refused to be "converted," and had the means of emigrating, were under the necessity of leaving France and endeavouring to find personal freedom and religious liberty elsewhere.

The refugees found protection in various countries. The principal portion of the emigrants from Languedoc and the south-eastern provinces of France crossed the frontier into Switzerland, and settled there, or afterwards proceeded into the states of Prussia, Holland, and Denmark, as well as into England and Ireland. The chief number of emigrants from

the northern and western seaboard provinces of France, emigrated directly into England, Ireland, America, and the Cape of Good Hope. In my previous work, I endeavoured to give as accurate a description as was possible of the emigrants who settled in England and Ireland, to which, the American editor of the work (the Hon. G. P. Disosway) has added an account of those who settled in the United States of America.

But besides the Huguenots who contrived to escape from Franco during the dragonnades which preceded and the persecutions which followed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, there was still a very large number of Huguenots remaining in France who had not the means wherewith to fly from their country. These were the poorer people, the peasants, the small farmers, the small manufacturers, many of whom were spoiled of their goods for the very purpose of preventing them from emigrating. They were consequently under the necessity of remaining in their native country, whether they changed their religion by force or not. It is to give an account of these people, as a supplement to my former book, that the present work is written.

It is impossible to fix precisely the number of the Huguenots who left France to avoid the cruelties of Louis XIV., as well as of those who perforce remained to endure them. It shakes one's faith in history to observe the contradictory statements published with regard to French political or religious facts, even of recent date. A general impression has long prevailed that there was a Massacre of St. Bartholemew in Paris in the year 1572; but even that has recently been denied, or softened down into a mere political

squabble. It is not, however, possible to deny the fact that there was a Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, though it has been vindicated as a noble act of legislation, worthy even of the reputation and character of Louis the Great.

No two writers agree as to the number of French citizens who were driven from their country by the Revocation. A learned Roman Catholic, Mr. Charles Butler, states that only 50,000 persons "retired" from France; whereas M. Capefigue, equally opposed to the Reformation, who consulted the population tables of the period (although the intendants made their returns as small as possible in order to avoid the reproach of negligence), calculates the emigration at 230,000 souls, namely, 1,580 ministers, 2,300 elders, 15,000 gentlemen, the remainder consisting almost entirely of traders and artisans.

These returns, quoted by M. Capefigue, were made only a few years after the Revocation, although the emigration continued without intermission for many years later. M. Charles Coquerel says that whatever horror may be felt for the Massacre of St. Bartholomew of 1572, the persecutions which preceded and followed the Act of Revocation in 1685, "kept France under a perpetual St. Bartholomew for about sixty years." During that time it is believed that more than 1,000,000 Frenchmen either left the kingdom, or were killed, imprisoned, or sent to the galleys in their efforts to escape.

The Intendant of Saintonge, a King's officer, not likely to exaggerate the number of emigrants, reported in 1698, long before the emigration had ceased, that his province had lost 100,000 Reformers. Languedoc suffered far more; whilst

Boulainvilliers reports that besides the emigrants who succeeded in making their escape, the province lost not fewer than 100,000 persons by premature death, the sword, strangulation, and the wheel.

The number of French emigrants who resorted to England may be inferred from the fact that at the beginning of last century there were not fewer than *thirty-five* French Protestant churches in London alone, at a time when the population of the metropolis was not one-fourth of what it is now; while there were other large French settlements at Canterbury, Norwich, Southampton, Bristol, Exeter, &c., as well as at Dublin, Lisburn, Portarlington, and other towns in Ireland.

Then, with respect to the much larger number of Protestants who remained in France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, there is the same difference of opinion. A deputation of Huguenot pastors and elders, who waited upon the Duc de Noailles in 1682 informed him that there were then 1,800,000 Protestant *families* in France. Thirty years after that date, Louis XIV. proclaimed that there were no Protestants whatever in France; that Protestantism had been entirely suppressed, and that any one found professing that faith must be considered as a "relapsed heretic," and sentenced to imprisonment, the galleys, or the other punishments to which Protestants were then subject.

