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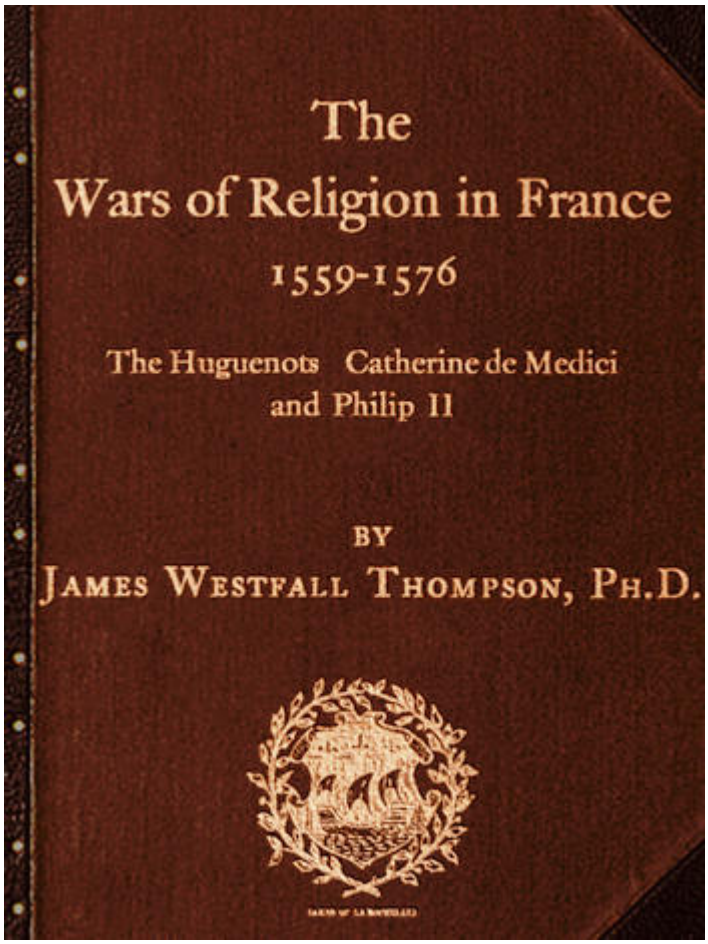

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The
Wars of Religion in France
1559-1576

VIEW OF PARIS
From a sketch by Jacques Callot (1592-1635).

The Wars of Religion in France 1559-1576

The Huguenots Catherine de Medici and Philip II

BY

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(ARMS OF LA ROCHELLE)

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TO
MARY HAWES WILMARTH
THE LARGESS OF WHOSE SPIRIT HAS MADE THE
WORLD RICHER AND LIFE NOBLER

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PREFACE

No one acquainted with the history of historical writing can have failed to observe how transitory are its achievements. Mark Pattison's aphorism that "history is one of

the most ephemeral forms of literature" has much of truth in it. The reasons of this are not far to seek. In the first place, the most laborious historian is doomed to be superseded in course of time by the accumulation of new material. In the second place, the point of view and the interpretation of one generation varies from that which preceded it, so that each generation requires a rewriting of history in terms of its own interest.

These reasons must be my excuse for venturing to write a new book upon an old subject. It is now nearly thirty years since the appearance of the late Professor Henry M. Baird's excellent work, *The Rise of the Huguenots* (New York, 1879), and little that is comprehensive has since been written upon the subject in English, with the exception of Mr. A. W. Whitehead's admirable *Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France* (London, 1904). But the limitations imposed by biographical history compel an author inevitably to ignore movements or events not germane to his immediate subject, which, nevertheless, may be of great importance for general history. Moreover, a biography is limited by the term of life of the hero, and his death may not by any means terminate the issue in which he was a factor—as indeed was the case with Coligny.

An enumeration of the notable works—sources and authorities—which have been published since the appearance of Professor Baird's work may serve to justify the present volume. First and foremost must be mentioned the notable *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, the lack of which Ranke deplored, edited by the late Count Hector de la Ferrière and M. Baguenault de la Puchesse (9 vols.), the initial volume of which appeared in 1880. Of diplomatic correspondence we have the *Ambassade en Espagne de Jean Ebrard, seigneur de St. Sulpice de 1562 à 1565* (Paris, 1902), edited by M. [viii]
Edmond Cabié, and thé *Dépêches de M. Fourquevaux, ambassadeur du roi Charles IX en Espagne, 1565-72*, in three volumes, edited by the Abbé Douais (Paris, 1896). Other sources which have seen the light within the last three decades are M. Delaborde's *Vie de Coligny* (3 vols., 1877-), the title of which is somewhat misleading, for it is really a collection of Coligny's letters strung upon the thread of his career; the Baron Alphonse de Ruble's *Antoine de Bourbon et Jeanne d'Albret* (4 vols., 1881); M. Ludovic Lalanne's new annotated edition of *D'Aubigné* (1886), and the new edition of Beza's *Histoire ecclésiastique* (ed. of Baum, 1883). Finally, among sources should be included many volumes in the "Calendar of State Papers." Professor Baird has rightly said that "Too much weight can scarcely be given to this source of information and illustration." His praise would probably have been even greater if he could have used the correspondence of Dale and Smith as freely as he did that of Throckmorton and Norris.

