

CHAPTER 13

The Great Massacre

Preliminary Attacks—The Propaganda de Fide—Marchioness de Pianeza—Gastaldo's Order—Its Barbarous Execution—Greater Sorrows—Perfidy of Pianeza—The Massacre Begins—Its Horrors—Modes of Torture—Individual Martyrs—Leger collects Evidence on the Spot—He Appeals to the Protestant States—Interposition of Cromwell—Mission of Sir Samuel Morland—A Martyr's Monument.

The first labour of the Waldenses, on the departure of the plague, was the re-organisation of society. There was not a house in all their Valleys where death had not been; all ties had been rent, the family was all but extinct; but now, the destroyer being gone, the scattered inhabitants began to draw together, and to join hand and heart in restoring the ruined churches, raising up the fallen habitations, and creating anew family and home.

Other events of an auspicious kind, which occurred at this time, contributed to revive the spirits of the Waldenses, and to brighten with a gleam of hope the scene of the recent great catastrophe. The army took its departure, peace having been signed between the French monarch and the duke, and the Valleys returned once more under the dominion of the House of Savoy. A decade and a half of comparative tranquility allowed the population to root itself anew, and their Valleys and mountain-sides to be brought again under tillage. Fifteen years—how short a breathing-space amid storms so awful!

These fifteen years draw to a close; it is now 1650, and the Vaudois are entering within the shadow of their greatest woe. The throne of Savoy was at this time filled by Charles Emmanuel II., a youth of fifteen. He was a prince of mild and humane disposition; but he was counselled and ruled by his mother, the Duchess Christina, who had been appointed regent of the kingdom during his minority. That mother was sprung of a race which has ever been noted for its dissimulation, its cruelty, and its bigoted devotion to Rome. She was the daughter of Henry IV. and Mary de Medici, and granddaughter of that Catherine de Medici whose name stands so conspicuously connected with a tragedy which has received, as it merited, the execration of mankind—the St. Bartholomew Massacre. The ferocious temper and gloomy superstition of the grandmother had descended to the granddaughter. In no reign did the tears and blood of the Waldenses flow so profusely, a fact for which we cannot satisfactorily account, unless on the supposition that the sufferings which now overwhelmed them came not from the mild prince who occupied the throne, but from the cold, cruel, and

bloodthirsty regent who governed the kingdom. In short, there is reason to believe that it was not the facile spirit of the House of Savoy, but the astute spirit of the Medici, prompted by the Vatican, that enacted those scenes of carnage that we are now to record.

The blow did not descend all at once; a series of lesser attacks heralded the great and consummating stroke. Machinations, chicaneries, and legal robberies paved the way for an extermination that was meant to be complete and final.

First of all came the monks. Pestilence, as we have seen, visited the Valleys in 1630. There came, however, a second plague—not this time the pestilence, but a swarm of Capuchins. They had been sent to convert the heretics, and they began by eagerly challenging the pastors to a controversy, in which they felt sure of triumphing. A few attempts, however, convinced them that victory was not to be so easily won as they had fondly thought. The heretics made "a Pope of their Bible," they complained, and as this was a book which the Fathers had not studied, they did not know where to find the passages which they were sure would confute the Vaudois pastors; they could silence them only by banishing them, and among others whom they drove into exile was the accomplished Antoine Leger, the uncle of the historian. Thus were the people deprived of their natural leaders [Muston, p. 126]. The Vaudois were forbidden on pain of confiscation and death to purchase or farm lands outside their own narrow territories. Certain of their churches were closed. Their territory was converted into a prison by an order forbidding them to cross the frontier even for a few hours, unless on fair-days. The wholly Protestant communes of Bobbio, Villaro, Angrogna, and Rora were ordered to maintain each a mission of Capuchins; and foreign Protestants were interdicted from settling in the Valleys under pain of death, and a fine of 1,000 gold crowns upon the communes that should receive them. This law was levelled against their pastors, who, since the plague, were mostly French or Swiss. It was hoped that in a few years the Vaudois would be without ministers. Monts-de-Piete were established to induce the Vaudois, whom confiscations, bad harvests, and the billeting of soldiers had reduced to great straits, to pawn their goods, and when all had been put in pledge they were offered restitution in full on condition of renouncing their faith. Dowries were promised to young maidens on the same terms [Muston, p. 129]. These various arts had a success surprisingly small. Some dozen of Waldensian perverts were added to the Roman Church. It was plain that the good work of proselytising was proceeding too slowly. More efficient measures must be had recourse to.