After an interval of about seventy-five years, during which Protestantism (though suppressed by the law) contrived to lead a sort of underground life—the Protestants meeting by night, and sometimes by day, in caves, valleys, moors, woods, old quarries, hollow beds of rivers, or, as

they themselves called it, "in the Desert"—they at length contrived to lift their heads into the light of day, and then Rabaut St. Etienne stood up in the Constituent Assembly at Paris, in 1787, and claimed the rights of his Protestant fellow-countrymen—the rights of "2,000,000 useful citizens." Louis XVI. granted them an Edict of Tolerance, about a hundred years after Louis XIV. had revoked the Edict of Nantes; but the measure proved too late for the King, and too late for France, which had already been sacrificed to the intolerance of Louis XIV. and his Jesuit advisers.

After all the sufferings of France—after the cruelties to which her people have been subjected by the tyranny of her monarchs and the intolerance of her priests,—it is doubtful whether she has yet learnt wisdom from her experience and trials. France was brought to ruin a century ago by the Jesuits who held the entire education of the country in their hands. They have again recovered their ground, and the Congreganistes are now what the Jesuits were before. The Sans-Culottes of 1793 were the pupils of the priests; so were the Communists of 1871.[1] M. Edgar Quinet has recently said to his countrymen: "The Jesuitical and clerical spirit which has sneaked in among you and all your affairs has ruined you. It has corrupted the spring of life; it has delivered you over to the enemy.... Is this to last for ever? For heaven's sake spare us at least the sight of a Jesuits' Republic as the coronation of our century."

In the midst of these prophecies of ruin, we have M. Veuillot frankly avowing his Ultramontane policy in the *Univers*. He is quite willing to go back to the old burnings, hangings, and quarterings, to prevent any freedom of

opinion about religious matters. "For my part," he says, "I frankly avow my regret not only that John Huss was not burnt sooner, but that Luther was not burnt too. And I regret further that there has not been some prince sufficiently pious and politic to have made a crusade against the Protestants."

M. Veuillot is perhaps entitled to some respect for boldly speaking out what he means and thinks. There are many amongst ourselves who mean the same thing, without having the courage to say so—who hate the Reformation quite as much as M. Veuillot does, and would like to see the principles of free examination and individual liberty torn up root and branch.

With respect to the proposed crusade against Protestantism, it will be seen from the following work what the "pious and politic" Louis XIV. attempted, and how very inefficient his measures eventually proved in putting down Protestantism, or in extending Catholicism. Louis XIV. found it easier to make martyrs than apostates; and discovered that hanging, banishment, the galleys, and the sword were not amongst the most successful of "converters."

The history of the Huguenots during the time of their submergence as an "underground church" is scarcely treated in the general histories of France. Courtly writers blot them out of history as Louis XIV. desired to blot them out of France. Most histories of France published in England contain little notice of them. Those who desire to pursue the subject further, will obtain abundant information, more particularly from the following works:—

Elie Bénoît: *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes.* Charles Coquerel: *Histoire des Églises du Désert.* Napoleon Peyrat: *Histoire des Pasteurs du Désert.* Antoine Court: *Histoire des Troubles de Cevennes.* Edmund Hughes: *Histoire de la Restauration du Protestantisme en France au xviii. Siècle.* A. Bonnemère: *Histoire des Camisardes.* Adolphe Michel: *Louvois et Les Protestantes.* Athanase Coquerel Fils; *Les Forçats pour La Foi, &c., &c.*

It remains to be added that part of this work—viz., the "Wars of the Camisards," and the "Journey in the Country of the Vaudois"—originally appeared in *Good Words*.

S.S.

London, *October*, 1873.[Back to Contents]

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CHAPTER I.

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REVOCATION OF THE EDICT OF NANTES.

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was signed by Louis XIV. of France, on the 18th of October, 1685, and published four days afterwards.

Although the Revocation was the personal act of the King, it was nevertheless a popular measure, approved by the Catholic Church of France, and by the great body of the French people.

The King had solemnly sworn, at the beginning of his reign, to maintain, the tolerating Edict of Henry IV.—the Huguenots being amongst the most industrious, enterprising, and loyal of his subjects. But the advocacy of the King's then Catholic mistress, Madame de Maintenon, and of his Jesuit Confessor, Père la Chaise, overcame his scruples, and the deed of Revocation of the Edict was at length signed and published.