When we pass from sources to authorities the list of notable works is even longer. La Ferrière's *Le XVI^e siècle et les Valois*—the fruit of researches in the Record Office in London—appeared in 1879; M. Forneron's *Histoire de Philippe II* (4 vols.) was published in 1887, and is even more valuable than his earlier *Histoire des ducs de Guise* (1877). Besides these, in the decade of the 80's, are Durier's *Les Huguenots en Bigorre* (1884); Communay's *Les Huguenots dans le Béarn et la Navarre* (1886); Lettenhove's *Les Huguenots et les Gueux* (1885); the baron de Ruble's *Le traité de Cateau-Cambrésis* (1889), and the abbé Marchand's *Charles de Cossé, Comte de Brissac* (1889). M. de Crue's notable *Anne, duc de Montmorency* appeared in the same year and his no less scholarly *Le parti des politiques au lendemain de Saint Barthélemy* three years later. M. Marlet's *Le comte de Montgomery* was published in 1890; M. Georges Weill's *Les théories sur le pouvoir royal en France pendant les guerres de religion*, in 1891; M. Henri Hauser's *François de La Noue* in 1892; M. Bernard de Lacombe's *Catherine de Médicis entre Guise et Condé* in 1899, and, most recently of all, M. Courteault's *Blaise de Montluc* (1908). Many contributions in the *Revue* [ix]
historique, the *Revue des questions historiques*, the *English Historical Review*, the *Revue d'histoire diplomatique*, the *Revue des deux mondes*, and one article in the *American Historical Review*, January, 1903, by M. Hauser, "The Reformation and the Popular Classes in the Sixteenth Century," are equally valuable, as the notes will show. I have also consulted many articles in the proceedings of various local or provincial historical societies, as the Société de Paris et de l'Ile de France; the Société de l'histoire de Normandie, the Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Genève, etc., and

the admirable series known as the *Bulletin de la Société du protestantisme français*, which is a mine of historical lore.

While the present work falls in the epoch of the French Reformation, no attempt has been made to treat that subject in so far as the Reformation is assumed primarily to have been a religious manifestation. Doctrine, save when it involved polity, has been ignored. But into the political, diplomatic, and economic activities of the period I have tried to go at some length. As to the last feature, it is not too much to say that our interpretation of the sixteenth century has been profoundly changed within the last twenty years by the progress made in economic history. Such works as Weiss's *La chambre ardente* and Hauser's *Ouvriers du temps passé* have revolutionized the treatment of this subject.

Such an interpretation is merely a reflection of our own present-day interest in economic and social problems. In this particular it is the writer's belief that he is the first to present some of the results of recent research into the economic history of sixteenth-century France to English readers. My indebtedness to M. Hauser is especially great for the help and suggestion he has given me in the matter of industrial history. But I have tried to widen the subject and attempted to show the bearing of changes in the agricultural régime, the influence of the failure of crops owing to adverse weather conditions, and the disintegration of society as the result of incessant war and the plague, upon the progress of the Huguenot movement. In an agricultural country like France in the sixteenth century, the distress of the provinces through the [x]
failure of the harvests was sometimes nearly universal, and the retroactive effect of such conditions in promoting popular discontent had a marked influence upon the religious and political issues.

It has been pointed out that "the religious wars of France furnish the most complete instance of the constant intersection of native and foreign influences."[1] The bearing of the Huguenot movement upon Spanish and Dutch history was intimate and marked, and this I have also attempted to set forth. In so doing the fact that has impressed me most of all is the development and activity of the provincial Catholic leagues and their close connection with Spain's great Catholic machine in France, the Holy League.

The history of the Holy League in France is usually represented as having extended from 1576 to 1594. This time was the period of its greatest activity and of its greatest power. But institutions do not spring to life full armed in a moment, like Athené from the head of Zeus. "The roots of the present lie deep in the past," as Bishop Stubbs observed. Institutions are a growth, a development. The Holy League was a movement of slow growth and development, although it has not been thus represented, and resulted from the combination of various acts and forces—political, diplomatic, religious, economic, social, even psychological—working simultaneously both within and without France during the civil wars. I have tried to set forth the nature and extent of these forces; to show how they originated; how they operated; and how they ultimately were combined to form the Holy League. Certain individual features of the history here covered have been treated in an isolated way by some writers. The late baron de Ruble and M. Forneron have disclosed the treasonable negotiations of Montluc with Philip II. M. Bouillé and more recently M. Forneron have followed the tortuous thread of the cardinal of Lorraine's secret negotiations with Spain. Various historians, chiefly in provincial histories or biographies like Pingaud's *Les Saulx-Tavannes*, have noticed the local work of some of the provincial Catholic associations. But the relation of all these various movements, one to the other, and their ultimate [xi]
fusion into a single united movement has not yet been fully brought out. What was the number and form of organization of these local Catholic leagues? What influenced their combination? What bearing did they have upon the course of Montluc and the cardinal of Lorraine? Or upon Philip II's policy? How did the great feud between the Guises and the Montmorencys influence the formation of the Holy League and its hostile counterpart—the Association of the Huguenots and the Politiques? These questions I have tried to answer and in so doing two or three new facts have been brought to light. For example, an undiscovered link in the history of the Guises' early secret intercourse with Philip II has been found in the conduct of L'Aubespine, the

French ambassador in Spain in 1561; the treasonable course of the cardinal of Lorraine, it is shown, began in 1565 instead of 1566, a fact which makes the petty conflict known as the "Cardinal's War" of new importance; the history of the Catholic associations in the provinces, hitherto isolated in many separate volumes, has been woven into the whole and some new information established regarding them.[2]

The notes, it is hoped, will sufficiently indicate the sources used and enable the reader to test the treatment of the subject, or guide him to sources by which he may form his own judgment if desired.

In the matter of maps, the very complete apparatus of maps in Mr. Whitehead's *Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France*, has greatly lightened my task, and I express my cordial thanks to Mr. Whitehead and Messrs. Methuen & Co., his publishers, for permission to reproduce those in that work. My thanks are also due to M. Ch. de Coynart and MM. Firmin Didot et Cie for permission to reproduce the map illustrating the battle of Dreux from the late Commandant de Coynart's work entitled *L'Année 1562 et la bataille de Dreux*; and to M. Steph. C. Gigon, author of *La bataille de Jarnac et la campagne de 1569 en Angoumois*, for permission to use his two charts of [xii]
the battle of Jarnac. Those illustrating the Tour of the Provinces in 1564-66, the march of the duke of Alva and Montgomery's great raid in Gascony are my own. Some lesser maps and illustrations are from old prints which I have gathered together, in the course of years, except that illustrating the siege of Havre-de-Grace and the large picture of the battle of St. Denis, which have been photographed from the originals in the Record Office.