The Society for the "Propagation of the Faith," established by Pope Gregory XV. in 1622, had already been spread over Italy and France. The object of

the society was originally set forth in words sufficiently simple and innocent—"De Propaganda Fide" (for the Propagation of the Faith). Since the first institution of this society, however, its object had undergone enlargement, or, if not its object, at all events its title. Its first modern designation was supplemented by the emphatic words, "et Extirpandis Haereticis" (and the Extirpation of Heretics). The membership of the society soon became numerous: it included both laymen and priests; all ranks, from the noble and the prelate to the peasant and the pauper, pressed forward to enrol themselves in it—the inducement being a plenary indulgence to all who should take part in the good work so unmistakably indicated in the one brief and pithy clause, "et Extirpandis Haereticis." The societies in the smaller towns reported to the metropolitan cities; the metropolitan cities to the capital; and the capitals to Rome, where, in the words of Leger, "sat the great spider that held the threads of this mighty web."

In 1650 the "Council of the Propagation of the Faith" was established at Turin. The chief councillors of state, the great lords of the country, and the dignitaries of the Church enrolled themselves as a presiding board. Societies of women were formed, at the head of which was the Marchioness de Pianeza. She was the first lady at court; and as she had not worn "the white rose of a blameless life," she was all the more zealous in this cause, in the hope of making expiation for the errors of the past. She was at infinite pains to further the object of the society; and her own eager spirit she infused into all under her. "The lady propagandists," says Leger [Leger, part ii., chap. 6, pp. 72-3], "distributed the towns into districts, and each visited the district assigned to her twice a week, suborning simple girls, servant maids, and young children by their flattering allurements and fair promises, and doing evil turns to such as would not listen to them. They had their spies everywhere, who, among other information, ascertained in what Protestant families disagreement existed, and hither would the propagandists repair, stirring up the flame of dissension in order to separate the husband, the children from the parents; promising them, and indeed giving them, great advantages, if they would consent to attend mass. Did they hear of a tradesman whose business was falling off, or of a gentleman who from gambling or otherwise was in want of money, those ladies were at hand with their *Dabo tibi* (I will give thee), on condition of apostacy; and the prisoner was in like manner relieved from his dungeon, who would give himself up to them. To meet the very heavy expenses of this proselytising, to keep the machinery at work, to purchase the souls that sold themselves for bread, regular collections were made in the chapels, and in private families, in the shops, in the inns, in the gambling-houses, in the streets—everywhere was alms-begging in operation. The Marchioness of Pianeza herself, great lady as she was, used every second or third day to make a circuit in search of subscriptions, even going into the taverns for that purpose ... If any person

of condition, who was believed able to contribute a coin, chanced to arrive at any hotel in town, these ladies did not fail to wait upon him, purse in hand, and solicit a donation. When persons of substance known to belong to the religion [Reformed] arrived in Turin, they did not scruple to ask money of them for the propagation of the faith, and the influence of the marchioness, or fear of losing their errand and ruining their affairs, would often induce such to comply."

While busied in the prosecution of these schemes the Marchioness de Pianezza was stricken with death. Feeling remorse, and wishing to make atonement, she summoned her lord, from whom she had been parted many years, to her bedside, and charged him, as he valued the repose of her soul and the safety of his own, to continue the good work, on which her heart had been so much set, of converting the Vaudois. To stimulate his zeal, she bequeathed him a sum of money, which, however, he could not touch till he had fulfilled the condition on which it was granted. The marquis undertook the task with the utmost goodwill [Muston, p. 130]. A bigot and a soldier, he could think of only one way of converting the Vaudois. It was now that the storm burst.