The aged Chancellor, Le Tellier, was so overjoyed at the measure, that on affixing the great seal of France to the deed, he exclaimed, in the words of Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen the salvation."

Three months later, the great Bossuet, the eagle of Meaux, preached the funeral sermon of Le Tellier; in the course of which he testified to the immense joy of the Church at the Revocation of the Edict. "Let us," said he, "expand our hearts in praises of the piety of Louis. Let our acclamations ascend to heaven, and let us say to this new

Constantine, this new Theodosius, this new Marcian, this new Charlemagne, what the thirty-six fathers formerly said in the Council of Chalcedon: 'You have affirmed the faith, you have exterminated the heretics; it is a work worthy of your reign, whose proper character it is. Thanks to you, heresy is no more. God alone can have worked this marvel. King of heaven, preserve the King of earth: it is the prayer of the Church, it is the prayer of the Bishops.'"[2]

Madame de Maintenon also received the praises of the Church. "All good people," said the Abbé de Choisy, "the Pope, the bishops, and all the clergy, rejoice at the victory of Madame de Maintenon." Madame enjoyed the surname of Director of the Affairs of the Clergy; and it was said by the ladies of St. Cyr (an institution founded by her), that "the cardinals and the bishops knew no other way of approaching the King save through her."

It is generally believed that her price for obtaining the King's consent to the Act of Revocation, was the withdrawal by the clergy of their opposition to her marriage with the King; and that the two were privately united by the Archbishop of Paris at Versailles, a few days after, in the presence of Père la Chaise and two more witnesses. But Louis XIV. never publicly recognised De Maintenon as his wife—never rescued her from the ignominious position in which she originally stood related to him.

People at court all spoke with immense praises of the King's intentions with respect to destroying the Huguenots. "Killing them off" was a matter of badinage with the courtiers. Madame de Maintenon wrote to the Duc de

Noailles, "The soldiers are killing numbers of the fanatics—they hope soon to free Languedoc of them."

That picquante letter-writer, Madame de Sévigné, often referred to the Huguenots. She seems to have classed them with criminals or wild beasts. When residing in Low Brittany during a revolt against the Gabelle, a friend wrote to her, "How dull you must be!" "No," replied Madame de Sévigné, "we are not so dull—hanging is quite a refreshment to me! They have just taken twenty-four or thirty of these men, and are going to throw them off."

A few days after the Edict had been revoked, she wrote to her cousin Bussy, at Paris: "You have doubtless seen the Edict by which the King revokes that of Nantes. There is nothing so fine as that which it contains, and never has any King done, or ever will do, a more memorable act." Bussy replied to her: "I immensely admire the conduct of the King in destroying the Huguenots. The wars which have been waged against them, and the St. Bartholomew, have given some reputation to the sect. His Majesty has gradually undermined it; and the edict he has just published, maintained by the dragoons and by Bourdaloue,[3] will soon give them the *coup de grâce*."

In a future letter to Count Bussy, Madame de Sévigné informed him of "a dreadfully fatiguing journey which her son-in-law M. de Grignan had made in the mountains of Dauphiny, to pursue and punish the miserable Huguenots, who issued from their holes, and vanished like ghosts to avoid extermination."

De Baville, however, the Lieutenant of Languedoc, kept her in good heart. In one of his letters, he said, "I have this

morning condemned seventy-six of these wretches (Huguenots), and sent them to the galleys." All this was very pleasant to Madame de Sévigné.

Madame de Scuderi, also, more moderately rejoiced in the Act of Revocation. "The King," she wrote to Bussy, "has worked great marvels against the Huguenots; and the authority which he has employed to unite them to the Church will be most salutary to themselves and to their children, who will be educated in the purity of the faith; all this will bring upon him the benedictions of Heaven."

Even the French Academy, though originally founded by a Huguenot, publicly approved the deed of Revocation. In a discourse uttered before it, the Abbé Tallemand exclaimed, when speaking of the Huguenot temple at Charenton, which had just been destroyed by the mob, "Happy ruins, the finest trophy France ever beheld!" La Fontaine described heresy as now "reduced to the last gasp." Thomas Corneille also eulogized the zeal of the King in "throttling the Reformation." Barbier D'Aucourt heedlessly, but truly, compared the emigration of the Protestants "to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt." The Academy afterwards proposed, as the subject of a poem, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and Fontenelle had the fortune, good or bad, of winning the prize.