During the preparation of this volume, which has entailed two prolonged visits to Paris and other parts of France, and to London, I have become the debtor to many persons. Among those of whose courtesy and assistance I would make special acknowledgment are the following: His Excellency, M. Jean-Jules Jusserand, French ambassador at Washington; M. Henri Vignaud, chargé d'affaires of the American legation in Paris; MM. Charles de la Roncière and Viennot of the Bibliothèque Nationale; MM. Le Grand and Viard of the Archives Nationales, where I chiefly worked in the K. Collection. At the Record Office, Mr. Hubert Hall and his assistant, Miss Mary Trice Martin, were unfailing in the aid given me. For the transcript of the "Discorso sopra gli humori del Regno di Francia," from the Barberini Library in Rome, I am indebted to P. Franz Ehrle, prefect of the Vatican archives. I also hold in grateful memory the friendship and assistance of the late Woodbury Lowery, author of *The Spanish Settlements within the Present Limits of the United States: Florida* (1562-74), New York, 1905, with whom I was a fellow worker at the Archives Nationales in the spring and early summer of 1903.

Finally, I owe much to the suggestive criticism of my friend and colleague, Professor Ferdinand Schevill, and my friends, Professor Herbert Darling Foster, of Dartmouth College, and Professor Roger B. Merriman, of Harvard University, each of whom has read much of the manuscript.

JAMES WESTFALL THOMPSON

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
January 1909

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CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING OF THE HUGUENOT REVOLT. THE CONSPIRACY OF AMBOISE

The last day of June, 1559, was a gala day in Paris. The marriages of Philip II of Spain with Elizabeth of France, daughter of King Henry II and Catherine de Medici, and that of the French King's sister, Marguerite with Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, were to be celebrated. But "the torches of joy became funeral tapers"[3] before nightfall, for Henry II was mortally wounded in the tournament given in honor of the occasion.[4] It was the rule that challengers, in this case the King, should run three courses and their opponents one. The third contestant of the King had been Gabriel, sieur de Lorges, better known as the count of Montgomery, captain of the Scotch Guard,[5] a young man, "grand et roidde," whom Henry rechallenged because his pride was hurt that he had not better kept his seat in the saddle in the first running. Montgomery tried to refuse, but the King silenced his objections with a command and [2]
reluctantly[6] Montgomery resumed his place. But this time the Scotch guardsman failed to cast away the trunk of the splintered lance as he should have done at the moment of the shock, and the fatal accident followed. The jagged point crashed through the King's visor into the right eye.[7] For a minute Henry reeled in his saddle, [3]

but by throwing his arms around the neck of his horse, managed to keep his seat. The King's armor was stripped from him at once and "a splint taken out of good bigness."[8] He moved neither hand nor foot, and lay as if benumbed or paralyzed,[9] and so was carried to his chamber in the Tournelles,[10] entrance being denied to all save physicians, apothecaries, and those valets-de-chambre who were on duty. None were permitted for a great distance to come near until late in the day, when the duke of Alva, who was to be proxy for his sovereign at the marriage, the duke of Savoy, the prince of Orange, the cardinal of Lorraine, and the constable were admitted.[11]

MONTGOMERY IN TOURNAMENT COSTUME
(Bib. Nat., Estampes, *Hist. de France*, reg. Q. b. 19)

After the first moment of consternation was past, it was thought that the King would recover, though losing the sight of his eye,[12] since on the fourth day Henry recovered his senses and his fever was abated. Meanwhile five or six of the ablest physicians in France had been diligently experimenting upon the heads of four criminals who were decapitated for the purpose in the Conciergerie and the prisons of the Châtelet. On the eighth day Vesalius, Philip II's physician, who had long been with the emperor Charles V, and who enjoyed a European reputation, arrived and took special charge of the royal patient.[13] In the interval of consciousness Henry commanded that the interrupted marriages be solemnized. Before they were celebrated the King had lost the use of speech and lapsed into unconsciousness, and on the [4]

morrow of the marriages he died (July 10, 1559). On August 13 the corpse was interred at St. Denis.[14] When the ceremony was ended the king of arms stood up, and after twice pronouncing the words "Le roi est mort," he turned around toward the assembly, and the third time cried out: "Vive le roi, très-chretien François le deuzième de ce nom, par la grace de Dieu, roi de France." Thereupon the trumpets sounded and the interment was ended.[15] A month later, on September 18, Francis II was crowned at Rheims. Already Montgomery had been deprived of the captaincy of the Scotch Guard and his post given to "a mere Frenchman," much to the indignation of the members of the Guard.[16]

DEATHBED OF HENRY II

A. Catherine de Medici
B. Cardinal of Lorraine
C. Constable Montmorency
D. Couriers
E. Courtiers
F. Physicians

The reign of Henry II had not been a popular one. He had neither the mind nor the [5]
application necessary in public affairs.[17] On the very day of the accident the English ambassador wrote to Cecil: "It is a marvel to see how the noblemen, gentlemen, and ladies do lament this misfortune, and contrary-wise, how the townsmen and people do rejoice."[18] The wars of Henry II in Italy and in the Low Countries had drained France of blood and treasure, so that the purses of the people were depleted by an infinity of exactions and confiscations; offices and benefices had been bartered, even those of justice, and to make the feeling of the people worse, Henry II was prodigal to his favorites.[19] Finally the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) was regarded as not less disadvantageous than dishonorable.[20]