On the 25th of January, 1655, came the famous order of Gastaldo. This decree commanded all the Vaudois families domiciled in the communes of Lucerna, Fenile, Bubiana, Bricherasio, San Giovanni, and La Torre—in short, the whole of that rich district that separates their capital from the plain of Piedmont—to quit their dwellings within three days, and retire into the Valleys of Bobbio, Angrogna, and Rora. This they were to do on pain of death. They were further required to sell their lands to Romanists within twenty days. Those who were willing to abjure the Protestant faith were exempted from the decree.

Anything more inhuman and barbarous under the circumstances than this edict it would not be easy to imagine. It was the depth of winter, and an Alpine winter has terrors unknown to the winters of even more northern regions. How ever could a population like that on which the decree fell, including young children and old men, the sick and bed-ridden, the blind and the lame, undertake a journey across swollen rivers, through valleys buried in snow, and over mountains covered with ice? They must inevitably perish, and the edict that cast them out was but another form of condemning them to die of cold and hunger. "Pray ye," said Christ, when warning his disciples to flee when they should see the Roman armies gathering round Jerusalem, "pray ye that your flight be not in the winter." The Romish Propaganda at Turin chose this season for the enforced flight of the Vaudois. Cold were the icy peaks that looked down on this miserable troop, who were now fording the torrents and now struggling up the mountain tracks; but the heart of the

persecutor was colder still. True, an alternative was offered them; they might go to mass. Did they avail themselves of it? The historian Leger informs us that he had a congregation of well-nigh 2,000 persons, and that not a man of them all accepted the alternative. "I can well bear them this testimony," he observes, "seeing I was their pastor for eleven years, and I knew every one of them by name; judge, reader, whether I had not cause to weep for joy, as well as for sorrow, when I saw that all the fury of these wolves was not able to influence one of these lambs, and that no earthly advantage could shake their constancy. And when I marked the traces of their blood on the snow and ice over which they had dragged their lacerated limbs, had I not cause to bless God that I had seen accomplished in their poor bodies what remained of the measure of the sufferings of Christ, and especially when I beheld this heavy cross borne by them with a fortitude so noble?" [Leger, part. ii., chap. 8, p. 94].

The Vaudois of the other valleys welcomed these poor exiles, and joyfully shared with them their own humble and scanty fare. They spread the table for all, and loaded it with polenta and roasted chestnuts, with the milk and butter of their mountains, to which they did not forget to add a cup of that red wine which their valleys produce [Monastier, p. 265]. Their enemies were amazed when they saw the whole community rise up as one man and depart.

Greater woes trod fast upon the heels of this initial calamity. A part only of the Vaudois nation had suffered from the cruel decree of Gastaldo; but the fixed object of the Propaganda was the extirpation of the entire race, and the matter was gone about with consummate perfidy and deliberate cruelty. From the upper valleys, to which they had retired, the Waldenses sent respectful representations to the court of Turin. They described their piteous condition in terms so moving—and it would have been hard to have exaggerated it—and besought the fulfilment of treaties in which the honour and truth of the House of Savoy were pledged, in language so temperate and just, that one would have thought that their supplication must needs prevail. Alas, no! The ear of their prince had been poisoned by false-hood. Even access to him was denied them. As regarded the Propaganda, their remonstrances, though accompanied with tears and groans, were wholly unheeded. The Vaudois were but charming deaf adders. They were put off with equivocal answers and delusive promises till the fatal 17th of April had arrived, when it was no longer necessary to dissemble and equivocate [Leger, part ii., pp. 95-6].