The philosophic La Bruyère contributed a maxim in praise of the Revocation. Quinault wrote a poem on the subject; and Madame Deshoulières felt inspired to sing "The Destruction of Heresy." The Abbé de Rancé spoke of the whole affair as a prodigy: "The Temple of Charenton destroyed, and no exercise of Protestantism, within the

kingdom; it is a kind of miracle, such as we had never hoped to have seen in our day."

The Revocation was popular with the lower class, who went about sacking and pulling down the Protestant churches. They also tracked the Huguenots and their pastors, where they found them evading or breaking the Edict of Revocation; thus earning the praises of the Church and the fines offered by the King for their apprehension. The provosts and sheriffs of Paris represented the popular feeling, by erecting a brazen statue of the King who had rooted out heresy; and they struck and distributed medals in honour of the great event.

The Revocation was also popular with the dragoons. In order to "convert" the Protestants, the dragoons were unduly billeted upon them. As both officers and soldiers were then very badly paid, they were thereby enabled to live at free quarters. They treated everything in the houses they occupied as if it were their own, and an assignment of billets was little loss than the consignment of the premises to the military, to use for their own purposes, during the time they occupied them.[4]

The Revocation was also approved by those who wished to buy land cheap. As the Huguenots were prevented holding their estates unless they conformed to the Catholic religion, and as many estates were accordingly confiscated and sold, land speculators, as well as grand seigneurs who wished to increase their estates, were constantly on the look-out for good bargains. Even before the Revocation, when the Huguenots were selling their land in order to leave the country, Madame de Maintenon wrote to her nephew,

for whom she had obtained from the King a grant of 800,000 francs, "I beg of you carefully to use the money you are about to receive. Estates in Poitou may be got for nothing; the desolation of the Huguenots will drive them to sell more. You may easily acquire extensive possessions in Poitou."

The Revocation was especially gratifying to the French Catholic Church. The Pope, of course, approved of it. *Te Deums* were sung at Rome in thanksgiving for the forced conversion of the Huguenots. Pope Innocent XI. sent a brief to Louis XIV., in which he promised him the unanimous praises of the Church, "Amongst all the proofs," said he, "which your Majesty has given of natural piety, not the least brilliant is the zeal, truly worthy of the most Christian King, which has induced you to revoke all the ordinances issued in favour of the heretics of your kingdom."[5]

The Jesuits were especially elated by the Revocation. It had been brought about by the intrigues of their party, acting on the King's mind through Madame de Maintenon and Père la Chaise. It enabled them to fill their schools and nunneries with the children of Protestants, who were compelled by law to pay for their education by Jesuit priests. To furnish the required accommodation, nearly the whole of the Protestant temples that had not been pulled down were made over to the Jesuits, to be converted into monastic schools and nunneries. Even Bossuet, the "last father of the Church," shared in the spoils of the Huguenots. A few days after the Edict had been revoked, Bossuet applied for the materials of the temples of Nauteuil and Morcerf, situated in

his diocese; and his Majesty ordered that they should be granted to him.[6]

Now that Protestantism had been put down, and the officers of Louis announced from all parts of the kingdom that the Huguenots were becoming converted by thousands, there was nothing but a clear course before the Jesuits in France. For their religion was now the favoured religion of the State.

It is true there were the Jansenists—declared to be heretical by the Popes, and distinguished for their opposition to the doctrines and moral teaching of the Jesuits—who were suffering from a persecution which then drove some of the members of Port Royal into exile, and eventually destroyed them. But even the Jansenists approved the persecution of the Protestants. The great Arnault, their most illustrious interpreter, though in exile in the Low Countries, declared that though the means which Louis XIV. had employed had been "rather violent, they had in nowise been unjust."

But Protestantism being declared destroyed, and Jansenism being in disgrace, there was virtually no legal religion in France but one—that of the Roman Catholic Church. Atheism, it is true, was tolerated, but then Atheism was not a religion. The Atheists did not, like the Protestants, set up rival churches, or appoint rival ministers, and seek to draw people to their assemblies. The Atheists, though they tacitly approved the religion of the King, had no opposition to offer to it—only neglect, and perhaps concealed contempt.

