

The Massacre of St. Bartholomew: Preceded by a History of the Religious Wars in the Reign of Charles IX (Classic Reprint)

Henry White

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Excerpt from The Massacre of St. Bartholomew: Preceded by a History of the Religious Wars in the Reign of Charles IX

In the following pages I have endeavored to describe the great struggle which devastated France in the latter half of the sixteenth century, and culminated in the memorable tragedy of St. Bartholomew's Day. The nature of that struggle, can not be fairly understood, unless the condition of the Protestants under Francis I. and his two immediate successors be taken into consideration. In those fiery times of trial the Huguenot character was formed, and the nation gradually separated into two parties, so fanatically hostile, that the extermination of the weaker seemed the only possible means of re-establishing the unity of France.

The three preliminary chapters necessarily contain many notices of the cruel persecutions which the Reformers had to suffer at the hands of the dominant Church; but the author would be much grieved were it supposed that he had written those chapters with any desire to rekindle the dying embers of religious strife. On that portion of his work he dwells with pain and regret; but such pages of history contain warnings that it may be well to repeat from time to time.

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