On the day above named, April 17th, 1655, the Marquis de Pianezza departed secretly at midnight from Turin, and appeared before the Valleys at the head of an army of 15,000 men [Ibid, part iv., p. 108]. Waldensian deputies were

by appointment knocking at the door of the marquis in Turin, while he himself was on the road to La Torre, He appeared under the walls of that town at eight o'clock on Saturday evening, the same 17th of April, attended by about 300 men; the main body of his army he had left encamped on the plain. That army, secretly prepared, was composed of Piedmontese, comprising a good many banditti, who were promised pardon and plunder should they behave themselves well, some companies of Bavarians, six regiments of French, whose thirst for blood the Huguenot wars had not been able to slake, and several companies of Irish Romanists, who, banished by Cromwell, arrived in Piedmont dripping from the massacre of their Protestant fellow-subjects in their native land [Monastier, p. 267].

The Waldenses had hastily constructed a barricade at the entrance of La Torre. The marquis ordered his soldiers to storm it; but the besieged resisted so stoutly that, after three hours' fighting, the enemy found he had made no advance. At one o'clock on the Sunday morning, Count Amadeus of Lucerna, who knew the locality, made a flank movement along the banks of the Pelice, stole silently through the meadows and orchards, and, advancing from the opposite quarter, attacked the Vaudois in the rear. They faced round, pierced the ranks of their assailants, and made good their retreat to the hills, leaving La Torre in the hands of the enemy. The Vaudois had lost only three men in all that fighting. It was now between two and three o'clock on Sunday morning, and though the hour was early, the Romanists repaired in a body to the church and chanted a Te Deum [Muston, p. 135]. The day was Palm-Sunday, and in this fashion did the Roman Church, by her soldiers, celebrate that great festival of love and goodwill in the Waldensian Valleys.

The Vaudois were once more on their mountains. Their families had been previously transported to their natural fastnesses. Their sentinels kept watch night and day along the frontier heights. They could see the movements of Pianeza's army on the plains beneath. They beheld their orchards falling by the axes, and their dwellings being consumed by the torches of the soldiers. On Monday the 19th, and Tuesday the 20th, a series of skirmishes took place along the line of their mountain passes and forts. The Vaudois, though poorly armed and vastly outnumbered—for they were but as one to a hundred—were victorious on all points. The Popish soldiers fell back in ignominious rout, carrying wondrous tales of the Vaudois' valour and heroism to their comrades on the plain, and infusing incipient panic into the camp [Leger, part ii., pp. 108-9].

Guilt is ever cowardly. Pianeza now began to have misgivings touching the issue. The recollection that mighty armies had aforetime perished on these mountains haunted and disquieted him. He betook him to a weapon which

the Waldenses have ever been less able to cope with than the sword. On Wednesday, the 21st, before daybreak, he announced, by sound of trumpet at the various Vaudois entrenchments, his willingness to receive their deputies and treat for peace. Delegates set out for his camp, and on their arrival at head-quarters were received with the utmost urbanity, and sumptuously entertained. Pianeza expressed the utmost regret for the excesses his soldiers had committed, and which had been done, he said, contrary to orders. He protested that he had come into their valleys only to track a few fugitives who had disobeyed Gastaldo's order, that the higher communes had nothing to fear, and that if they would admit a single regiment each for a few days, in token of their loyalty, all would be amicably ended. The craft of the man conquered the deputies, and despite the warnings of the more sagacious, the pastor Leger in particular, the Waldenses opened the passes of their valleys and the doors of their dwellings to the soldiers of Pianeza.

Alas! alas! these poor people were undone. They had received under their roof the murderers of themselves and their families. The first two days, the 22nd and 23rd of April, were passed in comparative peace, the soldiers eating at the same table, sleeping under the same roof, and conversing freely with their destined victims. This interval was needed to allow every preparation to be made for what was to follow. The enemy now occupied the towns, the villages, the cottages, and the roads throughout the valleys. They hung upon the heights. Two great passes led into France: the one over the snows of the lofty Col Julien, and the other by the Valley of Queyras into Dauphine. But, alas! escape was not possible by either outlet. No one could traverse the Col Julien at this season and live, and the fortress of Miraboue, that guarded the narrow gorge which led into the Valley of Queyras, the enemy had been careful to secure [Leger, part ii., p. 110]. The Vaudois were enclosed as in a net—shut in as in a prison.