Meanwhile much politics had been in progress.[21] The new king was not yet sixteen years of age.[22] He was of frail health and insignificant intellect, being quite unlike his wife, the beautiful and brilliant Mary Stuart, who was a niece of the Guises, Francis, duke of Guise, and his brother Charles, cardinal of Lorraine, who had been in no small favor under Henry II. Even in the king's lifetime the ambition of the Guises had been a thing of wonderment and his unexpected death opened before them the [6]
prospect of new and prolonged power. Henry II had scarcely closed his eyes when the duke of Guise and the cardinal of Lorraine took possession of the person of Francis II and conducted him to the Louvre, in company with the queen-mother, ignoring the princes of the blood, the marshals, the admiral of France, and "many Knights of the Order, or grand seigneurs who were not of their retinue." There they deliberated without permitting anyone to approach, still less to speak to the King except in the

presence of one of them. Francis II gave out that his uncles were to manage his affairs.[23] In order to give color to this assumption of authority, as if their intention was to restore everything to good estate again, the Guises recalled the chancellor Olivier, who had been driven from office by Diane de Poitiers, Henry II's mistress.[24]

Even before these events the Guises had shown their hand, for on the day of Henry II's decease the constable, the cardinal Châtillon and his brother, the admiral Coligny, had been appointed to attend upon the royal corse at the Tournelles, by which maneuver they were excluded from all active work and the way was cleared for the unhampered rule of the King's uncles. Rumor prevailed that D'Andelot, the third of the famous Châtillon brothers, was to be dismissed from the command of the footmen and the place be given to the count de Rochefoucauld.[25] Before the end of the month the duke of Guise was given charge of the war office and the cardinal of Lorraine that of finance and matters of state.[26] At the same time, on various pretexts, the princes of [7]
the blood were sent away,[27] the prince of Condé to Flanders, ostensibly to confer with Philip II regarding the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis,[28] the prince of La Roche-sur-Yon and the cardinal Bourbon to conduct Elizabeth of France into Spain, so that by November "there remained no more princes with the King save those of Guise,"[29] who had influential agents in the two marshals, St. André[30] and Brissac.[31]

Much depended upon the attitude of Antoine of Bourbon, sieur de Vendôme and [8]
king of Navarre, who was first prince of the blood, and the person to whom the direction of affairs would naturally fall. At the time of Henry II's death he was in Béarn, whither La Mare, the King's valet-de-chambre, was sent to notify him,[32] the Guises having shrewdly arranged to have the ground cleared of the opposition of the Bourbons and Châtillons when he should arrive.[33]

But not all the opposition had been overcome. While Henry II had been generous to the Guises, he had been even fonder of the constable Montmorency, a bluff, hearty man of war, who became the royal favorite upon the fall of the admiral Hennebault, after the death of Francis I.[34] Montmorency was the uncle of the three Châtillons, Odet, the cardinal-bishop of Beauvais, Gaspard, the admiral Coligny, and François de Châtillon, sieur d'Andelot, and the King was openly accused of having made a disadvantageous peace in order to protect the constable and secure the ransom of Coligny, who was captured at the battle of St. Quentin.[35] In order to prevent the constable and the king of Navarre from meeting one another and concerting an arrangement, the Guises contrived Montmorency's summary dismissal from court,[36] Francis II at their instigation sending him word to retire at once (August 15). The old war-dog[37] took the affront gallantly, and like an artful courtier said that he was glad [9]
to be relieved of active duties on account of his age.[38] In the absence of the princes of the blood, the opposition to the Guises gathered around Montmorency and the Châtillons, the faction for a short time taking its name from the constable's title, being known as "connestablistes."[39] The political line of division was drawn very sharply, and the growing influence of Huguenot teachings gave it a religious accentuation as well. The less significant portion of the noblesse was inclined to repose after the long wars and was indifferent to politics; but the upper nobility were eager partisans, either having hopes of preferment or being, in principle, opposed both to the usurpation and the religious intolerance of the Guises.[40]

As to the clergy, its members almost without exception were supporters of the faith and the government of the Guises. The mass of the people as yet were disregarded by both factions, but were soon to come forward into prominence for financial and other reasons.[41] Henry II, unlike his father, had never suffered French Protestantism to [10]
flourish,[42] but, on the contrary, had undertaken rigorous repressive measures. The edicts of Paris (1549), of Fontainebleau (1550), and of Chateaubriand (1551), made the Huguenots[43] subject to both secular and ecclesiastical tribunals.

[11]

The Protestant issue was both a religious and a political one, for to many men it seemed impossible to alter the religious beliefs of the time without destruction of the state. Francis I recognized this state of things in the rhymed aphorism:

Un roi
Une loi
Une foi

and his son rigidly sustained the dictum. The Edict of Compiègne, of July 24, 1557[44] imposed the death penalty upon those who publicly or secretly professed a religion other than the Catholic apostolic faith; the preamble declaring that "to us alone who have received from the hand of God the administration of the public affairs of our realm," clearly shows the intimate relation of the French state and the French church. It is significant that the *Chambre ardente* was established to prosecute the Huguenots in Henry II's reign.[45]

Ever since the duke of Alva had been in Paris the impression had prevailed that [12]
Henry II and Philip II purposed to establish the Inquisition in France,[46] and that the project had been foiled by the French king's sudden death. The Huguenots were convinced of it and keen politicians like the prince of Orange and Count Egmont taxed Granvella with the purpose in 1561.[47] What the government did do has been carefully stated by another:

