

"Poor, poor, child!" cried compassionate Alice, taking in her plump warm palm the little cold and wasted hand, "and did they turn you out of the monastery when the fathers were sent to prison?"

"No," answered the child. "But master Bedyl had me flogged because I cried when they took Father Green away to prison, and said that Master Bedyl was wicked, and the king was wicked, too. Then he called me a treasonous young urchin, who of right ought to swing upon the gallows; and he bade of the apparitors who came to turn the fathers out of the monastery hold me, while the other beat me with rods till"—and here the poor little fellow sobbed in recollection of his sufferings—"till the blood ran down from my shoulders. And I have the scars still!"

As he spoke, the boy stripped his ragged tunic down, and showed his back and shoulders all seamed with wheals and wounds scarce cicatrized.

Alice Holt burst into tears.

"Oh Lord!" she exclaimed, "how long wilt thou suffer these iniquities?"

"Till the measure of atonement for the people's sins is complete!" said a voice in her ear.

She looked up, and beheld standing beside her a mercer of the Chepe, who had been heavily fined for assisting one of the deprived monks, who had refused to acknowledge the king's supremacy.

"Have a care, dear Mistress Holt," he whispered. "Had other than myself overheard you, those few words might have cost you dear."

"Alas, I know it!" answered Alice. "But good Master Lambton, is not this a sight, sir, to provoke anger in the blessed Job?"

She showed the excoriated shoulders of the poor child to the mercer, as she tenderly covered them again with the ragged tunic.

"An acolyte from the Charter House," she whispered to the mercer.

"How comes he in this condition?" inquired the mercer, "for the school children are generally taken in charge!"

"They beat me, because I called the king wicked, and I ran away," said the child.

"And how hast thou since lived?" inquired Master Lambton.

"I keep about best part of the day," replied the boy, "and o' nights too, unless Giles at the Black Bull can get me to sleep in the stable without his master knowing it. Giles was one of Father Green's penitents; and he gives me bits to eat when he can. But that's not often, for old Shuffleton, his master, is a hard man, and Giles has two little children of his own to feed. Then there is one of the turnkeys here at the prison who is good to me, and lets me in sometimes to see Father Green. I have been here three mornings this week though and have not seen him. He has not been near the gate. I hope that he has not got into trouble with the head jailor about letting me in. And oh I hope—I hope Father Green is not worse, is not dead! He was so ill that he could not eat the black bread they gave him. I have a nice piece of white bread I have saved for him here. But perhaps, oh perhaps, poor Father Green is dead, and will not want bread in this world any more!"

Hereupon the poor child began to weep. But that moment there was a sound of heavy bolts and bars being withdrawn. Then a wicket in the gate was opened, and the head of a man with a round good-humoured face was put forth.

"Hist, hist! little Francis!" he said, looking cautiously round.

The child sprang to his feet, smiling through his tears. "Oh good Master Jackson," he cried, "You can take me to Father Green this morning!"

"Hush! fair and softly, my little man!" answered the jailor. "Now then," and leaning forward he lifted the little slender frame through the wicket, which he was then about to close, but that Mistress Holt stepped forward and called him by name.

The poor man's ruddy hue paled. In those horrible times, his admitting the child to the prison might have cost him probably his place, possibly his life.

Alice Holt understood, and sympathised with his alarm, and approaching closer to the wicket she whispered—

"Hist, do not fear, my friend! I love the good Queen Catherine, and hate the wanton Nan Bullen. It is about this poor child! When you let him forth, send or bring him, if you can, to my abode—Mistress Alice Holt, lace dealer, at the sign of the Shuttle in Giltspur street."

The jailor nodded assent. He could trust to the bitterness with which Alice spoke of Anne Boleyn, who was, indeed, most heartily hated by most of the honest wives of London.

DECIPHERING BURNT DOCUMENTS.—M. Ratchelot, an officer of the Paris law courts, has succeeded in an ingenious manner in transcribing a number of the registers which were burnt during the Commune. These registers had remained so long in the fire that each book seemed to have become a homogenous, mass more like a slab of charcoal than anything else; and when an attempt was made to detach a leaf, it fell away into powder. Many scientific men had examined these unpromising black blocks, when M. Ratchelot hit upon the following method of operation:—In the first place, he cut off the back of the book, so as to leave nothing but the mass of leaves, which the fire had caused to adhere to each other; he then steeped the book, and afterwards exposed it, all wet as it was, to the heat at the mouth of a *calorifere*; the water as it evaporated, raised the leaves one by one, and they could be separated, but with extraordinary precaution. Each sheet was then deciphered and transcribed, and the copy certified by a legal officer. In this way, the records of nearly 70,000 official acts have been saved. The appearance of the pages was very curious; the writing appeared of a dull black, while the paper was of lustrous black, something like velvet decorations on a black satin ground, so that the entries were not difficult to read.

By the last mail steamer from Melbourne there left for England a young man named Henry Sullivan, who was recently working in a wood yard at Geelong for 8s per week. At Home a nice little fortune of £18,000 awaits him.

MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY.