Hence it followed that the Court and the clergy had far more toleration for Atheism than for either Protestantism or Jansenism. It is authentically related that Louis XIV. on one occasion objected to the appointment of a representative on a foreign mission on account of the person being supposed to be a Jansenist; but on its being discovered that the nominee was only an Atheist, the objection was at once withdrawn.[7]

At the time of the Revocation, when the King and the Catholic Church were resolved to tolerate no religion other than itself, the Church had never seemed so powerful in France. It had a strong hold upon the minds of the people. It was powerful in its leaders and its great preachers; in fact, France has never, either before or since, exhibited such an array of preaching genius as Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Fléchier, and Massillon.

Yet the uncontrolled and enormously increased power conferred upon the French Church at that time, most probably proved its greatest calamity. Less than a hundred years after the Revocation, the Church had lost its influence over the people, and was despised. The Deists and Atheists, sprung from the Church's bosom, were in the ascendant; and Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, and Mirabeau, were regarded as greater men than either Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Fléchier, or Massillon.

Not one of the clergy we have named, powerful orators though they were, ever ventured to call in question the cruelties with which the King sought to compel the Protestants to embrace the dogmas of their Church. There were no doubt many Catholics who deplored the force

practised on the Huguenots; but they were greatly in the minority, and had no power to make their opposition felt. Some of them considered it an impious sacrilege to compel the Protestants to take the Catholic sacrament—to force them to accept the host, which Catholics believed to be the veritable body of Christ, but which the Huguenots could only accept as bread, over which some function had been performed by the priests, in whose miraculous power of conversion they did not believe.

Fénélon took this view of the forcible course employed by the Jesuits; but he was in disgrace as a Jansenist, and what he wrote on the subject remained for a long time unknown, and was only first published in 1825. The Duc de Saint-Simon, also a Jansenist, took the same view, which he embodied in his "Memoirs;" but these were kept secret by his family, and were not published for nearly a century after his death.

Thus the Catholic Church remained triumphant. The Revocation was apparently approved by all, excepting the Huguenots. The King was flattered by the perpetual conversions reported to be going on throughout the country—five thousand persons in one place, ten thousand in another, who had abjured and taken the communion—at once, and sometimes "instantly."

"The King," says Saint-Simon, "congratulated himself on his power and his piety. He believed himself to have renewed the days of the preaching of the Apostles, and attributed to himself all the honour. The Bishops wrote panegyrics of him; the Jesuits made the pulpits resound with

his praises.... He swallowed their poison in deep draughts." [8]

Louis XIV. lived for thirty years after the Edict of Nantes had been revoked. He had therefore the fullest opportunity of observing the results of the policy he had pursued. He died in the hands of the Jesuits, his body covered with relics of the true cross. Madame de Maintenon, the "famous and fatal witch," as Saint-Simon called her, abandoned him at last; and the King died, lamented by no one.

He had banished, or destroyed, during-his reign, about a million of his subjects, and those who remained did not respect him. Many regarded him as a self-conceited tyrant, who sought to save his own soul by inflicting penance on the backs of others. He loaded his kingdom with debt, and overwhelmed his people with taxes. He destroyed the industry of France, which had been mainly supported by the Huguenots. Towards the end of his life he became generally hated; and while his heart was conveyed to the Grand Jesuits, his body, which was buried at St. Denis, was hurried to the grave accompanied by the execrations of the people.