> The Government largely increased the powers of the Ecclesiastical Courts, and, *pari passu*, detracted from those of the regular Law Courts called the Parlements. The Parlement of Paris protested not only against the infringement of its privileges, but against conversion by persecution, and the same feelings existed at Rouen, where several members had to be excluded for heretical opinions. The introduction of the Spanish form of inquisition, under a bull of Paul IV, in 1557, still further exasperated the profession. The Inquisitors were directed to appoint diocesan tribunals, which should decide without appeal. The Parlement of Paris flatly refused to register the royal edict, and continued to receive appeals. The finale was the celebrated Wednesday meeting of the assembled chambers, the Mercuriale, where the King in person interfered with the constitutional freedom of speech, and ordered the arrest of the five members, thus giving his verdict for the ultra-Catholic minority of Parlement against the moderate majority. Marshal Vieilleville, himself a sound Catholic, strongly dissuaded this course of action. Its result was that one of the most influential elements of the State was not indeed brought into connection with Reform, but as placed in an attitude of hostility to the Government, and as the grievance was the consequence of the religious policy of the Crown, it had at all events a tendency to bring about a *rapprochement* between the Reformers and the judicial classes.[48]

[13]

EXECUTION OF DU BOURG

(Tortorel and Perissin)

Five of the advocates of the Parlement of Paris, of whom Du Bourg and Du Four were the most prominent, protested against this action, both because of its intolerance and because they believed it to be a political measure, at least in part, and were put under arrest for this manifestation of courage. Men reasoned very differently regarding this edict. The politicians and intense Catholics regarded it as necessary, both to preserve the church and in order to suppress those seditious spirits, who, under color of religion, aimed to alter or subvert the government. Others, who had no regard either for policy or religion, likewise approved of it, not as tending to extirpate the Protestants, for they believed it would rather increase their numbers, but because they hoped to be enriched by confiscations and that the King might thereby be enabled to pay his debts, amounting to forty-two millions, according to Castelnau, and thus restore his finances.[49] The trial of the parliamentary councilors was postponed for some time on account of Henry II's death, but soon afterward they were brought before "the bishops and Sorbonnists."[50] Du Four, upon retraction, was suspended from office for five years;[51] three others were fined and ignominiously punished; but Du Bourg[52] was condemned and executed on December 23, 1559, in spite of the solicitations of [14] Marguerite, wife of the duke of Savoy, and the count palatine who wrote to the King for his life.[53]

At the same time the measures of the government were redoubled. In November, 1559, a new edict ordained that all who went to conventicles, or assisted at any private assemblies, should be put to death, and their houses be pulled down and never rebuilt. By special decree the provost of the city was authorized, because Huguenot sessions were more frequent in Paris and its suburbs than elsewhere, to proclaim with the trumpet that all people who had information of Protestant assemblies should notify the magistrates, on pain of incurring the same punishment; and promise of pardon and a reward of five hundred livres was to be given to every informer. The *commissaires des quartiers* of Paris were enjoined to be diligent in seeking out offenders and to search the houses of those under suspicion from time to time using the *archers de la ville* for that purpose. Letters-patent were also given to the lieutenant-criminal of the Châtelet and certain other judges chosen by the cardinal of Lorraine to judge without appeal. The curés and vicars in the parishes were to excommunicate all those who had knowledge of Protestant doings and failed to report them.[54] In order to discover those who were Calvinists, priests bore the host (*corpus Domini*) through the streets and images of the Virgin were set up at the street corners, and all who refused to bow the head and bend the knee in adoration were arrested.[55] Similar measures were adopted in Poitou, at Toulouse, and at Aix in Provence where the double enginery of state and church was brought to bear in the suppression of heresy.[56] So great was the volume of judicial business as a result of these new measures that four criminal chambers were established at the end of the year, one to try offenses carrying the death penalty, the second for trial of those who might be condemned to make *amende honorable*, the third to judge those who might be publicly burned, the last to punish various other [15] offenses.[57] The saner Catholic opinion, as, for example, that of Tavannes, the brilliant cavalry leader, reprobated this recourse to extraordinary tribunals on the ground that the judging of criminals by special commissioners, who were persons chosen according to the passion of the ruler, was bound to be unjust or tyrannical, and that those counselors who were drawn from the courts of the parlements to be so employed offended their consciences and mingled in that which did not pertain to them. Tavannes justified his contention, legally as well as morally, on the ground that the King, being a party in the cause could not justly change the ordinary judges.[58]

The assassination of Minard, vice-president of the Grand Chamber of the Parlement of Paris, and one of the judges, who was shot in his coach[59] on the night of December 18, the same day that Du Bourg was degraded, was the protest against this order of things.[60] The murder was committed in such a way that the author of it could

never be discovered.[61] This was followed by that of Julien Frène, a messenger of the Parlement, while bearing some papers and instructions relating to the prosecution of certain Protestants. These two crimes undoubtedly hardened the government[62] and [16]
hastened the prosecution of Du Bourg, who was put to death just a week later, on December 23, and led to some new regulations. In order to protect the Parlement, it was commanded to adjourn before four o'clock, from St. Martin's Eve (November 10) until Easter; a general police order forbade the carrying of any firearms whatsoever[63] and in order to prevent their concealment, the wearing of long mantles or large hunting-capes was forbidden.[64]

It is to be observed that the Huguenots were concerted not only for religious, but for political interests. The distinction was fully appreciated at the time, the former being called "Huguenots of religion" and the latter "Huguenots of state."[65] The former were Calvinists who were resolved no longer to endure the cruelties of religious oppression; the latter—mostly nobles—those opposed to the monopoly of power enjoyed by the Guises.[66] The weight of evidence is increasingly in favor of the view [17]
that the causes of the Huguenot movement were as much if not more political and economic than religious.