At last the blow fell with the sudden crash of the thunderbolt. At four o'clock on the morning of Saturday, the 24th of April, 1655, the signal was given from the castle-hill of La Torre. [So says Leger, who was an eye-witness of these horrors]. But who shall rehearse the tragedy that followed? "It is Cain a second time," says Monastier, "shedding the blood of his brother Abel" [Monastier, p. 270]. On the instant a thousand assassins began the work of death. Dismay, horror, agony, woe in a moment overspread the Valleys of Lucerna and Angrogna. Though Pandemonium had sent forth its fiends to riot in crime and revel in blood, they could not have outdone the soldiers of the Propaganda. Though the victims climbed the hills with what speed they could, the murderer was on their track. The torrents as they rolled down from the heights soon began to be tinged with blood. Gleams of lurid light burst out through the dark smoke that was rolling through the vales, for a

priest and monk accompanied each party of soldiers, to set fire to the houses as soon as the inmates had been dispatched. Alas! what sounds are those that repeatedly strike the ear? The cries and groans of the dying were echoed and re-echoed from the rocks around, and it seemed as if the mountains had taken up a wailing for the slaughter of their children. "Our Valley of Lucerna," exclaims Leger, "which was like a Goshen, was now converted into a Mount Etna, darting forth cinders and fire and flames. The earth resembled a furnace, and the air was filled with a darkness like that of Egypt, which might be felt, from the smoke of towns, villages, temples, mansions, granges, and buildings, all burning in the flames of the Vatican" [Leger, part ii., p. 113].

The soldiers were not content with the quick dispatch of the sword, they invented new and hitherto unheard-of modes of torture and death. No man at this day dare write in plain words all the disgusting and horrible deeds of these men; their wickedness can never be all known, because it never can be all told.

From the awful narration of Leger, we select only a few instances; but even these few, however mildly stated, grow, without our intending it, into a group of horrors. Little children were torn from the arms of their mothers, clasped by their tiny feet, and their heads dashed against the rocks; or were held between two soldiers and their quivering limbs torn up by main force. Their mangled bodies were then thrown on the highways or fields, to be devoured by beasts. The sick and the aged were burned alive in their dwellings. Some had their hands and arms and legs lopped off, and fire applied to the severed parts to staunch the bleeding and prolong their suffering. Some were flayed alive, some were roasted alive, some disembowelled; or tied to trees in their own orchards, and their hearts cut out. Some were horribly mutilated, and of others the brains were boiled and eaten by these cannibals. Some were fastened down into the furrows of their own fields, and ploughed into the soil as men plough manure into it. Others were buried alive. Fathers were marched to death with the heads of their sons suspended round their necks. Parents were compelled to look on while their children were first outraged, then massacred, before being themselves permitted to die. But here we must stop. We cannot proceed farther in Leger's awful narration. There come vile, abominable, and monstrous deeds, utterly and overwhelmingly disgusting, horrible and fiendish, which we dare not transcribe. The heart sickens, and the brain begins to swim. "My hand trembles," says Leger, "so that I scarce can hold the pen, and my tears mingle in torrents with my ink, while I write the deeds of these children of darkness—blacker even than the Prince of Darkness himself" [Leger, part ii., p. 111].