Yet the Church remained faithful to him to the last. The great Massillon preached his funeral sermon; though the message was draped in the livery of the Court. "How far," said he, "did Louis XIV. carry his zeal for the Church, that virtue of sovereigns who have received power and the sword only that they may be props of the altar and defenders of its doctrine! Specious reasons of State! In vain did you oppose to Louis the timid views of human wisdom, the body of the monarchy enfeebled by the flight of so many citizens, the course of trade slackened, either by the

deprivation of their industry, or by the furtive removal of their wealth! Dangers fortify his zeal. The work of God fears not man. He believes even that he strengthens his throne by overthrowing that of error. The profane temples are destroyed, the pulpits of seduction are cast down. The prophets of falsehood are torn from their flocks. At the first blow dealt to it by Louis, heresy falls, disappears, and is reduced either to hide itself in the obscurity whence it issued, or to cross the seas, and to bear with it into foreign lands its false gods, its bitterness, and its rage."[9]

Whatever may have been the temper which the Huguenots displayed when they were driven from France by persecution, they certainly carried with them something far more valuable than rage. They carried with them their virtue, piety, industry, and valour, which proved the source of wealth, spirit, freedom, and character, in all those countries—Holland, Prussia, England, and America—in which these noble exiles took refuge.

We shall next see whether the Huguenots had any occasion for entertaining the "rage" which the great Massillon attributed to them.[Back to Contents]

CHAPTER II.

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EFFECTS OF THE REVOCATION.

The Revocation struck with civil death the entire Protestant population of France. All the liberty of conscience which they had enjoyed under the Edict of Nantes, was swept away by the act of the King. They were deprived of every right and privilege; their social life was destroyed; their callings were proscribed; their property was liable to be confiscated at any moment; and they were subjected to mean, detestable, and outrageous cruelties.

From the day of the Revocation, the relation of Louis XIV. to his Huguenot subjects was that of the Tyrant and his Victims. The only resource which remained to the latter was that of flying from their native country; and an immense number of persons took the opportunity of escaping from France.

The Edict of Revocation proclaimed that the Huguenot subjects of France must thenceforward be of "the King's religion;" and the order was promulgated throughout the kingdom. The Prime Minister, Louvois, wrote to the provincial governors, "His Majesty desires that the severest rigour shall be shown to those who will not conform to His Religion, and those who seek the foolish glory of wishing to be the last, must be pushed to the utmost extremity."

The Huguenots were forbidden, under the penalty of death, to worship publicly after their own religious forms. They were also forbidden, under the penalty of being sent to the galleys for life, to worship privately in their own homes.

If they were overheard singing their favourite psalms, they were liable to fine, imprisonment, or the galleys. They were compelled to hang out flags from their houses on the days of Catholic processions; but they were forbidden, under a heavy penalty, to look out of their windows when the Corpus Domini was borne along the streets.

The Huguenots were rigidly forbidden to instruct their children in their own faith. They were commanded to send them to the priest to be baptized and brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, under the penalty of five hundred livres fine in each case. The boys were educated in Jesuit schools, the girls in nunneries, the parents being compelled to pay the required expenses; and where the parents were too poor to pay, the children were at once transferred to the general hospitals. A decree of the King, published in December, 1685, ordered that every child of *five years* and upwards was to be taken possession of by the authorities, and removed from its Protestant parents. This decree often proved a sentence of death, not only to the child, but to its parents.

The whole of the Protestant temples throughout France were subject to demolition. The expelled pastors were compelled to evacuate the country within fifteen days. If, in the meantime, they were found performing their functions, they were liable to be sent to the galleys for life. If they undertook to marry Protestants, the marriages were declared illegal, and the children bastards. If, after the expiry of the fifteen days, they were found lingering in France, the pastors were then liable to the penalty of death.

Protestants could neither be born, nor live, nor die, without state and priestly interference. Protestant *sages-femmes* were not permitted to exercise their functions; Protestant doctors were prohibited from practising; Protestant surgeons and apothecaries were suppressed; Protestant advocates, notaries, and lawyers were interdicted; Protestants could not teach, and all their schools, public and private, were put down. Protestants were no longer employed by the Government in affairs of finance, as collectors of taxes, or even as labourers on the public roads, or in any other office. Even Protestant grocers were forbidden to exercise their calling.

There must be no Protestant librarians, booksellers, or printers. There was, indeed, a general raid upon Protestant literature all over France. All Bibles, Testaments, and books of religious instruction, were collected and publicly burnt. There were bonfires in almost every town. At Metz, it occupied a whole day to burn the Protestant books which had been seized, handed over to the clergy, and condemned to be destroyed.

Protestants were even forbidden to hire out horses, and Protestant grooms were forbidden to give riding lessons. Protestant domestics were forbidden to hire themselves as servants, and Protestant mistresses were forbidden to hire them under heavy penalties. If they engaged Protestant servants, they were liable to be sent to the galleys for life. They were even prevented employing "new converts."

Artisans were forbidden to work without certificates that their religion was Catholic. Protestant apprenticeships were suppressed. Protestant washerwomen were excluded from

their washing-places on the river. In fact, there was scarcely a degradation that could be invented, or an insult that could be perpetrated, that was not practised upon those poor Huguenots who refused to be of "the King's religion."

Even when Protestants were about to take refuge in death, their troubles were not over. The priests had the power of forcing their way into the dying man's house, where they presented themselves at his bedside, and offered him conversion and the viaticum. If the dying man refused these, he was liable to be seized after death, dragged from the house, pulled along the streets naked, and buried in a ditch, or thrown upon a dunghill.[10]

For several years before the Revocation, while the persecutions of the Huguenots had been increasing, many had realised their means, and fled abroad into Switzerland, Germany, Holland, and England. But after the Revocation, emigration from France was strictly forbidden, under penalty of confiscation of the whole goods and property of the emigrant. Any person found attempting to leave the country, was liable to the seizure of all that belonged to him, and to perpetual imprisonment at the galleys; one half the amount realised by the sale of the property being paid to the informers, who thus became the most active agents of the Government. The Act also ordered that all landed proprietors who had left France before the Revocation, should return within four months, under penalty of confiscation of all their property.

Amongst those of the King's subjects who were the most ready to obey his orders were some of the old Huguenot noble families, such as the members of the houses of

Bouillon, Coligny, Rohan, Tremouille, Sully, and La Force. These great vassals, whom a turbulent feudalism had probably in the first instance induced to embrace Protestantism, were now found ready to change their profession of religion in servile obedience to the monarch.

The lesser nobility were more faithful and consistent. Many of them abandoned their estates and fled across the frontier, rather than live a daily lie to God by forswearing the religion of their conscience. Others of this class, on whom religion sat more lightly, as the only means of saving their property from confiscation, pretended to be converted to Roman Catholicism; though, we shall find, that these "new converts," as they were called, were treated with as much suspicion on the one side as they were regarded with contempt on the other.

There were also the Huguenot manufacturers, merchants, and employers of labour, of whom a large number closed their workshops and factories, sold off their goods, converted everything into cash, at whatever sacrifice, and fled across the frontier into Switzerland—either settling there, or passing through it on their way to Germany, Holland, or England.

It was necessary to stop this emigration, which was rapidly diminishing the population, and steadily impoverishing the country. It was indeed a terrible thing for Frenchmen, to tear themselves away from their country—Frenchmen, who have always clung so close to their soil that they have rarely been able to form colonies of emigration elsewhere—it was breaking so many living fibres to leave France, to quit the homes of their fathers, their firesides,

their kin, and their race. Yet, in a multitude of cases, they were compelled to tear themselves by the roots out of the France they so loved.

Yet it was so very easy for them to remain. The King merely required them to be "converted." He held that loyalty required them to be of "his religion." On the 19th of October, 1685, the day after he had signed the Act of Revocation, La Reynée, lieutenant of the police of Paris, issued a notice to the Huguenot tradespeople and working-classes, requiring them to be converted instantly. Many of them were terrified, and conformed accordingly. Next day, another notice was issued to the Huguenot bourgeois, requiring them to assemble on the following day for the purpose of publicly making a declaration of their conversion.

The result of those measures was to make hypocrites rather than believers, and they took effect upon the weakest and least-principled persons. The strongest, most independent, and high-minded of the Huguenots, who would *not* be hypocrites, resolved passively to resist them, and if they could not be allowed to exercise freedom of conscience in their own country, they determined to seek it elsewhere. Hence the large increase in the emigration from all parts of France immediately after the Act of Revocation had been proclaimed.[11] All the roads leading to the frontier or the sea-coast streamed with fugitives. They went in various forms and guises—sometimes in bodies of armed men, at other times in solitary parties, travelling at night and sleeping in the woods by day. They went as beggars, travelling merchants, sellers of beads and chaplets, gipsies, soldiers, shepherds, women with their faces dyed and