> It was only in the general dislocation and *désœuvrement* of society that followed the cessation of the foreign wars that the French began to realize the weight of the burdens which their governmental system laid upon them. Until the religious sense gave a voice to the dumb discontent, social or political, first in the Huguenot rising and afterward in the outbreak of the League, there was little to show the real force of the opposition to the established order.[67]

Abstractly considered, the religious Huguenots were not very dangerous to the state so long as they confined their activity to the discussion of doctrine. This could not easily be done, however, nor did the opponents of the church so desire; for the church was a social and political fabric, as well as a spiritual institution, and to challenge or deny its spiritual sovereignty meant also to invalidate its social and political claims, so that the whole structure was compromised. Thus the issue of religion raised by the Huguenots merged imperceptibly into that of the political Huguenots, who not only wanted to alter the foundations of belief, but to change the institutional order of things, and who used the religious opposition as a means to attack the authority of the crown. The most active of this class were the nobles, possessed of lands or bred to the profession of arms, whom a species of political atavism actuated to endeavor to recover that feudal power which the noblesse had enjoyed before the powerful kings like Louis IX and Philip IV coerced the baronage; before the Hundred-Years' War ruined them; before Louis XI throttled the League of the Public Weal in 1465. The weakness of Francis II, the minority of the crown under Charles IX, and, above all, the [18]
dissatisfaction of the princes of the blood and the old aristocracy, like the Montmorencys, with the upstart pretensions and power of the Guises—these causes united to make the Huguenots of state a formidable political party. Religion and politics together provoked the long series of civil wars whose termination was not until Henry IV brought peace and prosperity to France again in 1598.[68]

It is necessary to picture the state of France at this time. The French were not essentially an industrial or commercial nation in the sixteenth century. France had almost no maritime power and its external commerce was not great. The great majority of the French people was composed of peasants, small proprietors, artisans, and officials. If we analyze city society, we find first some artisans and small merchants—the bourgeois and the *gens-de-robe* forming the upper class. The towns had long since ceased to govern themselves. Society was aristocratic and controlled by the clergy and nobility. The upper clergy was very rich. High prelates were all grand seigneurs, while the lower clergy was very dependent. Monks abounded in the towns, and the curates possessed a certain influence. The most powerful class was the nobles, seigneurs, and gentlemen, who possessed a great portion of the rural properties, and still had fortified castles. They were wholly employed either at court or in war, or held appointments as

governors of provinces and captains of strongholds. The nobles alone constituted the regular companies of cavalry, that is to say, the dominant element of the army. This class was therefore of influence in the state and the most material force in society. The government was an absolute monarchy. The king was theoretically uncontested master and obeyed by all; he exercised an arbitrary and uncontrolled power, and could decide according to his pleasure, with reference to taxes, laws, and affairs both of the state and of the church, save in matters of faith. He named and revoked the commissions of all the governors and acted under the advice of a council composed of the princes of the blood and favorites. But this absolute authority was still personal. The king was only [19] obeyed upon condition of giving the orders himself. There was no conception of an abstract kingship. If the king abandoned the power to a favorite, the other great personages of the court would refuse to obey, and declare that the sovereign was a prisoner. Everything depended upon a single person. No one thought of resisting Francis I or Henry II because they were men grown at their accession. But after 1559 we find a series of royal infants or an indolent monarch like Henry III. Then began the famous rivalries between the great nobles, rivalries out of which were born the political parties of the times, in which the Guises, the Montmorencys, and the famous Châtillon brothers figure so prominently.

Fundamentally speaking, the aims of both classes of Huguenots were revolutionary, and were directed, the one against the authority of the mediaeval church, the other against the authority of the French monarchy. The latter was a feudal manifestation, not yet republican. The republican nature of early political Huguenotism has been exaggerated. There was no such feeling at all as nearly as 1560,[69] and even at the height of Huguenot activity and power in 1570-72, most men still felt that the state of France was *vrayement monarchique*,[70] and that the structure of society and the genius of the people was strongly inclined to the form of government which eight centuries of development had evolved; that it was searching for false liberty by perilous methods to seek fundamentally to alter the state.[71] In a word, most political Huguenots in 1560 were reformers, not revolutionists; the extremists were Calvinist zealots and those of selfish purposes who were working for their own ends. For in every great movement there are always those who seek to exploit the cause. Mixed with both classes of Huguenots were those who sought to fish in troubled waters, who, under the guise of religion or the public good, took occasion to pillage and rob all persons, of whatever [20] degree or quality; who plundered cities, pulled down churches, carried off relics, burnt towns, destroyed castles, seized the revenues of the church and the king, informed for the sake of reward, and enriched themselves by the confiscated property of others. Similar things are not less true of the Catholics. For there were zealots and fanatics among them also, who under pretext of religion and patriotism were guilty of great iniquity and heaped up much ill-gotten wealth.[72]

The ascendency of the Guises quite as much as the suppressive measures of the government against Calvinism served to bring this disaffection to a head. The issues, either way, cannot be separated. The practical aims of the Guises were large enough to create dismay without it being necessary to believe that as early as 1560 they aimed to secure the crown by deposing the house of Valois. It was unreasonable to suppose, though it proved to be so in the end, that the four sons of Henry II would all die heirless, and even in the event of that possibility, the house of Bourbon still remained to sustain the principle of primogeniture.

The Guises came from Lorraine, their father having been brother of the old duke of Lorraine; and through their mother they were related to the house of Bourbon. They were thus cousins-german of the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé and related to the King and the princes of the blood. Their income, counting their patrimony, church property, pensions and benefits received from the king, amounted to 600,000 francs (nearly $500,000 today), the cardinal of Lorraine alone having the disposal of half that sum. This wealth, united with the splendor of their house, their religious zeal, the popularity of the duke of Guise, and the concord which prevailed among them, put

them ahead of all the nobles of the realm. The provincial governments and the principal offices were in their hands or those of their partisans. [21]