Nothing, perhaps is more common, and yet nothing can be more unjust, than to take advantage of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's day, to inveigh against the Catholic community and the Catholic principles, as if the awful deed had proceeded from their influence. If we consult the authentic and contemporary documents collected and adduced by those persons who have made a deep and impartial study of the whole transaction (v. g., Caveirao, *Dissert. sur la St. Bartholemi*;—Lingard, 8, Note T.;—Daniel, *Hist. de France*, ad ann. 1572), we shall find that religion had nothing to do with it, except to check its course as much as possible, and to weep over the devoted victims of the Massacre; that the whole affair was merely the effect of a political resentment and of a sudden ebullition of anger; in fine, that a much smaller number of persons perished on the occasion than is commonly believed.

The series and close connexion of the events immediately preceding the massacre, are sufficient to show that it originated in the animosity of the French court against the Protestant party, and was dictated by a violent desire of revenge. The mind of the young king, Charles IX., had been frequently harassed and exasperated by the frequent attacks of the Huguenots against his authority, and by the report of the many cruelties which they had committed throughout the kingdom during the last civil wars. Notwithstanding these causes of provocation, he would not have adopted the dreadful measure, had it not been for the positive assertion of his mother and chief counsellors, that he could no longer escape the plots of that party, without putting to death or in confinement its chief leaders, and that were he to wait till next morning, his most faithful officers, his family, perhaps himself, would be sacrificed to their vengeance. The king then gave his consent to the projected massacre; the time was appointed, and the execution took place during a considerable part of the following day, the twenty-fourth of August, 1572.

Thus the odious deed was not the result of a long premeditated and general plot, but the effect of a sudden fit of anger and revenge; it was, moreover, projected against the leaders only of the Huguenot party, and intended to have taken place only in Paris. If the example of the capital was followed in many other cities, v. g., Lyons, Rouen, Toulouse, Bordeaux, &c., this was owing chiefly to the violent excitement which the conduct and cruelties of the Calvinists, during the preceding insurrections, had produced in the minds of the Catholics. Far from sending orders to the provinces against Protestants, Charles IX., on the contrary, both in writing and by word of mouth, frequently expressed his intention that the bloody scene should not be repeated, nor extended beyond the limits of Paris. And indeed, the great difference of the epochs at which the massacres were committed in the cities just mentioned, also shows that they ought to be attributed rather to sudden ebullitions of popular vengeance, than to any previously concerted and general plan. Every one may see the detailed proofs of these assertions in the first two authors above mentioned.

Of the number of victims in all those towns, including the capital, it is impossible to speak with certainty. Among the Huguenot writers, some reckon seventy thousand; others thirty, or twenty, or fifteen thousand; but all these amounts to be exaggerated. "The reformed martyrologist adopted a measure of ascertaining the real number, which may enable us to form a probable conjecture. He procured from the ministers in the different districts where the massacres had taken place, lists of the names of the persons who had suffered, or were supposed to have suffered. He published the result in 1582; and the reader will be surprised to learn that in all France he could discover the names of no more than seven hundred and eighty-six persons. Perhaps, if we double that number, we shall not be far from the real amount."—(Lingard *in loco cit.*)

Above all, it is certain that religion had nothing to do with the massacre, whether as a motive or an encouragement. In the contriving of the wretched scheme, the passions of the French court, jealousy, animosity, revenge, were the real and only cause; and the pretence was a supposed conspiracy of the Protestant leaders against the king, his servants and his family. No clergymen were consulted about the adoption of the awful measure; and, when they heard of it after his execution, far from obtaining their approbation, it rather excited in their bosoms feelings of horror for the deed, and of commiseration for its victims. The only share which bishops, priests, and monks took in it, was to save as many as they could of the Protestants, who, in many towns, v. g., Lisieux, Toulouse, Lyons, Bordeaux, had taken refuge in their hospitable dwellings.

It is objected that Pope Gregory XIII. publicly returned thanks to God on that occasion;—but what was the real object of this rejoicing? Charles IX., in order to palliate the shame of his murderous edict against the Parisian Huguenots, wrote to every court in Europe, that, having just detected their horrid plots against his authority and person, he had been fortunate enough to escape from the imminent danger, by putting the conspirators to death without delay. The Pope then, under that impression, rejoiced, not for the death of the supposed traitors, whose rigorous punishment he on the contrary deplored, but for the preservation of the French monarch and of his kingdom from utter ruin: exactly, as in case of war, and of a signal victory against invaders, public rejoicings would take place, and every sensible person would willingly share in them, not, indeed, at the blood shed in battle, but at the advantages gained over an unjust enemy; and who could dare to find a fault in such conduct?—Fredet's *Modern History*.

The population of the Hungarian kingdom consists of 15,860,128 of whom 5,009,678 are engaged in the cultivation of the soil or in the forest; and 780,546 in industrial and commercial pursuits.

In two years 261 out of the 400 of the 60th Regiment quartered at Limerick have got married. Let some poet tell us at once what Limerick ladies are like. Not another town in Great Britain has done the same.