No general account, however awful, can convey so correct an idea of the horrors of this persecution as would the history of individual cases; but this we are precluded from giving. Could we take these martyrs one by one—could we describe the tragical fate of Peter Simeon of Angrogna—the barbarous death of Magdalene, wife of Peter Pilon of Villaro—the sad story—but no, that story could not be told—of Anne, daughter of John Charbonier of La Torre—the cruel martyrdom of Paul Garnier of Rora, whose eyes were first plucked out, who next endured other horrible indignities, and, last of all, was flayed alive, and his skin, divided into four parts, extended on the window gratings of the four principal houses in Lucerna—could we describe these cases, with hundreds of others equally horrible and appalling, our narrative would grow so harrowing that our readers, unable to proceed, would turn from the page. Literally did the Waldenses suffer all the things of which the apostle speaks, as endured by the martyrs of old, with other torments not then invented, or which the rage of even a Nero shrank from inflicting:—"They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth."

These cruelties form a scene that is unparalleled and unique in the history of at least civilised countries. There have been tragedies in which more blood was spilt and more life sacrificed, but none in which the actors were so completely dehumanised, and the forms of suffering so monstrously disgusting, so unutterably cruel and revolting. The Piedmontese Massacres in this respect stand alone. They are more fiendish than all the atrocities and murders before or since, and Leger may still advance his challenge to "all travellers, and all who have studied the history of ancient and modern pagans, whether among the Chinese, Tartars and Turks, they ever witnessed or heard tell of such execrable perfidies and barbarities."

The authors of these deeds, thinking it may be that their very atrocity would make the world slow to believe them, made bold to deny that they had ever been done, even before the blood was well dry in the Valleys. Pastor Leger took instant and effectual means to demonstrate the falsehood of that denial, and to provide that clear, irrefragable, and indubitable proof of these awful crimes should go down to posterity. He travelled from commune to commune, immediately after the massacre, attended by notaries, who took down the depositions and attestations of the survivors and eye-witnesses of these deeds, in presence of the council and consistory of the place [Leger, part ii., p. 112]. From the evidence of these witnesses he compiled and gave to the world a book, which Dr. Gilly truly characterised as one of the most "dreadful" in existence. [The book is that from which we have so largely

quoted, entitled *Histoire Generale des Eglises Evangeliques des Vallees de Piemont ou Vaudoises*. Par Jean Leger, Pasteur et Modérateur des Eglises des Vallees, et depuis la violence de la Persecution, appele a l'Eglise Wallonne de Leyde. A. Leyde, 1669.] The originals of these depositions Leger gave to Sir Samuel Morland, who deposited them, together with other valuable documents pertaining to the Waldenses, in the Library of the University of Cambridge.

Uncontrollable grief seized the hearts of the survivors at the sight of their brethren slain, their country devastated, and their Church overthrown. "Oh that my head were waters," exclaims Leger, "and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." "It was then," he adds, "that the fugitives, who had been snatched as brands from the burning, could address God in the words of the 79th Psalm, which literally as emphatically describes their condition:--

"O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance,
Thy holy temple have they defiled;
They have laid Jerusalem on heaps.
The dead bodies of thy servants have they given
To be meat unto the fowls of heaven,
The flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth,
Their blood have they shed like water;...
And there was none to bury them!"
[Leger, part ii., p. 113].

When the storm had abated, Leger assembled the scattered survivors, in order to take counsel with them as to the steps to be now taken. It does not surprise us to find that some had begun to entertain the idea of abandoning the Valleys altogether. Leger strongly dissuaded them against the thought of forsaking their ancient inheritance. They must, he said, rebuild their Zion in the faith that the God of their fathers would not permit the Church of the Valleys to be finally overthrown. To encourage them, he undertook to lay a representation of their sufferings and broken condition before their brethren of other countries, who, he was sure, would hasten to their help at this great crisis. These counsels prevailed. "Our tears are no longer of water," so wrote the remnant of the slaughtered Vaudois to the Protestants of Europe, "they are of blood; they do not merely obscure our sight, they choke our very hearts. Our hands tremble and our heads ache by the many blows we have received. We cannot frame an epistle answerable to the intent of our minds, and the strangeness of our desolations. We pray you to excuse us, and to collect amid our groans the meaning of what we fain would utter." After this touching introduction, they proceeded with a representation of their state,

expressing themselves in terms the moderation of which contrasts strongly with the extent of their wrongs. Protestant Europe was horror-struck when it heard of the massacre.