The cardinal, who was the head of the house, was in the early prime of life. He was gifted with great insight which enabled him to see in a flash the intention of those who came in contact with him; he had an astonishing memory; a striking figure; an eloquence which he was not loath to display, especially in politics; he knew Greek, Latin, and Italian, speaking the last with a facility that astonished even Italians themselves; he was trained in theology; outwardly his life was very dignified and correct, but, like many churchmen of the time he was licentious. His chief fault was avarice, and for this he was execrated. His cupidity went to criminal limits, and coupled with it was a duplicity so great that he seemed almost never to tell the truth. He was quick to take offense, vindictive, envious. His death would have been as popular as that of Henry II.[73]

On the other hand, the duke of Guise was a man of war, famed as the recoverer of Calais and the captor of Metz. He was as popular as his brother was otherwise. But, like him, he was avaricious stealing even from his own soldiers.[74] According to their opponents the ambition of the Guises was not to be content with the throne of France merely. The throne of St. Peter and the crown of Naples were also believed to be goals of their ambition, the cardinal of Lorraine aspiring to the first and his brother, the duke, aspiring to the other in virtue of the relationship of the Guises to the house of Anjou, one-time occupants of the Neapolitan throne.[75] Even this programme was to be excelled. Their enterprises in Scotland in favor of Mary Stuart[76] are known to every student of English history; and after having vanquished Scotland many of the German princes feared that they might move their forces into Denmark in order to put the duke of Lorraine, their relative and the brother-in-law of the king of Denmark, into possession of the kingdom.[77]

"La tyrannie guisienne"[78] was a practical ascendency, not a mere fiction of their opponents. As uncles of Francis II, destined morally to be a minor always, owing to his weakness of will and mediocre ability, having in their hands the chief offices of state, the Guises proceeded to build up a system of government wholly their own, not only in central but in provincial affairs, to compass which the removal of the constable and the princes of the blood from the vicinity of the King was the first step. Then followed an attempt to acquire control of the provincial governments. Montmorency, the late constable, was deprived of the government of Languedoc;[79] the governments of Touraine and Orleans, in the very heart of France, were given to the duke of Montpensier and the prince de la Roche-sur-Yon. Trouble arose, though, in January, 1560, when the Guises excluded the prince of Condé from the government of Picardy and gave it to the marshal Brissac, although "the office had been faithfully administered by his predecessors."[80] [22]

The cardinal of Lorraine's position with reference to the finances enabled him to provide the Guise faction with the resources necessary to back up its political intentions.[81] The onerous taxation of Francis I had been increased by Henry II, both the taille and the gabelle, the collection of which had caused a fierce outbreak at Bordeaux in the middle of the last reign; loans were resorted to, "not without great suspicion of their being applied to the King's finances;" and the wages of the soldiers in garrisons and officers withheld.[82] This condition of things naturally drew the constable[83] and his partisans toward the prince of Condé, who vainly endeavored to persuade the king of Navarre, as first prince of the blood, and therefore the natural supporter of the crown instead of the Guises, to take a firm stand, Condé especially representing to him how great a humiliation it was to the crown that the administration of the kingdom should fall so completely into the hands of the "foreigners" of Lorraine; that, considering the weakness of the King, the fact that the provincial governorships and those of the frontier fortresses and the control of finances (which enabled the Guises to subject the judiciary to their devotion) were in their hands, foreboded ill to France. [23]

Antoine of Bourbon listened to the complaints against the the Guises, but did little. At this time he was forty-two years of age. He was tall of stature, well-knit, robust; affable to everybody without affectation or display. His manners were open and frank, and his generosity was so great that he was always in debt. By the two merits of urbanity and generosity he made a superficial impression that did not last. In speech he was vain, and imprudent and inconstant in word and deed, not having the strength of will to adhere to a fixed purpose. He was suspected of indifference to religion and even of impiety at this time because he renounced the mass, though it was generally thought that this was with the purpose of making himself chief of the Huguenot party and not for religious zeal. The Protestants themselves called him a hypocrite.[84] Antoine would not make common cause with the constable partly from natural vacillation of character, partly because he believed that the constable had not supported his claims to the kingdom of Navarre, which he had been in hopes of recovering during the late negotiations at Cateau-Cambrésis.[85] With the conceit of a weak man in a prominent position, the king of Navarre entertained schemes of his own, which he proceeded to develop. His purpose was to play Spain and England against one another, in the hope [24] that he either might persuade Philip II to restore the kingdom of Navarre to him by a firm advocacy of Catholicism in France, which, of course, prevented him from affiliating with the Huguenot party to which Condé and the Châtillons were attached; or, in the event of failure in this, to side with the Huguenots and enlist English support. Accordingly, shortly after his arrival at the court from Béarn, on August 23, 1559, Antoine sent a gentleman to Throckmorton, the English ambassador in France, desiring him to meet him "in cape" in the cloister of the Augustine Friars on that night. When they met, after a long declaration of his affection for Elizabeth, he said that he would write to her with his own hand, since he would trust no one except himself, for if either the Guises or the Spanish ambassador knew of it, "it would be dangerous to both and hinder their good enterprise."[86]

In the interval, while waiting to hear from the English queen, Antoine of Bourbon, who had been coldly received at court, found that there was no room for a third party between those of the constable and the Guises.[87] At the same time the latter were made fully aware of his doings through the treachery of D'Escars, his chamberlain and special favorite,[88] and shrewdly schemed to rid themselves of his presence by sending him to Spain as escort for Elizabeth, the celebration of whose marriage (by proxy) to the King of Spain had come to such a fatal termination, and whose departure had been necessarily delayed by her father's death.[89] In order to bait the hook the [25] Guises represented to the beguiled king of Navarre that the opportunity was a most excellent one to urge his claims to his lost kingdom, and called in Chantonnay, the Spanish ambassador in France, to enforce this argument.[90]

The spirit of unrest in France, both political and religious, was so great that only a [26] head was wanting, not members, in order to bring things to a focus. The whole of Aquitaine and Normandy was reported, in December, 1559, to be in such "good heart" as to be easily excited to action if they perceived any movement elsewhere;[91] in February, 1560, the turbulence in Paris was so great that Coligny was appointed to go thither in advance of the King's entrance "for the appeasing of the garboil there."[92] In order to repress this spirit of rebellion the government diligently prosecuted the Huguenots.[93] The Guises hoped that the severity exercised during the last few months in Paris and many other cities against persons condemned for their religion, of whom very great numbers were burnt alive,[94] would terrify the Calvinists and the political [27] Huguenots into obedience. But on the contrary, local rebellion increased. At Rouen, at Bordeaux, and between Blois and Orleans, Huguenots arrested by the King's officers were rescued by armed bands, in some cases the officers being killed. Indeed, so common did these practices become that they were at last heard of without surprise.[95]

> Imagine a young king [wrote the Venetian ambassador] without experience and without authority; a council rent by discord; the royal

> authority in the hands of a woman alternately wise, timid, and irresolute, and always a woman; the people divided into factions and the prey of insolent agitators who under pretense of religious zeal trouble the public repose, corrupt manners, disparage the law, check the administration of justice, and imperil the royal authority.[96]

The interests of the religious Huguenots and the political Huguenot's continued to approach during the autumn and winter of 1559-60. In order to make head against the usurpation of the Guises,[97] which they represented as a foreign domination, the latter contended that it was necessary to call the estates of France in order to interpret the laws, just as the Calvinists contended for an interpretation of the Scriptures. The [28] contentions of the Huguenots, the tyrannical conduct of the Guises, the menaces which they did not hesitate to utter against the high nobles of the realm, the retirement into which they had driven the constable, the removal of the princes of the blood which they had brought about upon one pretext or another, the contempt they expressed for the States-General, the corruption of justice, their exorbitant financial policy, the disposal of offices and benefices which they practiced—all these causes, united with religious persecutions, constituted a body of grievances for which redress inevitably would be demanded. The question was, How? The leaders of the Huguenots—and the term is used even more in a political sense than in a religious one—were not ignorant of the history of the Reformation in Germany, nor unaware of the fact that politics had been commingled with religion there.[98] The question of ways and means being laid before the legists of the Reformation and other men of renown in both France and Germany, it was answered that the government of the Guises could be *legally* opposed and recourse made to force of arms, provided that the princes of the blood, who, in such case had legitimate right to bear rule in virtue of their birth, or any one of their number, could be persuaded to endeavor to do so.[99] But the attempt necessarily would have to be of the nature of a *coup de main*, for the reason that the King was in the hands of the Guises and the council composed of them and their partisans. After long deliberation it was planned, under pretext of presenting a petition to the King, to seize the cardinal of Lorraine and the duke of Guise, then to assemble the States-General for the purpose of inquiring into their administration, and before them to prosecute the ministers for high treason.[100] Three classes of men found themselves consorting together in this movement: those actuated by a sentiment of patriotism, [29] conceiving this to be the right way to serve their prince and their country; second, those moved by ambition and fond of change; finally, zealots who were filled with religious enthusiasm and a wish to avenge the intolerance and persecution which they and theirs had suffered.[101] For such an enterprise Louis of Bourbon, the prince of Condé, was the logical leader, both because of his position as a prince of the blood and on account of his resentment toward the Guises for having been excluded from the government of Picardy. But the prince, when besought to attempt the overthrow of the Guises for the deliverance of the King and the state, in view of the dubious conduct of his brother, concluded that it would be too perilous to the cause for him to be overtly compromised, in event of failure.[102] Montmorency was not possible as a leader, for his religious leanings were in no sense Calvinistic; he was not a prince of the blood, and therefore his contentions could not politically have the weight of Condé's; and finally, his grievance was more a personal than a party one.[103]

The conspirators found a leader in the person of a gentleman of Limousin or [30] Périgord, one Godfrey de Barry, sieur de la Renaudie,[104] who had been imprisoned at Dijon, escaped and found refuge in Switzerland;[105] he had a special grievance against the Guises, who had lately (September 4, 1558) put his brother-in-law, Gaspard de Heu, sieur de Buy, to death.[106]

The active participants were, in the main, recruited from the Breton border, Anjou, Saintonge, and Poitou, with individual captains from Picardy, Normandy, Guyenne, Provence, and Languedoc.[107] Their rendezvous was at Nantes, in a house owned, it is

said, by D'Andelot.[108] But the author of the whole daring project was the famous François Hotman, a French refugee at Geneva, and the real inspiration of the movement came from Switzerland, for the unexpected death of Henry II seemed to the French exiles in Switzerland to open the door of the mother country again to them.[109]

[31]

CONSPIRACY OF AMBOISE
SURRENDER OF THE CHÂTEAU DE NOIZAY
(Tortorel and Perissin)

The whole plot was concerted in a meeting held at Nantes on February 1, 1560,[110] which was chosen partly because of its remoteness, partly because the Parlement of Brittany being in session, the conspirators could conceal their purpose by pretending to be there on legal business. A marriage festival also helped to disguise their true purpose; and for the sake of greater caution, the principals were careful not to recognize one another in public.[111] It was determined to muster two hundred cavalry from each town in the provinces of Guyenne, Gascony, Périgord, Limousin, and Agenois. For the maintenance of this force they intended to avail themselves of the revenues and effects of the abbeys and monasteries of each province, taxing them arbitrarily and using force if unable to obtain payment in any other way.[112] The initiative was to have been taken on March 6,[113] under the form of presenting a petition to the King against the usurpation of the Guises.[114] Unfortunately for the success of the enterprise, it was too long in preparation and too widely spread to keep secret.[115] The magnitude of the plot alarmed the Guises, in spite of the full warning they had received.[116] Aside from outside sources of information, the conspiracy was revealed by one of those in it, an advocate of the Parlement named Avenelles, whose courage failed him at the critical moment.[117] Thereupon, for precaution's sake, the

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