Nowhere did these awful tidings awaken a deeper sympathy or kindle a stronger indignation than in England. Cromwell, who was then at the head of the State, proclaimed a fast, ordered a collection for the sufferers, and wrote to all the Protestant princes, and to the King of France, with the intent of enlisting their sympathy and aid in behalf of the Vaudois. [The sum collected in England was, in round numbers, 38,000 pounds. Of this, 16,000 pounds was invested, on the security of the State, to pension pastors, schoolmasters, and students in the Valleys. This latter sum was appropriated by Charles II., on the pretext that he was not bound to implement the engagements of a usurper.] One of the noblest as well as most sacred of the tasks ever undertaken by the great poet, who then acted as the Protector's Latin secretary, was the writing of these letters. Milton's pen was not less gloriously occupied when writing in behalf of these venerable sufferers for conscience' sake, than when writing "Paradise Lost." In token of the deep interest he took in this affair, Cromwell sent Sir Samuel Morland with a letter to the Duke of Savoy, expressive of the astonishment and sorrow he felt at the barbarities which had been committed on those who were his brethren in the faith. Cromwell's ambassador visited the Valleys on his way to Turin, and saw with his own eyes the frightful spectacle which the region still presented. "If," said he, addressing the duke, the horrors he had just seen giving point to his eloquence, and kindling his republican plainness into Puritan fervour, "If the tyrants of all times and ages were alive again, they would doubtless be ashamed to find that nothing barbarous nor inhuman, in comparison of these deeds, had ever been invented by them. In the meantime," he continued, "the angels are stricken with horror; men are dizzy with amazement; heaven itself appears astonished with the cries of the dying, and the very earth to blush with the gore of so many innocent persons. Avenge not thyself, O God, for this mighty wickedness, this parricidal slaughter! Let thy blood, O Christ, wash out this blood!" [The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piedmont: containing a most exact Geographical Description of the place, and a faithful Account of the Doctrine, Life, and Persecutions of the ancient Inhabitants, together with a most naked and punctual Relation of the late bloody Massacre, 1655. By Samuel Morland, Esq., His Highness' Commissioner Extraordinary for the Affairs of the said Valleys. London, 1658.]

We have repeatedly mentioned the Castelluzzo in our narrative of this people and their many martyrdoms. It is closely connected with the Massacre of 1655, and as such kindled the muse of Milton. It stands at the entrance of the Valleys, its feet swathed in feathery woods; above which is a

mass of debris and fallen rocks, which countless tempests have gathered like a girdle round its middle. From amidst these the supreme column shoots up, pillar-like, and touches that white cloud which is floating past in mid-heaven. One can see a dark spot on the face of the cliff just below the crowning rocks of the summit. It would be taken for the shadow of a passing cloud upon the mountain, were it not that it is immovable. That is the mouth of a cave so roomy, it is said, as to be able to contain some hundreds. To this friendly chamber the Waldenses were wont to flee when the valley beneath was a perfect Pandemonium, glittering with steel, red with crime, and ringing with execrations and blasphemies. To this cave many of the Vaudois fled on occasion of the great massacre. But, alas! thither the persecutor tracked them, and dragging them forth rolled them down the awful precipice.

The law that indissolubly links great crimes with the spot where they were perpetrated, has written the Massacre of 1655 on this mountain, and given it in eternal keeping to its rock. There is not another such martyrs' monument in the whole world. While the Castelluzzo stands the memory of this great crime cannot die; through all the ages it will continue to cry, and that cry our sublimest poet has interpreted in his sublime sonnet:--

"Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept Thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worhipt stocks and stones,
Forget not: in Thy book record their groans
Who were Thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundredfold, who having learned Thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe."