THE CATHOLIC HENRI IV AND THE PAPACY

1593-1610

THESIS

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This study explores Franco-Papal relations, and their effect on the French Church and State, from Henri IV's conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1593 until his death in 1610. Because Henri IV's primary concern, even in matters involving the Papacy or the Gallican Church, was to protect his kingdom from Habsburg encroachment, he was willing either to abandon his Protestant allies abroad, or to adopt reform measures, such as the decrees of the Council of Trent, that might weaken his own authority or disturb the peace of his kingdom. This caused repeated conflicts with the Counter-Reformation Popes Clement VIII and Paul V, to whom the primary enemy was always the infidel and the heretic. Nevertheless both sides realized that they needed each other to maintain their independence of Spain.
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INTRODUCTION

In 1589, Henri de Bourbon, King of Navarre, became King Henri IV of a France devastated by more than thirty years of religious wars, with no end in sight. Catholic extremists of the Ligue Sainte denied the right of the Huguenot Navarre to succeed to the French throne, and, backed by Spanish troops and money, controlled much of the kingdom, including Paris. The new French King's own ally, Queen Elizabeth, was unreliable, and her contacts with France's Huguenots could become menacing, especially should Henri ever become Catholic. The prestige of the French monarchy fell sharply under the inept rule of the final Valois Kings, who were caught in the middle between the Huguenots and the Catholic extremists. Navarre's immediate predecessor Henri III had even been driven from Paris by pro-Ligue mobs, who thought him too sympathetic toward the Huguenots. In a desperate move to recover his power, Henri III had the Ligue leaders Henri, Duke of Guise, and his brother Cardinal Guise murdered, but this only resulted in a Papal excommunication for the Cardinal's murder and the alienation of many French Catholics from their King.¹ Henri III was forced to join forces with Navarre, and the French King was himself murdered by a half-witted Dominican,

Jacques Clement, as the two kings besieged Paris in August 1589.2 The late King's Catholic followers, who were reluctant to serve a heretic king, and the Huguenots, who resented what concessions Henri IV had granted the Catholics, both soon deserted in large numbers, forcing Henri IV to raise the siege. Clearly the reassertion of royal authority and the pacification of the realm would occur only through a long and difficult process.

The moral authority of the Papacy might have aided Henri IV's task of pacifying the realm, had the French King not been deeply estranged from the Holy See. Following the massacre of St. Bartholomew, Navarre had been "converted" to Catholicism at sword-point, but he returned to Calvinism as soon as he could escape the French Court. Pope Sixtus V excommunicated Navarre, as a relapsed heretic, and barred him from the French throne in 1585, and Navarre made matters worse by becoming, in 1589, an ally of the excommunicate Henri III.3 Nevertheless, Sixtus was a moderate man, who mistrusted the intentions of the Ligue, and hoped for Navarre's conversion.4 Unfortunately, the Papal Nuncio to France, Cardinal Caetani, defied Sixtus' instructions by becoming an

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2Ibid.
3Ibid., pp. 147, 149.
open partisan of the Lique, and making no effort to negotiate with the supporters of Henri IV. Sixtus, vacillating as he was, nevertheless showed considerable sympathy for Henri IV, and independence of Spain and the Lique, but his immediate successors showed themselves wholly devoted to the Spanish-Ligue cause. Relations between the French monarchy and the Papacy reached perhaps an all time low in 1591, when Gregory XIV declared Henri IV deposed, and threatened with excommunication all of the King's followers who did not immediately forsake him. As a purely military solution to France's troubles seemed increasingly remote, Henri IV gradually came to see the need to return to the Catholic faith and be reconciled with the Papacy, in order to gain the loyalty of the vast majority of his subjects. However, such a reconciliation would have to await the coming of a more friendly, less pro-Spanish Pope.

Such a reconciliation would also permit more friendly relations with the Catholic states of Europe. At Henri IV's accession, the states of Europe split along religious lines in regard to acceptance of the Huguenot King, with Venice the only Catholic state recognizing him. If France were to continue to maintain its independence of the Habsburgs, it

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needed the support of both Protestant and Catholic states. Also, the Papacy could be a valuable intermediary in any negotiations with Spain, or any other Catholic kingdom. Finally, if Henri IV returned to Catholicism, and became reconciled with the Papacy, the Spanish could no longer pretend that their intervention in France was only a crusade against heresy.

Nevertheless, such a reconciliation could not be permitted to completely alienate England, Holland and the other Protestant states. Henri IV still needed their support against the Habsburgs, because the non-Habsburg Catholic states were too small and weak to permit an exclusively Catholic foreign policy. Nor could he alienate the Huguenots, because their acceptance of his regime was necessary for France to gain and keep the internal peace necessary to successfully resist the Habsburgs.

Whatever his true feelings in regard to religion, and to religious toleration, Henri IV's policies would have as their primary goals the frustration of Habsburg ambitions abroad, and the achievement and maintenance of peace and order at home. His policies in regard to the Papacy would be no exception. Henri IV saw the Pope primarily as a political, not a religious figure. He might become a valuable ally, but Henri IV's compliance with the Pope would never be allowed to interfere with his primary goals.
CHAPTER I

HENRI IV AND THE PAPACY TO 1593:
RELIGION AND POLITICS

For both France and its King, Henri IV, the year 1593
was a crucial one. Since the death in 1584 of François, Duke
of Anjou, the last remaining brother of the childless Henri
III, Henri of Navarre, the future Henri IV, had been heir-
apparent to the French throne. Unfortunately, Navarre was a
Huguenot. The threat of a heretic king caused Catholic ex-
tremists to form the Holy League to keep Navarre from the
throne. Following the murder of Henri III by a League sup-
porter in 1589, Navarre claimed the throne, but for four
years the League, supported by Spain, kept him from becoming
King in fact, as well as name. Finally, in 1593, the League
convoked in Paris an Estates-General for the purpose of
electing a Catholic sovereign. The King of Spain, who had
heavily supported the League with troops and money, sought to
pressure the Estates to elect his daughter Clara Eugenia Queen,
even though she was not even planning to marry a Frenchman.

1Roland Mousnier, The Assassination of Henry IV, trans-
lated by Joan Spencer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons,

2Ibid., p. 119.

3Ibid.
Thus in 1593 the Estates were considering a major break with France's tradition of a hereditary, native, male ruler, because of the religious issue. Had the Estates elected any candidate, and succeeded in making him truly King, the nature of the French monarchy would have been changed from an hereditary monarchy, under the Salic Law of succession, to an elective one. Had Henri IV continued to refuse to convert, he might never have become truly King.

The year 1593 also was crucial for the Catholic-Huguenot struggle, which had dragged on inconclusively for over thirty years. Europe in that era generally accepted the maxim of *cujus regio ejus religio*, meaning that the religion of a state was determined by its ruler. Should the League Succeed in imposing a Catholic sovereign, or Henri IV convert, Calvinism would lose what chance it still had to become the state religion. Thereafter, the question would be one of tolerance, not supremacy.

Relations between the Papacy and the French Church also reached a crucial stage in 1593. The national character of the French, or Gallican, Church had been strengthened by the Concordat of Bologna of 1516, which gave the French Kings considerable control over Church offices and revenues.

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This trend was reversed by the Council of Trent, which finally adjourned in 1563.6 The Council declared that Jesus himself had given to the Pope the title of bishop of the universal Church, but all other bishops held their title only indirectly, through the Pope's mediation. This implied that the Pope was superior to all bishops and even to Church councils, and he might even summon to Rome for trial bishops accused of serious offences.7 These claims ran directly counter to those of the Kings of France, who asserted that they derived directly from God final authority over the French Church and clergy.8 Also, the Council opposed a number of abuses of ecclesiastical patronage, such as the holding of multiple benefices, which were common practice in France. Not surprisingly, the French Kings had rejected the decrees of Trent, but on August 8, 1593, the League-dominated Estates-General adopted the proclamations of Trent relating to Church discipline as the law of the land.9 Had the League triumphed, the Gallican Church's traditional independence of Rome might have been sharply curtailed.

Finally, the year 1593 was an important one for relations between the Papacy and the French crown. The Papacy

7Ibid.
8Ibid., pp. 160-61.
9Ibid., p. 161.
had for centuries claimed the power to make and unmake secular rulers. In 1585, Sixtus V declared Navarre and Navarre's cousin the Prince of Condé excommunicated and barred from succession to the French throne, because they had both returned to heresy after converting to Catholicism in 1572. In 1591, Sixtus' successor Gregory XIV reiterated the sentence of excommunication and deposition of Navarre. These actions both provoked a storm of opposition in France, and in the 1590's there was a movement among both Catholics and Huguenots to break completely with Rome, and establish a strictly national Church. On the other hand, had the Estates succeeded in electing a replacement for Henri IV, the Pope's power to depose would have been somewhat vindicated. Also, such an elected ruler, lacking the sanction of the Salic Law, might have been more dependent on the Papacy's support than previous rulers. At any rate, there was a deep estrangement between the French monarchy and the Papacy in 1593.

Then, at St. Denis, on July 25, 1593, Henri IV took instruction in the Roman Catholic faith, and once again

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10 Sixtus V's excommunication of Navarre and Condé is in Appendix two of Mousnier, Assassination, pp. 293-99.

11 Mousnier, Assassination, p. 111.

The Estates-General, tired of Spanish bullying, finally adjourned without electing a new King. The monarchy remained on a hereditary basis. By his conversion, Henri IV had admitted that Calvinism had lost the struggle for supremacy with Roman Catholicism. Still undecided by Henri IV's conversion was the relationship of the Papacy with the French Church and crown, but Henri IV's conversion made possible a reconciliation with the Holy See.

Henri of Navarre, whose conversion was so crucial, was born at Pau, in Béarn, on December 14, 1553. His mother was Jeanne d'Albret, niece of François I, and heiress of Navarre, Béarn, and numerous other lands. His father was Antoine de Bourbon, Duke of Vendôme, and first Prince of the Blood Royal, by virtue of his descent from Robert of Clermont (died 1317), a son of Louis IX. On the death of Jeanne's father Henri d'Albret in 1555 Antoine and Jeanne became King and Queen of Navarre, which was to figure heavily in the political activities of Antoine.

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14 Roelker, Navarre, p. 99.

15 Ibid., pp. 4-9.


Although he had only obtained his crown by marriage, Antoine de Bourbon continued Henri d'Albret's intrigues to secure the return of southern Navarre, the greater part of that kingdom, which had been siezed by the King of Spain in 1512.\textsuperscript{18} Between 1555 and 1558 Antoine simultaneously carried on both open negotiations with the French King, and treasonable secret negotiations directly with the King of Spain, with the object of securing the return of southern Navarre.\textsuperscript{19} Spain feared Antoine would invade southern Navarre while Spain was making the transition of power from the retiring Charles V to his son Philip II. Accordingly, Spanish agents, at various times offered the return of Navarre, or the substitution of other kingdoms, such as Milan, or even France, if Antoine would aid the Spaniards against the King of France. However, each side suspected treachery, and insisted that the other make the first move. The secret negotiations came to nothing, when Spain's smashing victory over the French at St. Quentin in 1557 made Navarre's aid superflous.\textsuperscript{20} At about the same time, it became apparent that the French King was not going to ask for the return of Navarre in the upcoming peace with Spain at Cateau-Cambresis.\textsuperscript{21} Antoine's tortuous diplomacy had failed.

\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 5, 79-80.

\textsuperscript{19}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 108-19.

\textsuperscript{20}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 114-18.

\textsuperscript{21}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 113-14.
In 1557, while Antoine's negotiations for Navarre were breaking down, he and his wife, still nominally Catholics, began attending sermons given by pastors from Geneva. For the next five years he intermittently attended Calvinist services, sometimes in public, sympathized with Huguenots, and even corresponded with Calvin himself, but in fact Antoine shifted his religious stance with every change in the political situation. Antoine assumed particular importance at the French Court when the death of Francois II in December 1560 put the young King's brother, aged ten, on the throne as Charles IX. According to one tradition, the First Prince of the Blood should become regent. According to another, the Queen-Mother should. By a mixture of threats and promises, the Queen-Mother, Catherine de Medici, induced Antoine to waive his right to the regency, but his position as Prince of the Blood continued to make him an important personage at Court. Calvinism enjoyed a considerable upsurge in France, even at Court, from September 1561 through January 1562, but then a Catholic reaction, supported by Spain, set in. One of the immediate goals of this reaction was to win over

22Ibid., p. 123.
23Ibid., pp. 149-150.
24Ibid.
25Ibid., pp. 163-73.
Antoine, whom Catherine de Medici had made Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom. Spanish promises of a substitute kingdom for Navarre, plus the possibility of assuming the regency, which native Catholic leaders suggested, caused Antoine to commit himself to Catholicism.\(^2\) When the First War of Religion broke out, following the massacre of Huguenots at Vassy in March 1562, Antoine de Bourbon dismissed his still-Huguenot wife from Court, and went off to lead the Catholic forces.\(^2\) At the storming of Rouen in October, he was wounded and died a month later.\(^2\)

Jeanne d'Albret may have been secretly sympathetic to Calvinism as early as 1555, but she failed to commit herself for many years, and some Calvinists thought she hid her true beliefs for fear the Spanish would seize her lands.\(^2\) Finally, on December 25, 1560, Jeanne publically professed Calvinism.\(^2\) She became a Huguenot leader at the French Court, where she had joined her husband. Her Protestantism brought her into increasing conflict with Antoine, whose support for the new religion was waning, thanks to offers of aid from both native Catholic leaders, and from the Spanish. The Spanish, who offered the ambitious Antoine various territories in exchange for southern Navarre, demanded as one of their conditions that

\(^{26}\)Ibid., pp. 174-77. \(^{27}\)Ibid., p. 184.

\(^{28}\)Ibid., pp. 199-200. \(^{29}\)Ibid., pp. 127-33.

\(^{30}\)Ibid., p. 151.
he either imprison or exile his Calvinist wife. When Antoine finally did banish Jeanne from Court, he also forced her to leave young Henri behind.\(^{31}\)

Jeanne d'Albret returned to Béarn by way of Vendôme and Guyenne. During the First War of Religion (1562-63), she strengthened her control over Béarn and Navarre, but remained neutral.\(^{32}\) This neutrality was necessary to protect the person and inheritance of her son, who was forced to remain at court, and also because her territories could not be adequately defended against either the Catholic or Huguenot armies, nor against the Spanish. She corresponded with the Huguenot leader Louis, Prince of Condé, but also with Catherine de Medici, and even with the King of Spain.\(^{33}\)

Shortly after the end of the First War of Religion in 1563, Jeanne d'Albret sought to establish a state church, on the Calvinist model, in Béarn and Navarre.\(^{34}\) Unfortunately, that same year, Pope Pius IV issued a Bull excommunicating Jeanne d'Albret, and depriving her of her lands and titles.\(^{35}\) Jeanne ran the risk of having herself and her lands seized, either by French Catholics, or by Spain. Fortunately, Catherine de Medici promptly placed Jeanne and her lands under

\(^{31}\)Ibid., pp. 160-85. 
\(^{32}\)Ibid., pp. 186-97. 
\(^{33}\)Ibid., pp. 191-92, 194, 201-202, 204-206. 
\(^{34}\)Ibid., pp. 210-11, 266-67. 
\(^{35}\)Ibid., pp. 221-22.
the protection of the French crown. In return, Jeanne temporarily had to shelve her plans for making Calvinism the exclusive religion in her lands. Jeanne issued, on February 2, 1564, an edict permitting Catholic worship to continue where it had not already been suppressed, but the movable wealth of the Catholic churches and the religious orders was liquidated and the money distributed to the poor by the secular authorities.36 The Calvinists might worship wherever they were already permitted and where the Queen, Jeanne d'Albret, permitted them to worship later. Finally, all crimes committed in the name of religion, except those involving lese majesty, were pardoned.37 In the years 1566-71, Jeanne d'Albret resumed her efforts to establish Calvinism as the sole religion in her dominions.38 Serious revolts forced her to grant limited toleration to Catholics in Navarre, but in Béarn she was much more successful in establishing the Calvinist faith.39 The return of the Catholic Church to Béarn became a perennial topic in negotiations between her son and the Papacy.

A revolt of her Catholic subjects forced Jeanne d'Albret to again remain neutral during the Second War of Religion in 1567-68, but at the beginning of the Third War of Religion (1568-70) Jeanne, with her children, joined the Huguenot

36Ibid., pp. 224-25.  
37Ibid., p. 225.  
38Ibid., pp. 268-75.  
39Ibid., pp. 270-75.
leaders Condé and Admiral Gaspard de Coligny at La Rochelle.\textsuperscript{40} This time she could not remain neutral. Catherine de Medici could no longer protect her, because there was no longer a moderate Catholic faction to balance off against the extremists. Also, there were no Huguenot armies between Bearn and the Ile de France, so Jeanne's domains were vulnerable to invasion by Catholic armies. Jeanne d'Albret was to remain a leader of the Huguenots until her death a few weeks before her son's wedding in 1572.\textsuperscript{41} The Calvinist partisanship of his mother, coupled with the vacillation of his father probably contributed to Papal mistrust of Henri of Navarre.

Young Henri of Navarre had come to the French Court with his parents after the death of Francois II. When he dismissed his wife from Court, Antoine de Bourbon dismissed his son's Huguenot attendents, including Henri's first tutor La Gaucherie, and replaced them with Catholic ones. Antoine also enrolled him in the conservatively Catholic College de Navarre, where Henri of Valois, the future Henri III, Henri of Guise, and Henri of Bourbon, the future Prince of Condé, also studied.\textsuperscript{42} Following Antoine's death, Catherine de Medici took over control of the boy's education, and in 1563 she reinstated his Protestant attendents.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 291-97. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 297, 391. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{42}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 398-99. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{43}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 399.
During his stay at the French Court, which lasted until 1567, young Henri also had an opportunity for an education and had an opportunity to observe how the wily Queen-Mother Catherine de Medici preserved her power by balancing off the Catholic extremists with the Huguenots, the Guises with the Bourbons, and irrevocably to no one faction. More idealistic was her great Chancellor Michel de l'Hôpital, who advocated outright religious toleration only toward the end of his career, but always opposed the use of force in solving the religious question. He approached a theory of separation of church and state when he warned the Estates-General at St. Germain-en-Laye in 1561 that the King did not wish them to debate which religion was best, because it is not a question here of the order of religion, but of the order of the state; and many could be citizens who were not Christians: even the excommunicated does not cease to be a citizen. Compare this with Henri IV's own speech to delegates of the Calvinist churches assembled at Mantes on December 12, 1593: For the rest, you must believe that nothing lies closer to my heart than a happy union between all my subjects, whether Catholic or of your religion.


46 Speech of de l'Hôpital to the Estates-General at St. Germain-en Laye, 1561, in Ibid., p. 81.
I assure you that no one shall be able to prevent that. There will probably be some ill-inspired attempts to mar this, but I hope to deal severely with them. I assure you that the Catholics around me will maintain that union, and I shall see to it that you do not break away from them.47

At the end of his long stay at the French Court, young Henri had been exposed to a variety of religious influences, to the canny practical politics of Catherine de Medici, and to the pro-toleration ideas of Chancellor de l'Hopital.

Early in 1567, young Henri and his mother, who had returned to the French Court at Catherine de Medici's request in 1564, returned to Bearn.48 There, he returned to Calvinism, and continued his education, this time tutored by Florent Chrestien, a more eminent scholar than La Gaucherie, but also a Huguenot.49 Henri got his first military experience in the suppression of a revolt of Catholic peasants in Bearn, though he was too young to take part in the actual fighting. However, in the Third War of Religion, he and his cousin Henri, Prince of Condé, fought in the battles of Jarnac, in which Condé's father, the first Prince of Condé, was killed, and Moncontour.50 To set the seal on the peace that followed the


49Willert, pp. 55-56.

50Sedgwick, pp. 40-41.
Third War of Religion, Catherine de Medici sought to marry her daughter Marguerite to Navarre, whose royal blood made him a leading figure among the Huguenots. After some negotiations, the wedding was set for August 1572, in Paris.51

Unfortunately, Catherine de Medici's hatred and fear of the Huguenot leader Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, plus the wedding's location in fanatically Catholic Paris set the stage for tragedy. Coligny had come to the French Court at the end of the Third War of Religion, and had soon acquired a considerable influence over the impressionable young King Charles IX. He had used this influence to sway the King toward an attack on the Netherlands, which would mean war with Spain. Catherine de Medici, jealous of the Admiral's influence over her son, and fearing a disastrous war with Spain, began to plan the Admiral's death. She hired Maurevert, an experienced killer formerly in the employ of the Guise family, to murder the Admiral while the Huguenots were in Paris celebrating Navarre's wedding. She hoped that the Huguenot and extremist Catholic factions would be destroyed, and there would no longer be a threat to her power and influence. Unfortunately, Maurevert only wounded the Admiral, setting off an uproar among the Huguenot leaders, many of whom threatened not only the Guises, but the royal family as well. Fearful of ruin to

herself and to her sons, Catherine de Medici, aided by her council, persuaded the unstable Charles IX to agree to the killing of all the Huguenot leaders, except the Princes of the Blood.52

Unfortunately, the inclusion of the militantly Catholic citizenry of Paris in the plot turned what was to have been a limited proscription of Huguenot leaders into a general massacre in which thousands of Huguenots died. Thousands more died in subsequent massacres in the provinces.53

In the midst of the massacre, Charles IX summoned Condé and Navarre, informed them that only one religion would be tolerated in his kingdom, and said that their lives would be spared, if they became Catholics. Condé refused, and was nearly slain on the spot. Navarre merely asked that his conscience be respected.54 Nevertheless, Navarre was the last of his family to convert. Finally, on October 6, 1572, Navarre publically professed Catholicism.55 He then wrote to Pope Gregory XIII requesting absolution, which was granted.

For the next four years, Navarre, a virtual prisoner at Court,


53Ibid., pp. 151, 156-81.

54Ibid., p. 158.

adopted its ways, but on his escape in 1576, he returned to Calvinism and resumed his role as a Huguenot chieftain.56

Navarre was reportedly willing to return to the Roman Catholic faith as early as 1582, but his religion only assumed major importance when the Duke of Anjou's death in 1584 made Navarre the heir-apparent to Henri III.57 The Holy League, which developed rapidly in response to threat of a Huguenot King, allied itself with Spain in the Treaty of Joinville.58 Under League pressure, the weak Henri III united his cause with that of the League in the Treaty of Nemours of July 7, 1585.59 Eleven days later, a royal edict ordered the Huguenots to choose between conversion and exile, and barred Henri of Navarre from the French throne.60

Some idea of Henri of Navarre's attitude toward Catholicism during this period can be obtained from his letter of June 10, 1585 to the Swiss Catholic Cantons.61 In it, he blamed the personal ambitions of the League leaders as the true reason for the renewal of war. Against his enemies' charges of repression of Catholicism in Bearn, he cited his equally long-held territory of Navarre, which, with his

56Ibid.  57Ibid.  58Ibid.
59Mousnier, Assassination, p. 110.
60Ibid.
permission, practiced Catholicism exclusively. He added that Calvinism had been made the sole religion in Béarn before his time. Furthermore, since Béarn was a Pays d'Etat, enjoying special rights, he could make major changes only with the permission of its Estates. Nevertheless, he promised to moderate as much as he could the laws there against Catholics. Significantly, he added that if his religious views were in error, he was willing to be better instructed.62

No less conciliatory was Henri III. Even after the Edict of Nemours, the King was anxious to secure Navarre's conversion, and later that year sent several theologians to persuade him. Cavriana, the Tuscan Envoy believed Navarre, if he could keep his honor and dignity, would be glad to convert, and would destroy the power of the Guises by so doing. Unfortunately, Pope Sixtus V set back such efforts with his excommunication of Navarre and Condé.63

Both Navarre and Condé had incurred excommunication by returning to Calvinism after escaping from the French Court, but Pope Sixtus V (1585-90) had refrained from pronouncing the sentence out of suspicion of the motives of the League and respect for Henri III's wishes. However, the Edict of Nemours convinced Sixtus that a fusion of the royal and

62Ibid., pp. 11-14.

63Williams, "Abjuration," pp. 146-47.
League causes had taken place. In a Bull dated September 9, 1585, Sixtus declared Navarre and Condé relapsed heretics, excommunicated them, and declared them deprived of all their lands and titles, and of the right to succeed to any others, specifically the Kingdom of France. Their subjects were forbidden to obey them on pain of being excommunicated themselves, and Henri III was urged to proceed with the extermination of the heretics, in obedience to his coronation oath.

Navarre promptly sent to Sixtus a spirited letter of rebuttal, which won the Pontiff's grudging admiration. On October 11, Navarre sent formal letters of protest to Parliament and to the Sorbonne. In the letter to the Sorbonne, Navarre blamed France's religious troubles on the ambition of the Guises, and argued that he, Navarre, was not a relapsed heretic, because he had never been instructed in the Roman Catholic faith. He added that a heretic was one who persisted in error from ambition, whereas his own self-interest

64Ibid., pp. 147-48.


66Ibid.


68Henri of Navarre to the Sorbonne, October 11, 1585, in Henri IV, Lettres Intimes de Henri IV, ed. L. Dussieux (Versailles: Cerf et fils, 1876), pp. 67-72.
would incline him to become Catholic. He reminded the Sorbonne that Calvinism had been declared heretical only by the decrees of the Council of Trent, which the Sorbonne had never accepted. As in his letter to the Catholic cantons, Navarre indicated his willingness to take instruction in the Roman Catholic faith.69

Nevertheless, the events of the next few years set back Navarre's reconciliation with the Papacy and with the Catholic Church. On November 5, 1588, a League-dominated Estates-General, meeting at Blois, forever excluded Navarre, as a relapsed heretic, from the throne.70 In December of the same year, Henri III, tiring of League bullying, murdered the Duke and Cardinal of Guise. For his murder of a Cardinal, the King was excommunicated by Sixtus V.71

Following the assassination of Henri III, Navarre, now King Henri IV, was faced with demands by the late King's subjects for his immediate conversion. He refused, but eventually agreed to submit to a general or national council within six months. This concession cost him much Huguenot support while it failed to satisfy many Catholics, and Henri IV was forced to raise the siege of League-held Paris he and the late King had been conducting.72

69Ibid. 70Williams, "Abjuration," p. 149.
71Ibid., pp. 149-50.
72Ibid., p. 130.
Greatly aiding Navarre's cause at Rome in 1590 was the mission of the Duke of Piney-Luxembourg. Henri III's former Ambassador, the Marquis of Pisany, secured Venetian and Tuscan support for Luxembourg, and this plus Sixtus' own good-will secured a Papal audience over Spanish-League opposition. Spanish pressure caused Sixtus to ask Luxembourg to leave Rome, but the Pope later permitted his return.

Luxembourg's diplomacy was partially offset by the actions of Cardinal Caetani, Papal Legate in France from 1589. Caetani's original instructions are unknown, but probably did not include establishing himself at Paris and becoming an outspoken champion of the League. Caetani ignored the advice of Royalists Bishops Lenoncourt and Vendôme, and forbade attendance by French Bishops at an assembly the Royalists proposed to offer instruction to the King. An infuriated Sixtus was on the verge of recalling Caetani after the Legate defied new Papal orders to accept any opportunity to negotiate with the Royalists. He was kept from this step only by the pro-Spanish and pro-Caetani sentiments of the majority of his Cardinals. Nevertheless, he repeatedly considered the Legate's recall in the final months of his pontificate.

Sixtus' policy toward France underwent many shifts in 1590, but by his death on August 27, he was reportedly

73 Ibid., pp. 154-55. 74 Ibid., p. 155.
75 Ibid., pp. 153-55. 76 Ibid., p. 154.
approaching a complete break with Spain, and the dispatch of a new Legate to France. Following his death, however, Madrid secured the election of three pro-Spanish popes. Sixtus' successor was Urban VII, who lived only thirteen days. His successor, Gregory XIV elected December 5, 1590, openly supported the League with money and troops. He outraged Gallican sentiment with his issue of two Monitory Bulls, one to the clergy, one to the laity, excommunicating all Henri IV's followers who fail to abandon him (May 1591). Henri IV, though he protested such bulls, was too cautious to approve the idea of an independent Gallican Church, which his advisor Phillipe de Mornay and others seem to have desired, and which the Parlement of Tours awaited only the King's approval to proclaim. Pope Gregory XIV died on October 15, 1591, and was succeeded by Innocent IX, another Spanish sympathizer, who lived only until December 30. Then on January 30, 1592, Cardinal Ippolito Aldobrandini was elected and took the name Clement VIII.

Ippolito was the fourth son of Florentine exiles Silvestro Aldobrandini (1499-1558) and Lisa Deti. Silvestro, a

77Ibid., pp. 150-57. 78Ibid., p. 157
79Ibid. 80Ibid., p. 158
81Ibid., pp. 158-59.

legal scholar, had taken part in the expulsion of the Medici from Florence in 1527, and consequently had himself been forced to leave when the Medici returned four years later. Silvestro entered the service of various other Italian states, including the Papacy, where he served in various offices from 1548 until his dismissal in 1557. No fewer than four of his sons were to follow him into the service of the Papacy.

Ippolito began his career as a bank clerk, but obtained financial assistance to enable him to study law at Padua and Perugia, and he obtained a doctorate at Bologna. He too entered the Papal service, and obtained a succession of offices under Pius V, a great benefactor of the Aldobrandini family. Ippolito's advancement was temporarily halted by the death of Pius V and the election of Gregory XIII, but it resumed under Gregory's successor Sixtus V. Ippolito became a Cardinal in 1585, and in 1588 had been sent on an important mission to Poland, to help settle the Polish succession. His skillful handling of that mission increased his prestige tremendously and from that time onward, he was considered a serious candidate for Pope. Nevertheless, he was passed over in conclaves following the deaths of Sixtus V and his immediate successors Urban VII and Gregory XIV, due apparently

83 Ibid., 23:19.
84 Ibid., 23:19-20.
to Spain's initial opposition, to jealousy and to Italian politics. Finally, he was elected following the death of Gregory XIV's successor. 86

Not a brilliant man, Clement VIII was gentle, kindly and pious. Even after becoming Pope, he lived a life of asceticism, hard work, and extreme piety. His outstanding characteristic was great caution and timidity. 87 This was to make a reconciliation with Henri IV difficult.

Clement VIII had a weakness for his nephews Pietro Aldobrandini and Cinzio Passeri. Although he had condemned nepotism before becoming Pope, he made Cinzio and Pietro heads of his Secretariate of State in September 1592. 88 Cinzio was to specialize in the affairs of Poland, Italy and Germany, while Pietro was to specialize in those of Spain, Savoy and France. The following year, he made them both Cardinals, with Cinzio becoming known as Cardinal San Giorgio, and Pietro as Cardinal Aldobrandini. 89 Although frail, sickly and twenty years younger than Cinzio, Pietro Aldobrandini showed much greater skill at diplomacy and self-control than the hot-tempered Cinzio. Consequently, Clement VIII relied upon Pietro increasingly heavily, and in 1598, the Venetian Ambassador Giovanni Dolfin reported that whoever

86 Ibid., 23:24-25.
87 Ibid., 23:24-31, 42.
88 Ibid., 23:43-45.
89 Ibid., 23:46.
had recourse to Cardinal Aldobrandini was sure to obtain what he wished. A year later, a report by Cardinal Este claimed that all matters passed through Cardinal Aldobrandini's hands, and that all favors and graces depended upon him. Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini was to be an important figure in Franco-Papal diplomacy during his uncle's pontificate.

At Clement VIII's accession, the Papacy was aiding the League with both money and Papal troops. True to his usual caution, Clement VIII made no immediate changes. In fact, he promised further financial aid to the Spanish forces in France under the Duke of Parma and to the League forces under the Duke of Mayenne. The Pope also urged Mayenne and the League to elect a Catholic king, and appointed as Legate to France the pro-Spanish Cardinal of Piacenza (or Plaisance). However, Clement VIII soon reduced Papal troops in France to a purely nominal force, and by March 1592, the Pope himself and one-half to three fourths of the Cardinals were reportedly ready for peace.

Henri IV was likewise ready for peace. Much of France, including Paris, remained in League or Spanish hands. By 1592, many of Henri IV's followers served him very half-heartedly, and a faction among the royalist Catholics even

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90Ibid., 23:49-50.  
91Ibid., 23:50.  
92Williams, "Abjuration," p. 159.
favored replacing him with a Catholic member of the Bourbon family, should he refuse to convert. In 1592 also, the Spanish began negotiations with the League to put the Spanish King's daughter on the French throne, and by the end of the year, the Spanish had pressured Mayenne into calling an Estates-General to elect a new sovereign. Early in the following year, the Estates met in Paris. The sparsely attended Estates were clearly too divided to reach any early agreement on a ruler, but the situation remained dangerous for Henri IV. Fortunately, many of the Leaguers at the Estates tired of the conflict, and accepted a proposal of the royalist Catholics for a series of conferences at Suresnes. At one such conference on May 17, the royalist Bishop of Bourges announced Henri IV's intention to receive instruction in the Roman Catholic faith in two months.

At St. Denis, on the morning of July 23, Henri IV began his conference with several royalist prelates on the subject of his conversion. His knowledge and exposition of Scripture in defense of Calvinist theology caused the prelates to say later that they had never seen a heretic better instructed

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93 Ibid., pp. 160-64.  
94 Ibid., pp. 162-64.  
95 Ibid.  
96 L'Estoile, Memoires, 1:193.
in his errors or who defended them better. The King gave an evasive answer on the value of prayers for the dead, and appeared unconvinced on some other matters, such as the existence of Purgatory. Nevertheless, he finally submitted to the Catholic Church's doctrines, telling the prelates: "Je mets aujourd'hui mon âme entre vos mains. Je vous prie, prenez-y garde, car là où vous me faites entrer, je n'en sortirai que par la mort. . . ."\(^97\) He received conditional absolution and went to Mass.

Was Henri IV's conversion mainly an act of conscience or of policy? He was certainly aware of the political advantages of becoming Catholic and of the perils of failing to do. On September 15, 1593, he sent to his longtime ally the German Protestant Moritz, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, a declaration that gave a purely political justification for his conversion:

\begin{quote}
que s'il ne se fut pas range à la religion catholique, il se serait trouve hors d'état, et d'empêcher l'élection d'un roi, et de traiter avec la Ligue, et de tirer ses sujets de la main des Espagnols; que le premier fruit de sa conversion, au moyen de la treve a laquelle le parti catholique s'était obligé, serait l'affermissement de la paix dans le royaume, dont les resources etaient entièrement épuisées. . . .\(^98\)
\end{quote}

\(^{97}\)Ibid.

On the other hand, when in February 1594 the English Ambassador demanded to know what city his conversion had gained him, Henri IV declared, "that the sole motive which had induced him to take that step was to be found in his own conscience, for long his conscience had urged him to this resolve, and this was the most powerful cause of his conversion." If this seems hypocritical, it should be realized that he may have come to see conversion as the right course, as well as the most expedient one. His letter to some Huguenot gentlemen, written on the day of his conversion, indicated that he may not have clearly distinguished religious from political motives in his own mind. He stated that the principal reason for his conversion was,

pour la sure assurance que j'ai d'y pouvoir faire mon salut, et pour n'être en ce point different des rois mes précédateurs, qui ont heureusement et pacifiquement régné sur leurs sujets, espérant que Dieu me fera la même grâce, et que par ce moyen seraient ôtés non-seulement les prétextes, mais aussi les causes des divisions et révoltes qui minent cet Etat. . . .

Perhaps the most that can be said with certainty is that he realized that 1593 was the crucial year. Continued failure


100 Henri IV to certain gentlemen of the Protestant religion, St. Denis, July 25, 1593, Henri IV, Lettres Intimes de Henri IV, ed. L. Dussieux (Versailles: Cerf et fils, 1876), p. 191.
to convert might well prevent him from becoming King of France in fact as well as name.

Why did Henri IV delay his conversion for so long? He had a profound need to win, which had led him to needlessly risk his life in battle, even when he had no heir.\(^{101}\) Rather than bow to League demands for his conversion, Henri IV for four years tried to win his kingdom by military force. When he finally realized the necessity for his conversion, he delayed taking instruction in the Catholic faith for two months after announcing his intention to do so. Since Henri IV had probably decided already to convert, he did not need the delay to make up his mind. The most likely explanation for the delay is that he was seeking a military victory to disguise the fact that he was about to concede the League's principal demand. In early July, royalist forces captured the town of Dreux, and later that month Henri IV made his conversion at St. Denis.\(^{102}\)

In the years following his conversion, Henri IV made considerable use of a number of officials who had previously served the last Valois. These were somewhat elderly, moderate Catholics, who were essentially magistrates, rather than


\(^{102}\)Ibid., pp. 1-3, 10-13.
soldiers. Three of these officials, Pierre Jeannin, Nicolas de Neufville, Sieur de Villeroy, and Nicolas Brulart, Sieur de Sillery, would also serve Henri IV's son Louis XIII, providing considerable continuity of government.\textsuperscript{103} The families of these officials had begun their rise through municipal officeholding. By the early Sixteenth Century, the Bellievre family was established in the oligarchy controlling the municipal government of Lyons, while the Neufville-Villeroy families six times had members elected as municipal magistrates of Paris between 1429 and 1500.\textsuperscript{104} Jean Brulart, great-grandfather of Henri IV's minister Sillery, was elected a councillor of the city of Paris in 1511, while the father of Pierre Jeannin was an artisan, but also a municipal magistrate of Autun.\textsuperscript{105} The distant ancestors of Henri IV's minister Guillaume l'Aubespine held municipal offices in Orleans during the Fifteenth and early Sixteenth Centuries.\textsuperscript{106} These families then entered the service of the crown either through the sovereign courts, as with the Bellievres, or the small bureaucracy of the crown, as with the Neufville-Villeroy families and the l'Aubespines, though families often had members in both. These families, "through venality of offices or


\textsuperscript{105}Ibid., pp. 14-15.

\textsuperscript{106}Ibid.
simple nepotism . . . laid a hereditary claim upon office in the principal institutions of the realm."\textsuperscript{107}

Notable among these officials was Pomponne de Bellievre (1529-1607), who prepared for his career by the study of law at Toulouse and Padua.\textsuperscript{108} During these early years, he also studied the classics, and among his surviving papers is a folio of translations from Greek officers, dedicated, perhaps significantly, to that advocate of religious toleration Michel de l'Hopital. His first office, beginning in 1554, was his father's former post of councillor in the Parlement of Chambery.\textsuperscript{109} Pomponne de Bellievre then advanced to other offices, and in 1570 became a member of the royal council.\textsuperscript{110} When the King of Navarre became heir to the throne, Bellievre repeatedly sought to secure his conversion, believing that to be necessary to end France's troubles. When the authority of the crown, caught between the League and the Huguenots, virtually collapsed in 1588, Henri III in frustration dismissed all of his councillors, including Bellievre.\textsuperscript{111}

From 1588 to 1593, Bellievre lived in retirement on his estates at Grignon, near Paris.\textsuperscript{112} Always anti-Spanish, Bellievre long remained silent in regard to the League and their Spanish allies, for fear of League retaliation. However,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{107}Ibid., p. 15
  \item \textsuperscript{108}Ibid., p. 25.
  \item \textsuperscript{109}Ibid., p. 17.
  \item \textsuperscript{110}Ibid., p. 25, note 75.
  \item \textsuperscript{111}Dickerman, \textit{Villeroy}, pp. 45-47.
  \item \textsuperscript{112}Ibid., p. 87.
\end{itemize}
in 1592, in a letter to his fellow ex-councillor Pierre Jeannin, and in the draft of a speech intended for the upcoming Estates-General he warned against setting aside the Salic Law to elect the daughter of the King of Spain in place of Henri IV. Instead Frenchmen should rally behind Henri IV. Although he believed that Henri IV must eventually become a Catholic, he entered the King's service the next year even before the conversion at St. Denis.

Like Bellievre, Nicolas de Neufville, Sieur de Villeroy had been a councillor of Charles IX, and Henri III, and had been dismissed by the latter in 1588. However, after Henri III's death the next year, both Villeroy and another ex-member of the King's council Pierre Jeannin joined the League. Nevertheless, although Villeroy believed that "a good Christian and a true Frenchman," must support the League until the King's conversion, he repeatedly opposed the election of a new King. For four years, he was an intermediary between the King and the Duke of Mayenne, the head of the League, and Villeroy repeatedly sought the King's conversion. Finally, a year after Henri IV's conversion, Villeroy left the service of Mayenne to enter that of the King. Like Bellievre anti-Spanish, Villeroy specialized more in foreign policy under

113 Ibid., p. 98  
114 Ibid., pp. 46-47.  
115 Ibid., pp. 34, 47.  
116 Ibid., p. 46.
both Henri III and Henri IV. Under Henri IV, he became virtually foreign minister.\textsuperscript{117}

Bellievre and Villeroy had a secular, nationalistic view of France's Catholic clergy:

As good royal Gallicans, both men held that the church and its clergy should be royal subjects of the crown. As Villeroy put it, the clergy should not only be appointed by the king but should, in turn, serve the crown, lend it moral (and fiscal) support, and avoid stirring up unrest among the Huguenots.\textsuperscript{118}

The two ministers differed sharply on the subject of reform of the French Clergy. Two persistent issues were the return of the Jesuits and the acceptance in France of the decrees of the Council of Trent. The decrees of Trent had been opposed in France not only by the Huguenots, many of whose beliefs the decrees had declared heretical, but also by the Gallican Catholics, who objected principally to the limitations the decrees put on the holding of church offices.\textsuperscript{119} The Jesuits were expelled from the jurisdiction of the Parlement of 1595 for allegedly inspiring Jean Chastel's assassination attempt on the King.\textsuperscript{120} Villeroy soon came to favor the Jesuits' return, and his repeated efforts to secure their recall

\textsuperscript{117}Ibid., pp. 45-46, 48, 92-97. \textsuperscript{118}Ibid., p. 127.


\textsuperscript{120}Dickerman, Villeroy, p. 129.
finally succeeded. Villeroy also had long advocated France's adoption of the Trentine decrees, but he finally came to oppose them for fear their adoption would stir up the Huguenots. By contrast, Bellievre, who obtained a number of church benefices for his relatives, took little interest in clerical reform.\textsuperscript{121}

Bellievre and Villeroy took a thoroughly nationalistic attitude toward the Papacy, which the ministers thought of as a political, rather than a spiritual, power. They expected the Pope to aid France against its enemies, and their regard for the Popes, and for Papal officials in France, varied with the degree of sympathy the Pope and his officials had for French interests.

In 1593, major changes might well have taken place in the French Monarchy and the Gallican Church. The Estates-General of that year might well have changed the monarchy from an hereditary one under the Salic Law to an elective one in which a woman and a foreigner might succeed to the throne. Since Spain was the principal supporter of the League and its Estates-General, such an elective monarchy probably would have been at least initially under the domination of Spain. Likewise, the Gallican Church might have been both more thoroughly reformed and more dependent on Rome, since the Estates also adopted the decrees of Trent.

\textsuperscript{121}Ibid., pp. 128-31.
Nevertheless, these radical changes did not occur. The Estates-General finally rejected the King of Spain's attempt to put his daughter on the French throne. Its reason for being gone, the Estates soon disbanded after Henri IV's conversion. France continued to be ruled by a hereditary, male, native sovereign. The action of the 1593 Estates on the Trentine decrees was not followed up. Henri IV's choice of Henri III's former ministers, even though some of them had served his enemies, indicated that he intended no break with the past. The one significant change in the French monarchy was that it was not explicitly limited to Catholics. Henri IV's regime was to be notable for its conservatism.

Henri IV had returned to the Catholic Church, but he had not yet returned to normal relations with the Papacy. Also, the religious-political conflict was by no means automatically ended by Henri IV's conversion. The involvement of foreign powers such as Spain and England, the ambitions of Henri IV's over-mighty subjects, and the Pope's continued failure to supply legitimacy to Henri IV's regime by granting him absolution from Sixtus V's excommunication promised to make the ending of the war a long and difficult process. Finally, in 1593 Henri IV had not yet proven the sincerity and permanence of his conversion, nor the durability of his regime. In the following chapter will be shown Henri IV's reconciliation
with the Papacy, and the Papacy's role in ending the religious conflict. Also will be seen the French King's priorities in the religious question.
CHAPTER II

HENRI IV AND CLEMENT VIII: THE PACIFICATION
OF FRANCE (1593-98)

In the years immediately following his conversion in 1593, Henri IV's chief task was to return France to peace, order and obedience to the royal will. To do this, he needed to gain the submission of his rebellious Catholic subjects, without also alienating the Huguenots. A related problem was getting rid of the Spanish troops occupying French territory in support of the League. The task of returning France to peace would not be complete until the year 1598. In that year, the Duke of Mercoer, the last of the League leaders, surrendered, and France made peace with Spain at Vervins.¹ In that year also, Henri IV maintained the loyalty of his Huguenot subjects by issuing the Edict of Nantes.²


Clement VIII, once he decided to accept Henri IV's regime, aided the task of pacification by his recognition of the Catholic orthodoxy of the French King. No longer could the Spanish and Leaguers claim they were fighting only to keep a heretic from the throne of France.\(^3\) Later, Papal diplomats helped arrange France's peace with Spain at Vervins. However, Henri IV's issuance of the Edict of Nantes showed that his primary concern was for the peace and order of his kingdom. Any concession to the Huguenots was bound to offend the Pope, but Henri IV considered the measure necessary to avert a possible uprising by the Huguenots, who feared that peace with Spain would be a prelude to their persecution, as the Peace of Cateau-Cambresis (1559) had been.\(^4\) Henri IV saw the Pope more as political ally, whose wishes he might sometimes disregard, than as spiritual father.

However, in 1593, the Pope was more an enemy of the King of France than an ally. From the Papal point of view, France had not had a legitimate ruler for several years. In 1585, Pope Sixtus V excommunicated Henri of Navarre and deprived him of the right to succeed to the French throne, because


Navarre had returned to heresy after his "conversion" in 1572.\(^5\) On his deathbed in 1589, Henri III, the last Valois King, named Navarre his successor, but Henri III was himself under sentence of excommunication for his murder of the League leader Cardinal Guise.\(^6\) In 1591, Sixtus' successor Gregory XIV sent to the supporters of Navarre, now Henri IV, a pair of monitory bulls, one to the clergy, one to the laity, reiterated Sixtus' condemnation of Navarre, and admonished Navarre's followers to abandon him promptly or face excommunication themselves.\(^7\) Clement VIII, who became Pope in early 1592, imposed no new censures, but permitted the existing ones to remain, and he continued to support the League and its Spanish allies, though less vigorously than his predecessors had.\(^8\) Clearly, there was a deep gulf between the Papacy and the French monarchy in 1593.

Henri IV saw little advantage in widening the gulf. The Concordat of Bologna (1516) granted French Kings control of ecclesiastical offices and revenues, which Henri's English namesake, Henri VIII, had won only by a complete break with

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\(^5\)"Bull in which Pope Sixtus V Excommunicated and Deposed Henry of Navarre, 9th September, 1585" in Appendix two of Mousnier, Assassination, pp. 293-99.


\(^7\)Ibid., p. 157.

\(^8\)Ibid., p. 159.
Furthermore, Papal support would, as mentioned, strengthen the King's legitimacy in the eyes of Catholics by attempts by Catholics, three of which occurred in 1593-94 alone. Once he decided to return to Catholicism, Henri IV wasted little time in seeking reconciliation with the Holy See.

Indeed, Henri IV had already sought such a reconciliation. In October 1592, he sent to Rome Jerome Gondi to represent the royalist clergy, and commissioned the Marquis of Pisany, already in Italy, to represent the royalist Catholic nobles. Gondi and Pisany enjoyed the support of Venice and Tuscany, and the devoutly Catholic Dukes of Montmorency and Nevers sent letters to Rome in favor of the embassy. Nevertheless, the Pope, after some hesitation, finally yielded to the protests of Spain and the League and refused an audience with Gondi and Pisany.

Despite his rejection of Gondi and Pisany, Clement VIII was not irreconcilably opposed to Henri IV. The Pope's

9 Williams, "Absolution," p. 381.
12 Ibid., p. 381.
13 Ibid.
attitude was revealed in a conversation with Paolo Paruta, the Venetian Ambassador, on August 21, 1593:

The Ambassador urges the Pope not to be too severe about the conversion of the King of Navarre. He quotes the example of England; that kingdom was lost owing to excessive rigidity. Perhaps, had Clement VII known how to compromise, King Henry VIII would have continued faithful to the Roman Church. Charles V had the greatest weight in the councils of Clement, and yet Charles, a few years later, was obliged to enter into alliance with Henry, who, chiefly at his instance had been declared schismatic. The Pope lent a kindly attention, and then said "Well, we will wait a little and see what happens. If it pleases God to make Navarre King of France it is not for us to oppose his will."14

On September 11, 1593, the Venetian Ambassador reported that,

The Pope is very anxious about the affairs of France. He sees that he will be obliged to accept the King of Navarre. He is afraid that Navarre, once established in his kingdom, will begin to plot with the Queen of England against Christendom.15

Thus Clement VIII's attitude toward Henri IV seemed promising. Perhaps a new French embassy would succeed in obtaining Papal absolution.

Soon after his conversion at St. Denis, Henri IV prepared to send to Rome such an embassy, headed by Charles de Gonzaga.


15Polo Paruta to the Doge and Senate, Rome, September 11, 1593, Ibid., 9:106.
Duke of Nevers. Accompanying Nevers would be three clerics who had participated in the King's instruction and conversion at St. Denis: Claude d'Angenne, Bishop of Mans, Louis Seguier, Dean of the Cathedral Chapter of Notre Dame de Paris, and Master Gobelin, Commander of the Religious of the Abbey of St. Denis. To prepare the way for Nevers, Henri IV sent ahead La Clielle, a gentleman of the King's household, with letters to the Pope and to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, requesting the latter's aid in the negotiations.

La Clielle's mission in Rome, which lasted from September 11 to September 26, was a failure. Clement VIII did grant La Clielle a special midnight interview during which the diplomat was permitted to state his mission and present his letters. For further interviews, the Pope selected as intermediary Cardinal Toledo, a Spanish Jesuit who nevertheless favored Navarre's absolution. Cardinal Toledo, on behalf


17Ibid.


20Ibid.

21Ibid.
of the Pope objected that the letters from the King mentioned only obedience to the Pope, implying that Papal intervention was not needed for the King's return to the Church. Cardinal Toledo added that the act of obedience should be preceded by contrition, penance, absolution and rehabilitation. La Clielle failed to satisfy the Pope's scruples by explaining that the "obedience" mentioned in the letter was not the official obedience rendered by kings on their accession or upon the election of a new pope, but simply meant the King's desire to satisfy the Pope in every way. Cardinal Toledo repeatedly suggested that matters would be helped considerably if the King sent a letter requesting the papal benediction on each of the points mentioned. Following his departure from Rome, La Clielle prepared a comprehensive memoir for Nevers' guidance.22

Nevertheless, when Nevers, in obedience to papal orders received en route, made an unostentatious entry into Rome on November 21, 1593, the letters he carried still proffered only the King's obedience for the Kingdoms of France and Navarre.23 This language Clement VIII still considered unsatisfactory. The Pope refused to permit Nevers to consult either the

22Ibid.

Cardinals or the French clergy in Rome, and refused also to hear the three clerics accompanying him until they justified before the Roman Inquisition their participation in the King's conversion at St. Denis. The three clerics, for their part, not only refused to appear, but threatened to convene a national church council or to set up a French Patriarch, independent of Rome. In several stormy audiences with Nevers, Clement VIII continued to demand further proof of the sincerity of the King's conversion, but refused to specify what acts the King might perform to indicate his repentance, because that would be going beyond the scope of private negotiations, which were all he had allowed. An embittered Nevers finally left Rome on January 14, 1594.

Henri IV revealed his own dissatisfaction with the Pope in a letter written to Nevers on January 5, 1594. The King blamed Spanish pressure on the Pope for Nevers' difficulties, and advised that the three prelates accompanying Nevers must not.

24Ibid.
25Ibid.
26Ibid.
27Henri IV to de Beauvoir, Chartres, end of February, 1594, Henri IV, Lettres Missives, 4:102-103.
Out of regard for the Papacy, the King had postponed both his coronation and the celebration of the Order of the Holy Spirit, but his subjects' discontent would not permit him to delay much longer. His subjects' impatience would not permit the King much further delay in filling the many vacant ecclesiastical benefices, either, but "moins voudront ils souffrir ny recevoir aulcunes provisions des dictes benefices soubz aultre nomination que la mienne." The King warned that, while he would never leave the Catholic Church,

en ce qui concerne l'administration et police du royaume, ou l'interest public est joint avec le mien, vous jugez bien que je ne pourray contre l'opinion commune, et l'instance qui m'en sera faicte, laisser les choses plus longtemps sans aultre reglement.

Henri IV clearly regarded himself as already returned to the Catholic Church, and already rightfully King of France. This was the reason why the letters La Clielle and Nevers carried to Clement VIII did not request Papal absolution and

29Ibid., pp. 382-83.
30Ibid., pp. 383-84.
31Ibid., p. 384.
rehabilitation, but only offered the King's obedience. Henri IV was unwilling to sacrifice his prerogatives nor those of the Gallican Church, in exchange for Papal absolution, and he at least vaguely threatened to make the Gallican Church independent of Rome. Whether or not Henri IV seriously contemplated such a break with Rome, he became King indeed in the months following Nevers' mission.

In January 1594, Giovanni Mocenigo, the new Venetian Ambassador, reported that,

Many governors are coming to Paris to renew the oath of allegiance. The King gains over some one every day, not only because he has become a Catholic, but also because the conditions on which he receives even those who have most deeply injured him are taken to be the result of an indescribable clemency and an extraordinary humanity.32

Orleans and Bourges surrendered to the King in February, Paris on March 22, and Sens, Rouen, Le Havre, Troyes, Lyon, Poitiers, Chateau Thierry, Agen, Laon, Amiens, Beauvais, St. Malo and Rhiems by the end of 1594.33 Institutions submitting to the King in 1594 included the Parlement of Paris (March 28-30) and the Sorbonne (April 22).34 Important

32Giovanni Mocenigo, Venetian Ambassador in France, to the Doge and Senate, Chartres, January 10, 1594, Great Britain, P.R.O., C.S.P. ... Venice ... , 9:118.


individuals making their submission in 1594 included Villeroy, Louis de l'Hopital, Baron of Vitry and League commander at Meaux, and the young Duke of Guise and his brothers, while the League's overall leader Charles, Duke of Mayenne, also opened negotiations.\textsuperscript{35}

Despite his growing power, and Clement VIII's rejection of Nevers' mission, Henri IV treated even hostile Papal officials with considerable deference. The Papal Nuncio Filippo Sega, the Cardinal of Plaisance, had urged the Estates-General of 1593 to elect the Spanish Infanta Queen of France.\textsuperscript{36} Nevertheless, after the surrender of Paris, Henri IV permitted the Cardinal to depart for Rome at his leisure, and gave him an escort as far as Lyon.\textsuperscript{37}

The royalist Cardinal Gondi, whom Clement VIII had invited to Rome soon after Nevers' departure, sent back to France reports of the Pontiff's increasingly favorable attitude toward the absolution of the French King.\textsuperscript{38} By mid-1594, Henri IV, encouraged by Gondi's report of the Pope's assurances that a future embassy would be well received, selected

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[35]{Ibid., pp. 379-380.}
\footnotetext[37]{Henri IV to Nevers, Paris, March 22, 1594, and Henri IV to Pomponne de Bellievre, in camp before Laon, August 8, 1594, Henri IV, \textit{Lettres Missives}, 9:396, 405.}
\footnotetext[38]{Williams, "Absolution," pp. 389-90.}
\end{footnotes}
Cardinal Du Perron, a participant in the King's conversion, to head a new embassy. The royalist cleric Arnaud d'Ossat, who was already in Rome, would prepare the groundwork for the mission. Nevertheless, Henri IV delayed sending the mission for months, perhaps from fear that the Pope would impose unacceptable conditions for absolution.

Relations between France and Rome became rather strained at the beginning of 1595, because of the expulsion of the Jesuits and Henri IV's declaration of war upon Spain. On December 27, 1594, Jean Chastel, a young law student who had once studied in a Jesuit school, stabbed Henri IV, inflicting only a minor wound. Chastel, who was condemned to death, denied to the end the Jesuits' knowledge of his plans, but the Parlement of Paris, always hostile to the Jesuits, used this pretext to banish the Jesuits from its jurisdiction on January 8, 1595. By order of the King, the Parlements of Rouen and Dijon likewise banished the order. Then on January 17, 1595, Henri IV, possibly under Huguenot influence,

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39Ibid., p. 390.
40Ibid.
42Mousnier, Assassination, pp. 218-219.
43Ibid., p. 222.
44Ibid.
declared war upon Spain, which had never officially opposed the French King, but only heresy. Nevertheless, in February, the King wrote to de Beauvoir that the Pope showed himself more willing than ever to grant absolution, and would not make peace with Spain a condition. In March, the King wrote to Bellievre that the Pope's goodwill alone prevented the affair of the Jesuits from overturning the negotiations. He added that the Pope accepted his reasons for the delay of the new mission, and had a favorable attitude toward such a mission.

As relations between France and Rome improved, those between Rome and Spain deteriorated slightly. In April, the French King wrote to the Marshal de Matignon that Clement VIII had been greatly irritated by the King of Spain's disregard of his advice, transmitted by one of the Pope's nephews, on the conduct of the war against the Turks in Ottoman Hungary.

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46 Henri IV to de Beauvoir, Paris, February 26, 1595, Henri IV, Lettres Missives, 4:312.


48 Ibid.

49 Henri IV to the Marshal de Matignon, Paris, April 18, 1595, Henri IV, Lettres Missives, 4:342.
Consequently, the Pope had again assured the French King of his benediction as soon as du Perron arrived.  

Despite the favorable circumstances for du Perron's mission, Henri IV still was anxious to prevent any affront to the dignity of the French Crown in the process of absolution. In August, apparently in a postscript to a longer letter, he advised Cardinal Joyeuse, Protector of the affairs of the (French) King at Rome, that the request for absolution, 

soit conduit de façon qu'il ne m'en puisse advenir aucun préjudice, n'ayant pense d'entrer un aucune justification de ce que j'ai fait, devant autre que devant Dieu a qui seul J'en suis responsable; . . . je veux bien qu'on lui fasse connaitre que, si on voulait user de formaldites contraires a ma dignité, ce serait chose que je ne pourrais souffrir ni passer.  

Du Perron, however, received a very different reception from that of Nevers. Henri IV had, since his conversion, gained the submission of most of his kingdom, despite Papal opposition. Further Papal recalcitrance or delay could cause a permanent break with France.  

Du Perron finally arrived in Rome on July 12. Du Perron and d'Ossat, unlike Nevers, were permitted to visit the Cardinals. Following the visits, Clement VIII addressed

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50 Ibid.
53 Ibid., p. 396.
the Cardinals, assembled in full congregation, on the importance of du Perron's mission, and then interviewed them individually, to prevent Spanish manipulation of their opinions. Over three-fourths of the Cardinals favored absolution. Following the interviews, and final negotiation of terms, Clement VIII granted absolution to Henri IV on September 17.54

The terms of the absolution included the adoption of the decrees of the Council of Trent, if it could be done without disturbing the peace, the re-establishment of Catholicism in Bearn, the conversion to Catholicism within two years of the young prince of Condé, heir-apparent to the French throne, and the rigid application of the terms of the Concordat of Bologna of 1516.55 Other provisions included the protection of clerics and the return of Church property, the building of a monastery in every province of his kingdom and also in Béarn, the exclusion of heretics from benefices, the favoring of Catholics in the distribution of honors, and a number of personal observances.56

Clement VIII's grasp of political realities was shown in the list of things secretly desired by the Pope, but not included in the official absolution. The most important of these was that the French King do all in his power to

54Ibid., pp. 396-400.
56Ibid.
strengthen his own party in Rome, and to weaken that of Spain, possibly by means of a resident ambassador. Such an ambassador could write letters to the Cardinals, intercede on behalf of favored clergy, and distribute pensions and benefices. This request showed Clement VIII's desire to obtain greater independence of Spain by balancing against it a rival Catholic power.

Despite his scruples, Clement VIII came to see that he could not avoid granting absolution to Henri IV. The League, supported by the Spanish, had for four years been able to keep the Huguenot Henri IV from becoming King in fact as well as name, but they could produce no acceptable alternative candidate. After Henri IV's conversion, much of the League opposition melted away, especially since he offered them lenient terms for surrender. With so much of France already acknowledging Henri IV as their rightful sovereign, continued Papal obstinacy in the matter of absolution might result in the secession of the French Church from the authority of Rome. On the other hand, a reunited France could provide a balance to the Habsburg influence in Rome and elsewhere, and a strong ruler, such as Henri IV, could do much to protect and advance the Catholic Church in France.

57 Ibid., p. 399
58 Ibid., p. 381
Once he decided to return to the Catholic fold at St. Denis, Henri IV could scarcely avoid seeking Papal absolution. His alternative was a national church, Catholic, but independent of Rome, but such a church would have trouble maintaining its identity in a France surrounded by the Catholic Habsburgs, and by Protestant England and Holland. With such dangerous enemies, and with by no means unanimous support even in France, such a church probably would have been forced either to accept Protestantism, as with the England of Henry VIII, or, more likely, to return to Rome. While many French Catholics accepted Henri IV as King even before his absolution, many, including several religious orders, did not. Henri IV's absolution opened up a new era in Franco-Papal relations.

Symbolizing the new era was Clement VIII's sending of a new legate to France. Even before the absolution, the Pope recognized the need for a new legate to convey directly to the French King the Pope's desires and intentions, and to witness the King's ratification of the articles of absolution. In the search for a suitable candidate, the Pope rejected his Cardinal nephews Aldobrandini and San Giorgio.

59 Henri IV to Bellievre, Paris, March 16, 1595, and Henri IV to several towns of Languedoc, April 30, 1595, Henri IV, Lettres Missives, 9:409, 4:349; Mousnier, Assassination, pp. 113, 217.

together with Cardinal Montalto, because of their youth.\textsuperscript{61} After also considering and rejecting Cardinal Salviati, Clement VIII seriously considered Cardinal Toledo. The Spanish Jesuit, learned, able, and of proven sympathy toward France seemed an ideal legate, and Clement VIII went to the length of seeking in advance Henri IV's approval of the candidate. However, Cardinal Toledo regretfully refused the appointment, claiming that he could best serve both the Holy See and France at Rome.\textsuperscript{62} The Cardinal died in 1596, so health may have been a factor.\textsuperscript{63} Finally the Pope decided to send Alessandro de Medici, the Cardinal of Florence.\textsuperscript{64}

Alessandro Ottaviano de Medici, grand-nephew to Pope Leo X, distinguished himself at an early age as an ambassador of Cosimo de Medici to Pope Pius V (1566-72).\textsuperscript{65} Although he took holy orders only after the death of his mother, Francesca Salviati, who opposed it, Alessandro's religious vocation was never questioned. On entering the Sacred College in 1583, he took the name Cardinal of Florence to distinguish himself from his cousin Cardinal Medici, who later left the

\textsuperscript{61}Ibid., pp. 15-16. \\
\textsuperscript{62}Ibid., pp. 16-17. \\
\textsuperscript{63}Note two, Henri IV, \textit{Lettres Intimes de Henri IV}, ed. L. Dussieux (Versailles: Cerf et fils, 1876), p. 235. \\
\textsuperscript{64}Leo IX, \textit{Lettres}, pp. 16-17. \\
\textsuperscript{65}Ibid.
Cardinalate to become Grand Duke of Tuscany. During du Perron's mission, the Cardinal of Florence showed his pro-French sympathies by repeatedly upsetting Spanish intrigues to prevent the absolution, and by supporting the Pope against Spanish pressure and the wavering attitude of many of the Cardinals. Along with his pious life, proven diplomatic abilities and sympathy for France, the Cardinal of Florence, at fifty-nine, was of sufficiently mature age for such an important mission. The Pope was concerned about the Cardinal's frequent ill-health, but nevertheless decided to name him legate.

On April 3, 1596, in consistory at Rome, Clement VIII designated the Cardinal of Florence Legate a latere for France, and, a week later, also in consistory presented him with a cross, as insignia of his functions. These functions included discovering the true moral, religious and political state of France, and Henri IV's attitude toward Catholicism, the Papacy and the Huguenots. He was to see that the French King ratified the articles of absolution in their proper form, to secure the return of the Jesuits, to gain the registration of the decrees of the Council of Trent, and, a secret topic,
to make peace between France and Spain. Finally he was to look into the state of ecclesiastical benefices in France, and to provide remedies for their abuse.70

The Legate entered France by the pass of Montgenevre on June 13.71 At Chatres-sous-Montlhery (modern Arpajon), on July 19, the Legate first met the French King in a cordial, informal interview, and two days later the Legate arrived in Paris.72

Once in Paris, the Legate had to cope with the Parlement of Paris, which was ever suspicious of Papal encroachment on the liberties. Trouble was foreshadowed by the tactless speech of Achille de Harlay, First President of Parlement, during welcoming ceremonies for the Legate. Apparently referring to the Cardinal of Plaisance, de Harlay expressed the hope that this Papal emissary would be unlike the previous one who, "apporter en France non le paix de Dieu, mais le flambeau de la guerre."73 Parlement examined the new Legate's credentials carefully, and found his powers too sweeping, and objected also to reference to the Council of Trent and to the Constitutions of Boniface VIII.74 Parlement then attempted to

70Ibid.
71Ibid., pp. 48-49.
72Ibid.
73Ibid.
74Ibid., p. 50.
limit by decree the Legate's powers, despite royal letters-patent forbidding such meddling. Henri IV refused to tolerate this interference. He personally reprimanded de Harlay, and limited the effect of Parlement's decree by preventing it from being put in letters-patent, but only registered in the archives of Parlement.

In Paris, on August 1, the Legate had his first official audience with the King. Cardinal Medici explained his mission, and presented the King with the Papal brief di carta buona, having already presented the other brief to the King at Chatres-sous-Montlhery. The King displayed considerable amiability toward the Legate, and appeared willing to do much to please the Pope.

The final act of Henri IV's absolution came on September 19, when he signed documents accepting the conditions of absolution. The final signing occurred despite considerable opposition, especially from the Huguenots, and the Legate believed that only the goodwill of de Perron, of Pomponne de Bellievre and of the King himself permitted the signing to

75 Ibid., pp. 49-50; Cardinal of Florence to Clement VIII, Paris, July 24, 1596, Ibid., pp. 60-61.


77 Ibid.

78 Cardinal of Florence to Clement VIII, Rouen, September 21, 1596, Ibid., pp. 76-77.
take place. As the King prepared to sign, Bellievre offered
to place something beneath his hand for support. The King
refused, saying that his hand would not tremble like that of
a perjuror, a remark that pleased Clement VIII immensely when
it was reported to him.  

Possibly the most important political matter the Legate
had to deal with was the war between France and Spain. Henri
IV's initial successes, such as his brilliant victory at
Fontaine-Francaise (April 5, 1595), and the surrender of the
Duke of Mayenne, were offset by the loss of Cambrai, Calais
and Ardres to the Spanish. In 1596, Henri IV signed
treaties with England and Holland to obtain troops and money.
Each of the three pledged to make no peace with Spain without
the participation of the others. Nevertheless, by June of
the same year, the French King advised de Breves, his Ambas-
sador to the Ottoman Empire, that if the Sultan did not provide
aid as well, he, the King, would be forced to listen to the

79Ibid., pp. 77-79.
80Fall of Calais, in Piero Duodo, Venetian Ambassador in
France, to the Doge and Senate, Paris, May 1 and 3, 1596,
Great Britain, P.R.O., C.S.P. . . .Venice . . ., 9:196-98;
Fall of Ardres, P. Duodo to the Doge and Senate, Paris, June 1
and 8, 1596, Great Britain, P.R.O., C.S.P. . . .Venice . . .,
9:209-10; Leo IX, Lettres, pp. 85-86.
81P. Duodo to the Doge and Senate, Paris, July 27 and
December 21, 1596, Great Britain, P.R.O., C.S.P. . . .Venice .
. ., 9:223-24, 246; Leo IX, Lettres, p. 86.
advice of the Pope and make peace with Spain. On his arrival, the Legate found the King interested in peace, but cautious.

In September 1596, the Legate offered to go to Brussels to negotiate peace with the Cardinal-Archduke Albert of Austria, nominal ruler of the Spanish Netherlands. Henri IV approved of a peace, but, because of his treaty commitments, preferred that the Pope send an ecclesiastical diplomat directly from Rome to Brussels. That way, the initiative for peace would appear to come from Rome, not Paris. In a late December interview, the French King reiterated his insistence on Papal mediation. Such negotiations might be carried out through a Legate or a Nuncio, in Rome or in Spain. The Legate's report added that all France, even the heretics, desired peace, and Anglo-Dutch fear of such a separate peace was all the more reason to proceed. A January report of the Venetian Ambassador in France indicated that the Spanish themselves were ready for peace, but neither side wished to appear to sue for

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82 Henri IV to de Breves, June 17, 1596, Henri IV, Lettres Missives, 4:600-601.


85 Ibid.
peace. Unfortunately, the alternative of a truce also posed serious problems.

The Venetian Ambassador reported on February 1 that Henri IV had invited England and Holland to send "ministers of importance" to Le Havre to discuss with him a proposed truce, and means for continuing the war, should they reject the truce. At this time, the French ministers wanted the war to continue, because a cessation of hostilities would allow the Spanish to recover. A month later, the French ministers were willing to accept a truce of four or five years, fearing that such a long interval of peace would allow the Spanish too much time to rebuild, and would cause the French people to lose the will to fight. Peace or truce, efforts at ending the war were set back considerably by the fall of Amiens.

Amiens (population 50,000) held, in March 1597, 10,000 soldiers, all the cannon the French were preparing to use on the Flemish border that spring, and 100,000 crowns for

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88 Ibid.

soldiers' pay. On March 11, Spanish troops, led in person by Don Fernando Tello de Porto Carrero, the Spanish governor of Doulens, captured the town in a surprise attack. Amiens' fall made it possible for the Spaniards to bridge the Somme and raid previously protected areas of France up to the walls of Paris. Two hours after learning of Amiens' fall, Henri IV set out on horseback for the captured town, getting as far as Beauvais on the second day. In Paris, by March 15, the French had raised in support of the King's expedition 7,000 foot-soldiers and 1,500 cavalrymen, but the Venetian Ambassador believed Amiens' recovery was, "more properly a subject for desire than for hope." 

The months following Amiens' fall brought, not Spanish triumph, but mutual frustration. The Spanish failed in an attempt to take Montreuil by treachery, but the French failed in an attempt to retake Arras. Henri IV's ally Queen Elizabeth assembled a huge fleet, which was then wasted in a futile attempt to capture the Spanish treasure fleet at the

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91 Ibid.; Leo IX, Lettres, p. 125.


93 P. Duodo to the Doge and Senate, Paris, March 29 and April 5, 1597, Ibid., 9:263-64.
Azores. The Spanish, at about the same time sent against England another huge armada, which was no more successful than the one of 1588. Matching the military stalemate was a financial one. In April, the Fuggers refused the King of Spain's terms for a loan, and in May the Venetians refused Henri IV a loan of 300,000 crowns. Small wonder that negotiations continued despite Amiens' fall.

In the early stages of negotiations, the Legate had to contend with Spanish opposition to Papal participation. The King of Spain preferred to negotiate directly with the French crown, and claimed that the Pope had forfeited his right to intervene when he failed to make peace with Spain a condition of Henri IV's absolution. The French King insisted on including the Papacy in the negotiations, and professed suspicion of

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Spanish intentions. To mollify the Spanish, the Legate secured the services of Buonaventura Calatagirona, Father-General of the Franciscan Order, and, as a native of Calabria, a Spanish subject. Once the Legate managed to overcome Henri IV's suspicions of the Father-General, the Franciscan was widely used as an intermediary between the French King and the Cardinal-Archduke Albert. The inclusion of France's Protestant allies remained a stumbling block.

By June 1, 1597, Henri IV was willing to accept a negotiated peace, but wanted it to include his Dutch and English allies. The Legate refused to participate in any accord involving heretics, but at the same time warned the Pope that the Holy See might only exclude itself from the negotiations by an intransigent attitude on the matter. The Papal Nuncio offered, as his private opinion, that the difficulty over the inclusion of England might be resolved by Spain and France dealing directly with each other and reserving a place for the Queen of England, "as had been done


on other occasions."101 In truth, little could be done until the fall of Amiens.

By August 16, the forces besieging Amiens were reinforced by the arrival of English troops, plus 1,500 troops raised in Rouen, while the Archduke was unable to pay his troops and could raise only a few at a time for fear of mutinies.102 On September 3, Porto Carrero was killed.103 On September 16, some 2,500 of the Archduke's men attempted to force their way into Amiens, but were routed by 800 Swiss mercenaries summoned from Abbeville by Henri IV.104 On September 25, Amiens capitulated, removing a major obstacle to the negotiations.105

The negotiations dragged on throughout the fall of 1597, without any resolution of the essential questions of the inclusion of France's allies, particularly England, and of the restoration of French fortified towns in Spanish hands. Furthermore, it was not settled whether there was to be a peace

101A. Nani to the Doge and Senate, July 10, 1597, P.R.O., Venetian Papers, IX, 278.
103Leo XI, Lettres, p. 125.
or a truce only. None of these matters were settled until the site of the negotiations was moved from St. Quentin to Vervins. The final talks began there on February 10, 1598, in a spirit of good humor, with the Legate giving the opening address. Representing France was Nicolas Brulart de Sillery, and by Pomponne de Bellievre, while Spain and the Spanish Netherlands were represented by Jean Richardot, Juan Bautista de Tassis and Louis van Verhecken. On February 28, the Venetian Ambassador reported that the Spanish had agreed to surrender Ardres and Calais within two months, and the rest of the fortified towns within three months, except for Blauet, whose fortifications would be dismantled. Unfortunately, in regard to France's allies, "it seems that the powers to deal with them, especially, with the Queen of England, are somewhat restricted." The treaty was ready for signing when the French representatives elected to delay in order to consult their King, who mistrustfully demanded immediate Spanish withdrawal from the towns, despite a Spanish offer of hostages to ensure compliance.

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106 A. Nani to the Doge and Senate, Madrid, December 27, 1597, Ibid., 9:304.
107 Cardinal of Florence to Clement VIII, Vervins, February 10, 1598, Leo XI, Lettres, pp. 201-02.
109 Ibid., 9:313.
110 Ibid., 9:313.
a final decision on the peace for two months, while Henri IV received delegations from Holland and England.

The English delegation was handicapped from the start by the death at Dieppe, a week after their rough channel crossing, of Sir Thomas Wilkes, one of their few members with experience in diplomatic dealings with the French. Robert Cecil, head of the delegation, had a number of discussions with the French King, but could present no practical alternative to a separate French peace with Spain. The Dutch, for their part, could only make unrealistic requests for aid. Hardly had the two delegations departed when the French signed the peace.\textsuperscript{111}

On Saturday, May 2, the delegates at Vervins each signed documents presented by Spain, by the Spanish Netherlands, and by the Ambassador of Savoy.\textsuperscript{112} Under terms of the three documents, Blauet would be dismantled and Calais, Ardres, La Chapelle, Doulens and Chatlet ceded to the King of France within two months, with two Spaniards and two Flemings serving as hostages to guarantee it. All old claims were temporarily suspended. The Duke of Savoy also be included in the peace, provided he restored Bera and several other places to the King of France, but the Marquisate of Saluzzo was reserved

\textsuperscript{111}P. M. Handover, \textit{The Second Cecil, 1563-1604} (London, 1959), pp. 165-72.

\textsuperscript{112}A. Nani to the Doge and Senate, Madrid, May 13, 1598, P. R. O., \textit{Venetian Papers}, 9:328.
for papal arbitration. Finally, England and the United Provinces had two months in which to join in the peace. Vervins relieved Clement VIII of the embarrassment of friendly relations with an enemy of the greatest--and most dangerously powerful--upholder of Catholic orthodoxy in Europe. Henri IV, by insisting on papal participation in the negotiations, helped reassure a doubtful Papacy that he had indeed become a true son of the Church.

At the same time as the peace negotiations occurred the crisis of Ferrara. The Duchy of Ferrara, a Papal fief, was held at this time by the Este family, who often had taken an uncertain, even hostile, attitude toward their Papal overlord. For years, Duke Alfonso II had vainly sought Papal acceptance of the succession of his cousin Cesare to the duchy. This, Clement VIII refused to do, citing a bull of Pius V barring illegitimate branches of a family from succession to Papal fiefs. Nevertheless, at the time of Duke Alfonso's death, on October 27, 1597, the Duke's will named Cesare d'Este his successor, and Cesare promptly took possession of the Imperial fiefs of Modena and Reggio, and also of Ferrara and Comaccio. Clement VIII, at a general congregation of Cardinals on November 2, declared that, since the legitimate line of the Este family was not extinct, the fief

113 Ibid., 9:328.
114 Von Pastor, Popes, 23:382-83, 386.
reverted to the Papacy. Both sides promptly gathered troops to enforce their positions. Cesare's continued defiance eventually resulted in his excommunication, and the placing of an interdict on Ferrara.\textsuperscript{115} Henri IV, to whom Cesare had looked for aid, promptly declared his support for the Papacy, and in late December the Duke of Luxemburg, the King's representative at Rome, offered the Pope 4,000 to 5,000 troops for use in the recovery of Ferrara—-as soon as peace was made with Spain.\textsuperscript{116} Facing an excommunication and interdict, the lukewarm attitudes of Spain, the Empire and Venice, the pro-papal stand of France, and a large Papal army, Cesare realized the hopelessness of his position, and, on January 12, 1598, ceded Ferrara and various other estates to the Church, in return for absolution from the excommunication for himself and his followers.\textsuperscript{117} Henri IV's support for the Papacy not only gained Clement VIII's goodwill, but the return of Ferrara strengthened the Pope's independence of Spain.\textsuperscript{118}

Also at the time of the Franco-Spanish peace negotiations, Henri IV made his peace with the Huguenots—-the Edict

\textsuperscript{115}Ibid., 23:383-92.

\textsuperscript{116}Giovanni Dolfin, Venetian Ambassador at Rome, to the Doge and Senate, Rome, December 20, 1597, P.R.O., Venetian Papers, 9:303.

\textsuperscript{117}Von Pastor, Popes, 23:388-94.

of Nantes. It should be noted that the Edict of Nantes was on the whole favorable to the Roman Catholic Religion. For example, Church property taken by the Huguenots must be restored, and Catholic worship permitted everywhere in the realm. Under these provisions, Catholic worship was restored in many predominantly Protestant areas, including even the Huguenot center of La Rochelle, causing St. Francis de Sales to exclaim, "Would to God that worship could be made as free in Geneva, as it is in La Rochelle." By contrast, the Huguenots were expressly forbidden to worship, build schools or sell their literature except where such worship was permitted by the Edict—thus limiting the expansion of Calvinism. Nevertheless, the Legate was disturbed by the Edict, and was not impressed by the King's insistence on the necessity of the Edict to preserve order in his kingdom, nor by the King's assurances that he hoped to see the end of Protestantism in France within six years.

119 Edict of Nantes, article three, in Appendix four of Mounier, Assassination, p. 319.

120 Ibid., pp. 148-49.

121 Edict of Nantes, articles seven through fifteen, and article twenty-one, in Appendix four of Ibid., pp. 321-22, 324, also, Ibid., pp. 148-49.

122 Cardinal of Florence to Clement VIII, Macon, September 14, 1598, in Leo XI, Lettres, pp. 248-49.
In three matters—the restoration of Catholicism in Béarn, the return of the Jesuits and registration of the Trentine decrees—the Legate failed completely. The Jesuits' return was opposed by the vast majority of the King's ministers, including Bellievre, and the King himself was convinced they were a subversive element, sympathetic to Spain. In vain did the Legate insist that a whole order should not be blamed for the actions of a few individuals, and suggest that the Pope would permit to be sent into France only those Jesuits sympathetic to the French crown. A major obstacle to the reception of the Trentine decrees was the hostility of the parlements, which the Legate tried to circumvent by seeking the adoption, individually, of some of the more important Trentine reforms, especially concerning benefices. In regard to both the Trentine decrees and to the re-establishment of Catholicism in Béarn, the Legate received only excuses and promises from the King, who noted that his predecessors had been unable to secure acceptance of the decrees.


124Ibid., p. 115.


The final months of Cardinal Medici's mission were unhappy ones. His opposition to the proposed marriage of the King's still-Protestant sister Catherine to the prince of Lorainne, and to the King's proposed marriage (once an annulment of his present marriage to Marguerite de Valois was secured) to his mistress Gabrielle d'Estrees drew upon the prelate the resentment of both sister and favorite, and the Legate found himself increasingly unpopular at Court. The Legate repeatedly asked the Pope for his recall, but was given no order to return. Finally Henri IV himself demanded the Legate's departure. 127 Cardinal de Medici departed Paris August 31, 1598, and after formally taking leave of the King the next day at Fontainebleau departed for Italy, reaching Ferrara by November. 128

Henri IV's behavior toward the Papacy in 1593-98 becomes more comprehensible when one considers the menacing presence of a third party--the Habsburgs. Because of this continuing threat, Henri IV could ill-afford to alienate the powerful Huguenot minority and risk a renewal of the religious wars. Such measures as the return of the Jesuits, registration of the Trentine decrees and the re-establishment of Catholicism


128 Ibid., pp. 221-26.
in Béarn, if effected, would be likely to arouse the Protestants, and the first two of those would also alienate those Gallican Catholics on whose support he heavily depended. The Edict of Nantes, itself favorable to Catholics in many ways, was a means of preserving the internal peace necessary for the kingdom's recovery. England and Holland, though Protestant, were too valuable allies to break with altogether, and their support of the Huguenots would make them dangerous enemies. The Papacy, through the King's absolution, helped to strengthen Henri IV's legitimacy, and Papal aid helped facilitate peace with Spain, while France's support, especially in the Ferrara episode, helped the Papacy lessen its dependence on the Habsburgs.
In the years 1593-98, Henri IV had become reconciled with the Roman Catholic Church and with the Papacy, and Papal mediation helped him end war with Spain and the League with the Peace of Vervins. Nevertheless, much unfinished business remained in the French King's relations with the Holy See. The Catholic Church had still not been reestablished in Bearn, the Jesuits remained excluded from a large part of France, and the decrees of the Council of Trent still had not been accepted in France. Furthermore, the French King had retained his Protestant allies England and Holland, and even worse, in Papal eyes, he had issued a new edict of toleration of the Huguenots. What must be realized is that Henri IV's policies, even those affecting religion, had the secular goal of combatting the influence of the Habsburgs, or preventing disorders in the kingdom that would weaken it in the face of the Habsburg menace. In the category of preventing disorders was the Edict of Nantes.

Henri IV attached so much importance to his kingdom's acceptance of the Edict of Nantes that he personally addressed the Parlement of Paris, urging its registration of the Edict, on January 7, 1599.² On February 25, Parlement bowed to royal pressure and issued a slightly modified version of the Edict.³ On learning of the Edict's registration, Clement VIII summoned the French King's representatives at Rome, Cardinal Joyeuse and Arnaud d'Ossat, now a Cardinal also. The Pope denounced the Edict as ruinous to the Catholic faith, especially in its granting the heretics freedom of conscience and the right to hold public office.⁴ The Pope contrasted the ardor with which the French King promoted the heretics' cause with his "cool indifference" toward the Catholic faith he had sworn to uphold. The Pope added that he was deeply offended and humiliated, and he threatened even to revoke his absolution of the French King.⁵

Gradually Cardinal Joyeuse's arguments on the Edict's value, and his good offices toward certain Cardinals, especially the Pope's nephew Cardinal Aldobrandini, helped improve

²Speech of Henri IV to Parlement requesting the registration of the Edict of Nantes, January 7, 1599, in Appendix five of Ibid., pp. 364-67.


⁴Mousnier, Assassination, p. 152.

⁵Ibid.
the Pontiff's attitude. In a March 31 letter to Joyeuse, Henri IV wrote that the Cardinal was correct in asserting that France continued to recover and prosper under the Edict, and he added that Edict, by undercutting the Huguenots as a political faction, made it less necessary to reward individual Huguenot magnates. In a July 24 letter to Cardinal Joyeuse, Henri IV thanked the prelate for his remonstrances on the Edict, which had caused the Pope to once again trust the French King and his intentions.

Another source of friction between Henri IV and Clement VIII during the 1590s was the King's matrimonial plans for his sister Catherine. At various times, Henri III, his brother the Duke of Alençon, the Kings of Spain and of Scotland, the Dukes of Lorraine and of Savoy, Henri IV's cousin Condé and a prince of Anhalt had been put forward as possible spouses for Catherine. Each time, Catherine herself, her brother or some other important personage prevented the match. Catherine herself preferred to marry Charles de


7Ibid.

8Henri IV to Cardinal Joyeuse, Orleans, July 24, 1599, Ibid., 5:150.


10Ibid.
Bourbon, Count of Soissons, but Henri disliked and distrusted the politically unreliable Soissons, who failed to aid the King in the recovery of Amiens. In 1596, the King planned to marry his sister to the Duke of Montpensier, but the next year he settled on Henri, the eldest son of the Duke of Lorraine and a staunch Catholic.

Unfortunately, Catherine, unlike her brother, remained a convinced Calvinist. Worse, she had, in defiance of the Edict of Nantes, held public Calvinist services at Court before as many as 2,000 to 3,000 persons. The Cardinal of Florence initially hoped for her conversion, but when that seemed no longer probable, his determined opposition to her marriage, and to that of the King and Gabrielle D'Estrees


13 Letter from Catherine de Bourbon transmitted to the Landgrave of Hesse by the Duke of Deux-Ponts (Zweibrücken), about 1593, Henri IV, Correspondance inédite de Henri IV, roi de France et de Navarre, avec Maurice-le-Savant, Landgrave de Hesse, ed. (no first name) de Rommel (Paris: J. Renouard et cie, 1840), p. 11.

caused the King to request his departure. At the beginning of January 1599, Catherine took instruction in the Roman Catholic faith by attending a debate between several doctors of the Sorbonne, led by André Duval, and several Huguenot pastors, led by Daniel Tilenus, but the King's sister declined to convert, and Henri IV postponed further attempts to instruct her. Without her conversion, Papal approval of the marriage was clearly impossible, so the King had the couple married secretly in his own chambers by the Archbishop of Rheims, Henri IV's illegitimate brother, in late January. In 1600, Clement VIII wrote to Catherine urging her conversion, but she remained a Calvinist until her death four years later.

Why did Henri IV risk alienating the Papacy by marrying his Huguenot sister to a member of one of the leading Catholic families in Europe? Roland Mousnier has said that after Vervins Henri IV sought to thwart Spanish ambitions in Europe by supporting Europe's small, independent states, who owed loyalty to neither France nor the Habsburgs. Across many


17Ibid., 1:561.  


19Mousnier, Assassination, pp. 121-22.
of them, the Spanish moved troops and supplies from Italy to the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{20} Such a state was Lorraine, whose neutrality permitted troops of all powers free passage across its territory provided they stayed no more than two nights in one place.\textsuperscript{21} This neutrality did not prevent the Duke of Lorraine from intervening in the French religious wars in 1589.\textsuperscript{22} Henri IV's marriage of his sister to the Duke's son may have been intended to draw the Duke closer to France and to make him less willing to permit the passage of Spanish troops, but the timing of the marriage negotiations suggested a more immediate goal: the pacification of France. The marriage negotiations preceded both the Edict of Nantes and the Peace of Vervins, and the actual marriage took place within months of the two settlements. The house of Lorraine, particularly the Guise branch, had led the Catholic extremists during the Wars of Religion, and at least two members, the Dukes of Aumale and of Mergoer, had not yet been reconciled with the crown when the marriage negotiations began.\textsuperscript{23} The marriage of Catherine de Bourbon may have been a step toward

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., p. 122.


\textsuperscript{22}Ibid., p. 61.

cementing the loyalty of the leading opposition family, and as such, Henri IV may have thought it well worth risking the wrath of the Papacy.

Clement VIII was also concerned about Henri IV's own marital plans. The King's marriage to Marguerite de Valois had been a childless failure, and as early as 1593-94 he had requested her consent to the dissolution of their marriage.24 A serious problem was the King's determination to marry his mistress Gabrielle D'Estrees. Queen Marguerite would never give her consent as long as Henri IV planned to marry her hated rival.25 Also Henri IV had already had illegitimate children by Gabrielle, whose own previous marriage was dissolved in somewhat doubtful proceedings.26 Clement VIII feared that the King's marriage to Gabrielle would result in a disputed succession, even if sons were born in wedlock, and urged Cardinal de Medici to dissuade him from such a dangerous course.27 The Pope urged instead that the French

24Henri IV to Queen Marguerite, about September 1593, To the same, Mantes, December 27, 1593, To the same, Fontainebleau, September 14, 1594, Henri IV, Lettres Intimes, pp. 197-98, 206-208.


26The Venetian Ambassador, Francesco Contarini, to the Doge and Senate, Paris, July 24, 1598, Leo IX, Lettres, p. 235.

King name his successor immediately, to avert such a crisis.\(^{28}\)

The Legate's opposition to Henri IV's marital plans caused the King to request his departure, and the impasse was broken only by the sudden death of Gabrielle D'Estrees in April 1599.\(^ {29}\) The Queen, once suitable financial arrangements were made for her, then gave her full consent, and on September 24 the Pope appointed to hear the case a commission consisting of Cardinal Joyeuse, the Bishop of Modena, Papal Nuncio in France, and Horatio del Monte, Archbishop of Albi.\(^ {30}\)

On November 10, 1599, the Papal commission declared the marriage void since its beginning, because the couple were related in the prohibited degree, and because Marguerite had been forced to marry by her mother Catherine de Medici and by her brother Charles IX.\(^ {31}\)

By March 9, 1600, Henri IV was conducting negotiations for his marriage to Marie de Medici, niece of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, one of the few Italian rulers still independent

\(^{28}\)Ibid.

\(^{29}\)Ibid., p. 221; L'Estoile, Journal, 1:571.

\(^{30}\)Marguerite's financial wants are given in her letter to Sully. Marguerite de Valois to Sully, Usson, July 29, 1599, Marguerite de Valois, Memoires, p. 336, p. 339 (note).

\(^{31}\)L'Estoile, Journal, 1:582.
of Spain. Besides improving French influence in Italy, the match was expected to bring a large dowry. Nicolas Brûlart de Sillery, French Ambassador to Rome, kept the Pope informed of the proceedings, and, to quiet papal misgivings, asked Clement VIII's Cardinal nephew Pietro Aldobrandini to officiate at the wedding in the Pope's name. Henri IV initially insisted on being married in person, in Marseilles, no earlier than late September, in order that he might first deal with Savoy and inspect his forts on the Italian frontier. Unfortunately, the King became involved in a war with Savoy which lasted into the fall, so in August, Henri IV sent Roger de Saint-Lary, Grand Squire of France, to Italy to espouse, in the King's name, Marie de Medici, and to accompany her to France. The marriage by proxy was celebrated in Florence.

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33 Henri IV to de Chatte, April 19, 1600, Henri IV, Sillery, p. 34.

34 Henri IV to Sillery, April 1, 1600, and Henri IV to Sillery, May 11, 1600, Ibid., pp. 3, 38-39. The nature of the Pope's misgivings was not stated.

35 Henri IV to Sillery, May 11, 1600, and Henri IV to Sillery, May 12, 1600, Ibid., pp. 39-40, 48-49.

early in October, and on December 17, in Lyon, Henri IV and Marie de Medici received from Cardinal Aldobrandini, as Legate, his benediction solemnizing the match.37

Gabrielle D'Estrees' unexpected death saved both France and the Papacy from a serious crisis. Had Gabrielle lived, Henri IV, who was determined to marry her, might eventually have broken with Rome, like Henry VIII.38 For the reasons already given, such a marriage would also have seriously compromised the succession by casting doubt on the legitimacy of the King's children by Gabrielle. Instead, her death and Marguerite de Valois' consent to the dissolution of her marriage to the King permitted him to marry an Italian princess with no previous marital entanglements, and who was far more acceptable to Rome than the late mistress.

At the time of the French King's remarriage, the Papacy was also attempting to arbitrate France's dispute with Savoy over the Marquisate of Saluzzo, which Duke Carlo Emmanuele had seized from Henri III in 1588.39 France could threaten

37Henri IV to Clement VIII, Lyon, December 21, 1600, Henri IV, Lettres, p. 46, and note two, p. 47.

38Prior to Henri IV's absolution, those of his followers who desired the dissolution of his marriage to Marguerite de Valois urged him to break with the Papacy and have the marriage terminated by the French clergy alone, because of the slowness of the Papal courts. Adair G. Williams, "The Absolution of Henry of Navarre," The Journal of Modern History 6 (1934):391.

39Mousnier, Assassination, p. 122.
Spanish possessions in Italy from Saluzzo, which was only a
day's march from Turin. The Peace of Vervins had left the
Saluzzo question to Papal arbitration, but the Pope, perhaps
from fear of Spain, took no action, and the tensions mounted.
In March 1599, the Venetian Ambassador in Spain feared an open
break between Spain and France over Saluzzo, and he believed
that the 10,000 troops raised in Castile were to be used
either in Saluzzo or for an invasion of England. For his
part, Henri IV persistently refused during 1599 to consider
any settlement that did not include Saluzzo's return.
Finally, in February 1600, in Paris, France and Savoy agreed
on a treaty by which the Duke agreed to return Saluzzo or to
exchange it for the County of Bresse within three months.

40Ibid., p. 123.
41Dickerman, Bellievre and Villeroy, p. 113.
42Francesco Soranzo, Venetian Ambassador in Spain, to
the Doge and Senate, Valencia, March 8, 1599, and F. Soranzo
to the Doge and Senate, Valencia, March 18, 1599, Great
Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of state papers and
manuscripts relating to English affairs existing in the
archives and collections of Venice and other libraries of
northern Italy, 40 vols. (London: Longmans, Green and Co.,
1864-), 9:363-64.
43Henri IV to Cardinal Joyeuse, Fontainebleau, March 31,
1599, Henri IV to the Constable Montmorency, Fontainebleau,
May 15, 1599, Henri IV to the Constable, Fontainebleau, May
22, 1599, Henri IV to the Baron des Alymes, Haslier, June 17,
1599, and Henri IV to the Chevalier de Berton, Haslier, June
17, 1599, in Henri IV, Lettres Missives, 5:103-104, 116-17,
119, 138-41.
44Henri IV to Clement VIII, Paris, February 25, 1600,
Ibid., 5:208-209; L'Estoile, Journal, 1:592-93, note 674 on
711.
Unfortunately, the Duke of Savoy showed little inclination to abide by the Treaty in the succeeding months. The Duke insisted on consulting his subjects, but delayed his visit on the pretext of an outbreak of Plague in the cities he was to pass through, though he found ample time for hunting. He also sought to alter the Treaty's terms by offering to return Saluzzo on condition it be granted to him or to one of his children as a fief of the French Crown. He sent representatives to Archduke Ernest, nominal ruler of the Spanish Netherlands, and to the King of Spain himself, and the Duke later claimed that Spain threatened him with war, should he cede Saluzzo to France. Henri IV was irritated by these delays and unimpressed by the Duke's excuses, but nevertheless extended the deadline for Saluzzo's return or exchange to the end of June. Even then he took no immediate action.

45 Henri IV to Sillery, May 12, 1600, Henri IV, Sillery, pp. 52-53.


48 Henri IV to Sillery, April 18, 1600, Henri IV to Sillery, June 27, 1600, and Henri IV to Clement VIII, June 30, 1600, Henri IV, Sillery, pp. 25-26, 88-90, 101.
when that deadline too expired, but in late July the Duke, who was negotiating for Spanish military aid, declared his unwillingness to observe the treaty.\textsuperscript{49} Clement VIII sent Buonaventura Calatagirona, one of the chief negotiators of the Peace of Vervins and now Patriarch of Constantinople, to France to negotiate a new treaty, but already, on August 11, Henri IV had ordered Lesdigueres and Marshal Biron to invade Savoy.\textsuperscript{50}

The war was short and decisive. French forces obtained the surrender of the fortresses of Montmelian, St. Catherine and Alinges, depriving the Duke of much of his artillery, during the fall and winter campaign.\textsuperscript{51} The Duke's forces, aided by Spanish troops, were unable to relieve the forts, because of the heavy alpine snows.\textsuperscript{52} In December, when Cardinal Aldobrandini arrived from Rome to solemnize the

\textsuperscript{49}Henri IV to Rochepot, Lyon, August 9, 1600, Discourse by Henri IV addressed to the Patriarch of Constantinople, August 15, 1600, Henri IV, \textit{Rochepot}, pp. 25-27.

\textsuperscript{50}Henri IV to Rochepot, Lyon, August 9, 1600, Ibid., p. 24; Henri IV to Clement VIII, Lyon, August 11, 1600, Henri IV, \textit{Lettres}, p. 41, including note two.

\textsuperscript{51}Henri IV to De Breves, Maire, December 1, 1600, and Henri IV to the Constable, December 5, 1600, Henri IV, \textit{Lettres Missives}, 5:359, 361; Henri IV to Rochepot, Lyon, December 23, 1600, Henri IV, \textit{Rochepot}, p. 56.

\textsuperscript{52}Henri IV to De Breves, Maire, December 1, 1600, Henri IV, \textit{Lettres Missives}, 5:359; Henri IV to Rochepot, Lyon, December 23, 1600, Henri IV, \textit{Rochepot}, p. 56.
King's marriage and to negotiate a new peace between France and Savoy, Henri IV was well content to make peace.53

Unfortunately, Cardinal Aldobrandini was considerably sympathetic toward Savoy. On March 31, 1599, Henri IV wrote to Cardinal Joyeuse in Rome that above all else the Cardinal should do what he could to strengthen the pro-French party there, and that the friendship of Cardinal Aldobrandini could make that party the most powerful of all.54 For that reason, the King was unhappy to learn that the Papal nephew had agreed to become protector of Savoy's affairs in Rome, and that the Duke had rewarded him with the provision of a vacant abbey in Savoy.55 In the fall of 1600, the Duke proposed to Cardinal Aldobrandini a marriage of one of the Duke's sons to a daughter of Gian Francesco Aldobrandini, another nephew of the Pope and a favorite of the young Cardinal.56 Despite the Cardinal's clear sympathy for Savoy, or perhaps because of it, Henri IV recognized the need for obtaining the Cardinal's favor, and the King's insistence that his marriage

53Henri IV to De Breves, Maire, December 1, 1600, Henri IV, Lettres Missives, 5:360.

54Henri IV to Cardinal Joyeuse, Fontainebleau, March 31, 1599, Ibid., 5:105.

55Ibid.

be performed by the Cardinal himself was presumably intended to gain the young prelate's goodwill.57

By late December 1600, envoys of Carlo Emmanuele, through the intermediary of Cardinal Aldobrandini, offered to cede to Henri IV not only Bresse, but also two other small alpine territories, Bugey and Valromey, and to pay 200,000 to 300,000 écus to defray the war's cost.58 In return, the French King was to surrender any claim to Saluzzo, give to Savoy four places in Provence and Dauphiné, and provide a road through his new territories on which Spanish troops on their way to the Netherlands might pass without asking permission.59 Henri IV was willing to accept Bugey, Bresse and Valromey in exchange for Saluzzo, to accept payment of 300,000 écus and the return of some of the cannon that had fallen into the Duke's hands when he took Saluzzo, and to permit, on the word and faith of a king, the passage of Spanish troops.60 He would not turn over the four places in Dauphiné and Provence, nor permit Spanish troops passage through his territories without requesting permission, and he insisted that the fortress of St. Catherine, built in defiance of the terms of the Peace of Cateau-Cambresis (1599), which the Duke's father had signed,
be demolished. Henri IV also was irritated by what he considered the Cardinal's favoritism toward the Duke.

By the end of December, Henri IV was willing to cede to Savoy three of the four French places requested: Cental, Demont and Rocqueparvieres, but insisted on retaining the fourth, Chateaudauphin, which, as part of Dauphiné, was the patrimony of the eldest children of the French Kings and was therefore inalienable. He was also willing to allow the Duke the use of the Rhône and of a road running through Bugey, so the Duke and his subjects would have a passageway from Savoy to the County of Burgundy, but the King also insisted on enjoying the same rights in Bugey as in his other lands. Cardinal Aldobrandini not only demanded in the Duke's name, all four of the places in France, but sought to restrict French access to the Rhône in Bugey. Henri IV told his Ambassador to Spain, Rochepot, to advise the Papal Nuncio there, not of an actual complaint against the Cardinal, but merely that he doubted whether someone else should not have been sent as Legate.

61 Ibid., pp. 57-58.  
62 Ibid., p. 60.  
63 Henri IV to Rochepot, Lyon, December 31, 1600, Ibid., pp. 63-64.  
64 Ibid.  
65 The Duke of Savoy also failed to pay Henri IV for the expenses of the war. Ibid., p. 64.  
66 Ibid.
The King and Cardinal finally agreed on a settlement in early January 1601, but the Cardinal refused to sign it, and nearly broke off the negotiations, because of Henri IV's insistence on demolishing Fort St. Catherine. The French King believed that the Fort, should it be returned to Savoy intact, could menace Bugey and cut off a passage from France to Germany. Only the fort's destruction could avert an invasion of the baillages of Chablais Tonon and Terny, and an attack on the fortress itself by the inhabitants of Berne, who were themselves threatened by its existence. If successful, such an invasion would result in the suppression of Catholicism in those territories. Finally, the fortress' continued existence menaced also Geneva, which the French Crown was obliged to protect, "non pour cause de religion, mais pour consideration d'estat."

Two days after the question of Fort St. Catherine interrupted the negotiations, Henri IV overcame the Cardinal's recalcitrance with an offer of 15,000 écus, as a gift to the prelate, out of the 100,000 écus France was to receive from Savoy by the terms of the proposed treaty. On January 17, 1601, Cardinal Aldobrandini and the assembled representatives

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67 Henri IV to Rochepot, Lyon, January 10, 1601, Ibid., p. 66.
68 Ibid., p. 67. 69 Ibid. 70 Ibid.
71 Henri IV to Rochepot, Lyon, January 19, 1601, Ibid., p. 69.
signed the Treaty of Lyon, which permitted the Duke of Savoy to keep Saluzzo and a strip of land between the Valserine and the Grand Cret d'Eau, and permitted him to continue using the Gresin Bridge over the Rhône between l'Encluse and the Arve Bridge.\textsuperscript{72} Henri IV got from the Duke Bresse, Bugey, Valromey and Gex.\textsuperscript{73}

As a consequence of the Treaty, Henri IV could now close at will the most direct route for Spanish troops to travel from Italy to the Netherlands: through the Milanais, Savoy, Franche-Comte, and Lorraine.\textsuperscript{74} Unfortunately, French troops, though they still had ten different routes through the Alps into Italy, no longer possessed, because of the loss of Saluzzo, any operational base for such an invasion.\textsuperscript{75} The independent states of Italy, who could no longer depend on French military aid, became less willing to oppose Spain, and Henri IV was unable to create a defensive league of Venice, Turin, Florence, Modena, Mirandola and Mantua.\textsuperscript{76} In fact, by November 1601, Modena and Mirandola accepted Spanish protection.\textsuperscript{77} A week before the Treaty was actually signed, Henri IV

\textsuperscript{72}Ibid.; Mousnier, \textit{Assassination}, p. 122.

\textsuperscript{73}Mousnier, \textit{Assassination}, p. 122.

\textsuperscript{74}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{75}Ibid., p. 123.

\textsuperscript{76}Ibid.

admitted to Rochepot that, despite French military successes, the Treaty of Lyon was less advantageous to France than the one signed in February 1600, but he wished to content the Pope, in the person of the Legate. However, he believed that Savoy and Spain would secure no more advantage from the Treaty than would France.

One fruit of the Savoy crisis was the restoration of Catholic worship in Gex, which had been exclusively Protestant, despite its Catholic sovereign, since troops from Berne and Geneva forcibly "reformed" it in 1536. Soon after Henri IV obtained Gex from Savoy by the Treaty of Lyon, he heeded the urgings of the Holy See and re-established Catholicism there, despite the protests of Geneva and Berne. Afterward, "both denominations were enabled to live side by side in peace."

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78 Henri IV to Rochepot, Lyon, January 10, 1601, Henri IV, Rochepot, pp. 67-68.

79 Ibid., p. 68.


82 LeCler, Toleration, 2:147.
The Treaty of Lyon by no means ended the expansionist ambitions of Carlo Emmanuele, but now Savoy could expand only at the expense either of the Spanish possessions in Italy or of the Swiss.\textsuperscript{83} Henri IV had placed Geneva under French protection from Savoy by the Declaration of Monceaux of November 11, 1598, which extended the Peace of Vervins to include the Swiss leagues and their allies.\textsuperscript{84} In early 1602, Carlo Emmanuele sought to persuade the Genevans to depart from their alliance with France and to accept his mediation of their dispute with the Pope over the property of the Bishopric of Geneva.\textsuperscript{85} Béthune exposed the Duke's dealings with Geneva to Clement VIII, to discredit the Duke's claims that religious zeal motivated his attitude toward the Calvinist citadel.\textsuperscript{86} Later that year, the Duke launched a surprise attack on Geneva, but his troops were beaten back and, the Genevans, aided by French volunteers, carried the war into Savoy.\textsuperscript{87} Following the restoration of peace, Henri IV applied the benefits of the Treaties of Vervins and Lyon to Geneva in the Treaty of St. Julien of July 1603, and he guaranteed that France would


\textsuperscript{84}Mousnier, \textit{Assassination}, p. 124.


\textsuperscript{86}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{87}Treasure, \textit{France}, p. 60.
permit neither fortifications nor any hostile concentrations within a ten mile radius of the City's walls. In a letter of April 18, 1603, Clement VIII, referring to the attack on Geneva, reproached the French King for giving so much aid to heretics. In reply, Henri IV, writing on June 16, reaffirmed his loyalty to the Church, and contrasted that with those who abused the name of God, "pour couvryr leur convoytyse et troubler la trancquylyte publycque." 

Henri IV was also concerned about the public tranquility in England, where he sought to reduce the persecution of the Catholics and to reunite them for the coming reign. To this end, he favored England's Catholic moderates, who supported both the Tudor monarchy and the order of society, and saw the Jesuits as a menace to both. Like him, these moderates saw the pro-Spanish intrigues of the Jesuits as the reason for the persecution, and believed that, "if both the Pope and the

88Mousnier, Assasination, p. 124.
89Henri IV, Lettres, p. 79, note three.
Queen could be convinced that the Jesuits had perverted the mission from its original object, the Pope would deprive the Jesuits of any connection with it, and the Queen cease to persecute." 93 In 1602, four English Catholics went to Rome to complain that the Jesuits' Archpriest in England sought to exact from his converts an oath of allegiance to the King of Spain, in the event of Elizabeth's death. 94 Béthune secured for the delegation an audience with the Pope, whom he assured that the Queen would not oppose Catholic worship, if it were conducted quietly. 95 However, the delegation's opponents asserted that it was merely a ruse of Queen Elizabeth, and Clement VIII, cautious as ever, forbade any change in the condition of religion in England. 96 By early 1603, Henri IV had been conducting negotiations with the Jesuits, to secure their reunion with the other English Catholics, and to persuade them to behave less provocatively, by means of Robert Owen, an Englishman who was a canon of Mans, and whose brother, living in Flanders, controlled the activities of the

93 Ibid.


95 Ibid.

Jesuits in England.\textsuperscript{97} When the negotiations failed, Henri IV again sought Papal restraint of the order.\textsuperscript{98}

Following James I's accession in 1603, Henri IV continued to urge a policy of moderation on the part of the English King, his Catholic subjects and the Pope, and the French King initially saw signs of better treatment for English Catholics.\textsuperscript{99} Henri IV encouraged James to deal directly with the Papacy, but the English King preferred to negotiate through the English Catholic community in Paris.\textsuperscript{100} James I had grave misgivings about the Jesuits in France, and the heavy-handed efforts of the Jesuit Robert Persons to influence Queen Anne had caused the English King to urge Henri IV to chase them from his kingdom.\textsuperscript{101} This, Henri IV would not do, and he protested the excessive zeal of the English representative, Parry, in demanding the Jesuits' dismissal.\textsuperscript{102}

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\textsuperscript{97}Henri IV to Béthune, Paris, February 11, 1603, Henri IV, Béthune . . . 1602-1604, p. 354. \\
\textsuperscript{98}Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{99}Henri IV to Béthune, Rouen, August 24, 1603, Ibid., pp. 414-15. \\
\textsuperscript{101}Ibid., pp. 32-33. Persons (or Parsons) had already caused a stir in England as the author of a book printed in 1591, which claimed that there had been no legitimate Kings nor Queens in England in the past century, and claimed that the King of Spain and his children were the true heirs to the English throne. Henri IV, Béthune . . . 1601, p. 14, note three. \\
\textsuperscript{102}Maurice Lee, \textit{James I and Henry IV}, p. 33.
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Parry's intemperate language caused him to be reprimanded by James I's chief minister Robert Cecil, and in turn the French King assured James that the Jesuits in France would make no more trouble for him.103

The Papacy had been occupied for many years in seeking the return of the Jesuits to the jurisdictions of the Parlements of Paris, Rouen, Dijon and Grenoble, from whence they had been banished following Jean Chastel's assassination attempt on Henri IV.104 Following the failure of the Cardinal of Florence to secure their return, Clement VIII dispatched to France Lorenzo Maggio, himself a Jesuit, and the Archbishop of Arles, Del Monte, who arrived in Paris in July 1599.105 In the next two years Clement VIII received from the French King many assurances, but no action to secure the order's return.106 Finally, on November 18, 1601, Henri IV sent to Béthune a list of conditions on which he would permit them to remain in those parts of France where they were already permitted: Toulouse, Auch, Agen, Perigeux, Limoges, Tournon and Beziers, and, in addition, to return to Lyon and

103Ibid.


105Ibid.

106Henri IV to Sillery, April 1, 1600, Henri IV to Sillery, April 17, 1600, Henri IV to Sillery, May 12, 1600, and Henri IV to Sillery, May 24, 1600, in Henri IV, Sillery, pp. 5-6, 11, 45, 66-67; Henri IV to Béthune, Paris, November 9, 1601, Henri IV, Béthune ... 1601, pp. 9-10.
Dijon. The Jesuits in France would be permitted to establish colleges or residences only where specified, except by royal permission. All the Jesuits and those who studied under or resided with them must be native born Frenchmen, subject to the laws of the realm. They must have a member at Court, as a hostage for the good behavior of the Society, and all members must take an oath to do nothing against either the King's service or the peace of the realm. The Society may acquire no property without the King's permission. The Diocesan Bishops are to have complete supervision over the members of the Society in their area. Members of the Society may exercise no temporal nor spiritual functions to the prejudice of the Diocesan Bishops, the Universities, Chapters, or Cures, nor of other Religious Orders, and members of the Society may hear confessions and administer the sacraments to their own members only, except by permission of the Bishop. If their behavior merits it, the King will later permit them to operate in more areas, under fewer restrictions. Even under these stringent restrictions, Henri IV did not permit the Jesuits' return until September 1, 1603, when the Edict of Rouen permitted them to remain in their existing houses and to establish colleges at Lyons, Dijon and La Fleche, under the conditions previously given.

108 Ibid.
109 Ibid.
110 Von Pastor, Popes, 23:177.
Subsequently, the Jesuits were permitted in other areas as well. On September 11, 1604, Henri IV, at the request of the clergy and people, permitted the Jesuits to re-establish a college at Rouen. Unfortunately, Clement VIII did not live to see the return of the Jesuits to Paris, which did not occur until 1606. Even then, they were not immediately permitted to resume teaching there.

Why did Henri IV delay so long in permitting the Jesuits' return, and why did he finally readmit them? Von Pastor attributed the delay primarily to Huguenot influence, but the Jesuits' return was hardly more acceptable to the Gallican Catholics in the parlements that had expelled them in the first place. Perhaps the most serious problem was the pro-Spanish element among the Jesuits. Henri IV seems to have been genuinely disturbed by their pro-Spanish political activity in England and elsewhere, and in his letter listing his restrictions on the Jesuits, he noted that they had been


113 Ibid., p. 175; Speech made by the First President of the Parlement to the King, December 24, 1603, in Appendix Six of Mousnier, Assassination, pp. 368-69. In 1600, Parlement had proved so recalcitrant in regard to the Decrees of Trent, and to the Jesuits' return that Henri IV threatened to visit them in person to see that his wishes were carried out. Henri IV to Sillery, May 12, 1600, Henri IV, Sillery, p. 45.
expelled, not only from France and England, but from Sweden and the Netherlands as well.\textsuperscript{114} In his decision to permit them to return, Henri IV was influenced by the writings of the Jesuit Louis Richeome, which especially improved his opinion of the Jesuits' educational system, also by the arguments of Ignace Armand, Provincial of the Jesuits in France, and perhaps most importantly by the persuasion of Pierre Coton, also a Jesuit, who came to the Court to be the resident preacher there, in accordance with the rules laid down by the King.\textsuperscript{115} These men helped convince Henri IV that the Jesuits could be both safe and useful, and a Venetian, Niccolo Contarini, believed that the French King saw the Jesuits also as a useful counterweight to the Huguenots.\textsuperscript{116} Finally, the King, in replying to a speech by the First President of Parlement, Achille de Harlay, opposing the Jesuits' return, cited not only their contribution to education and the worthy lives of the majority of them, but added that if the King of Spain had made use of them, why couldn't the King of France?\textsuperscript{117}


\textsuperscript{115}Von Pastor, \\textit{Popes}, 23:176. \textsuperscript{116}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{117}The King's reply to the objections raised by the First President of the Parlement, December 24, 1603, in Appendix Six of Mousnier, \\textit{Assassination}, pp. 371-72.
The Papacy had not success at all in getting any action from the French King on the two other major conditions of his absolution, the re-establishment of Catholicism in Bearn, and the acceptance of the Decrees of the Council of Trent.\(^\text{118}\)

On May 12, 1600, Henri IV wrote to Sillery that he expected Parlement to obey him in the matter of the Trentine Decrees, "avec toute promptitude et loiaulte," but his words may have been intended for Papal consumption.\(^\text{119}\) As with the Jesuits, Henri IV frequently promised satisfaction on the matter of the Council, but he probably never intended to accept its Decrees, as he considered them as contrary to Royal authority, and to the rights of the Gallican Church, and likely to endanger the fragile religious peace obtained by the Edict of Nantes.\(^\text{120}\)

Neither side was altogether satisfied with the results of the Franco-Papal relations in 1599-1605, but neither could regard it as disastrous either. Henri IV was not especially pleased with Cardinal Aldobrandini's negotiation of the Treaty of Lyon, and disliked the Cardinal's pro-Savoy, and pro-Spanish

\(^{118}\)The re-establishment of Catholicism in Bearn did not occur until the fall of 1620, under Louis XIII. Treasure, France, p. 78.

\(^{119}\)Henri IV to Sillery, May 12, 1600, Henri IV, Sillery, p. 45.

\(^{120}\)Henri IV to Sillery, April 17, 1600, and Henri IV to Sillery, May 12, 1600, Ibid., pp. 10, 60.
The Pope also failed to provide what the French King saw as a necessary discipline of the Jesuits in England. However, the Pope had helped assure the French succession by permitting the King's divorce and remarriage. Pope Clement VIII was disturbed and angered by the Edict of Nantes, the marriage of the King's Protestant sister to a prominent Catholic nobleman, and by the King's support of Protestant powers, such as England and Geneva. However, the King had remained a Catholic, and had returned Catholicism to Gex, and, however hesitantly and reluctantly, had permitted the Jesuits to return to at least some of the areas from which they had been banned. If King and Pope differed on many issues, it was partly because their policies had different orientations. Clement VIII was a Counter-Reformation Pope primarily interested in the struggle of Catholicism with Protestantism. Henri IV's foreign policy was primarily directed toward the secular goal of combatting the Habsburgs, even if this meant taking Protestant allies.

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CHAPTER IV

HENRI IV AND PAUL V: RELIGION AND POLITICS, 1605-1610

On March 3, 1605, Pope Clement VIII, aged sixty-nine, died of apoplexy.\(^1\) After several weeks of balloting, the French Cardinals, supported by the late Pope's nephew, Cardinal Aldobrandini, were able to secure the election of Alessandro de Medici, who, as Legate to France in 1596-98, had negotiated peace between France and Spain.\(^2\) But the seventy year old Cardinal, who took the name of Leo IX, had been ill since his election on April 1, and he died on April 27, only ten days after his coronation.\(^3\) After several more weeks of struggle between the French and Spanish factions, the Cardinals elected a compromise candidate, Camillo Borghese, an expert in Canon Law, who took the name Paul V.\(^4\)

What changes would the new Pope make in relations with France? Would he insist that the French King break with his


\(^{3}\)Ibid.

\(^{4}\)John, Popes, p. 356.
Protestant allies and pursue tougher policies in regard to the Huguenots? Would Henri IV modify his anti-Habsburg orientation to secure continued Papal goodwill? Would the reasonably friendly relations built up between Henri IV and Clement VIII be undone? Finally, how would the new Pope affect the progress of the Counter-Reformation in France? The five years between the death of Clement VIII and that of Henri IV would determine whether relations between the two sovereigns had been truly unique and unrepeatable.

Paul V was born in Rome in 1550.\(^5\) He attended the Universities of Perugia and Padua, and held successively the church offices of Advocate, Vice-Legate at Bologna, Auditor of the Sacred Apostolic Camera, Cardinal-Vicar and finally Legate to Spain.\(^6\) Applying strictly the Decrees of Trent, Paul V forced those bishops living in Rome without good reason to return to their sees.\(^7\) It remained to be seen whether Henri IV's more or less good relations with the Papacy under Clement VIII would continue under his more aggressive successor.\(^8\)

\(^{5}\)Brusher, Ages, p. 466.


\(^{7}\)John, Popes, p. 356.

\(^{8}\)Descriptions of Paul V's character are in Treasure, France, p. 61, and in Hayward, History, p. 290.
Paul V confirmed the appointment as Nuncio to France of Maffeo Barberini, who had been originally appointed by Clement VII in late 1604, and gave him detailed instructions on promoting the revival of Catholicism there. Not surprisingly, one of the major items was to secure the registration and enforcement of the Trentine Decrees. Also, he was to persuade the King to refrain from giving public offices to Huguenots, and instead to reward converts to Catholicism. Other tasks included the Jesuits' return (already being done), the return of Catholicism to Bearn, the suppression of heresy in the town of Chateaudauphin, and French military action against Geneva.

Protestant worship in Chateaudauphin had been forbidden by royal edict in 1598, but continued there anyway. Following the Treaty of Lyon in 1601, Clement VII urged the suppression of Protestantism there, but Henri IV replied by promises and stalling. Clearly he did not relish that task.

10Ibid., 26:3-5. 11Ibid., 26:3. 12Ibid., 26:5.
13Ibid., 26:5.
Finally, the efforts of Barberini achieved the banishment of Calvinism from the little town.\textsuperscript{15}

Barberini was able to secure the dismissal of the unfit Bishop of Apt, Pompey de Perille, and his replacement by a more worthy successor, but he was unable to secure acceptance of the more sweeping reforms of Trent, despite Papal Briefs to the King, to Cardinals d'Ossat, Gondi and Sourdis, and to the royal officials Bellievre and Sillery, requesting their support.\textsuperscript{16} Barberini repeated his urgings in regard to the Decrees at an assembly of French clergy at Paris in late 1605, but Henri IV, responding to another speech there, said that although he continued to desire the Decrees' publication, worldly considerations must often take precedence over heavenly ones.\textsuperscript{17}

The Nuncio was likewise unable to secure either the return of Catholicism to Bearn or a French attack on Geneva, either of which would probably have aroused the Huguenots or France's Protestant neighbors at a time when the Huguenot Duke of Bouillon, who had been implicated in the Marshal Biron's conspiracy in 1602, was still defying the King's

\textsuperscript{15}Von Pastor, \textit{Popes}, 26:5.

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., 26:6-9.

\textsuperscript{17}Response of the King to the Archbishop of Vienne on the remonstrances made by him in the name of the French clergy, Paris, December 5, 1605, Henri IV, \textit{Lettres Intimes de Henri IV}, ed. L. Dussieux (Versailles: L. Cerf et fils, 1876), p. 415.
justice from his principality of Sedan, and posing as a martyr for his religion. Also, Henri IV had secured the use of the Swiss mountain passes for France by means of a defensive alliance with the cantons in 1602, and the next year had committed himself by treaty to Geneva's protection. If he had betrayed Geneva by an attack on the city, he might have had some difficulty getting the Protestant cantons to honor the 1602 treaty.

Barberini returned to Rome after being made a Cardinal on September 11, 1606, and was replaced as Nuncio by Robert Ubaldini, a Florentine who was known to be sympathetic to France. Ubaldini, who arrived in Paris in late fall, 1607, was to remain as Nuncio for nine years. He succeeded in getting the Jesuit Father Coton appointed Confessor to the King, and Tutor to the Dauphin, but was unable to persuade Henri IV to deprive the Huguenots of their strongholds, nor to set up the Inquisition in France, nor secure acceptance of the Decrees of Trent. In fact, Ubaldini admitted, in his

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20Von Pastor, Popes, 26:9.  
21Ibid., 26:9-10.

22Ibid., 26:11-12.
report to Rome on August 19, 1608, that securing the acceptance of the Decrees of Trent was not at that time possible. 23

An important episode in Franco-Papal diplomacy in the final five years of Henri IV's reign was France's arbitration of Paul V's quarrel with Venice. Venice, Catholic, but often very independent in its attitude toward the Papacy, had been the first Catholic state to recognize Henri IV as King, and first to lend him money. 24 In 1600, Henri IV attempted, apparently with success, to arbitrate a quarrel between Venice and the Papacy over a canal that the Venetians proposed to dig within the boundaries of the Papal territory of Ferrara. 25 A much more serious controversy developed in late 1605, when Venice, which in 1603 had prohibited the building of new monasteries and churches in the city without permission of the government, forbade any further gifts and legacies of land or money to the Church, and arrested and proposed to try before its own Council of Ten two priests accused of secular crimes. 26 On December 25, 1605, Venice

23 Ibid., 26:13.


25 Henri IV to Sillery, April 17, 1600, Henri IV, Lettres inedites du roi Henri IV a monsieur de Sillery, 1 avril-27 juin 1600, ed. E. Halphen (Paris: J. Aubry, 1866), pp. 9-10. The writer has found no other reference to this affair.

received from Paul V two identical briefs demanding repeal of the two laws, and that the two priests be handed over to the Holy See. Venice's refusal led to the threat of an interdict being placed upon the city if the Pope's demands were not met within a certain grace period. An attempt by Henri IV to gain an extension of the grace period by the Pope failed, because of the recalcitrance of the Venetians and the interdict was duly promulgated on April 17, 1606.

The struggle escalated rapidly. Venice dismissed its Papal Nuncio, denounced the Interdict as invalid, and ordered its clergy to conduct services as usual. The Jesuits, Capuchins and Theatines were expelled from the city for refusing to conduct religious observances, in obedience to the Interdict. Henri IV, who feared Spanish military action against Venice if the crisis were not resolved quickly and peaceably, sought to reconcile the parties, but his peace proposal of August, and that of the French Cardinals in Rome in November both failed.

29 Ibid., p. 385; Von Pastor, Popes, 25:158.
30 Wiel, Venice, pp. 385-86. 31 Ibid., p. 386.
Ambassador to Venice prejudiced his kingdom's role as mediator by his excessive partiality toward Venice. True to Henri IV's fears, the King of Spain ordered his Governor of Milan, the Count of Fuentes, to raise a large army in support of the Pope, while the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph IV promised the Pope the aid of a force comparable in size to that of the Spanish.

In January and February 1607, Henri IV and his ministers warned the Venetian Ambassador in France that Venice was not nearly so well supported in Europe as it thought, warned the Republic not to trust to the support of the English, and declined to commit France to a proposed alliance between Venice, England and itself. With the ground properly prepared, Henri IV then sent Cardinal Joyeuse to Venice to negotiate between them and the Holy See. On April 21, after


prolonged and extremely complicated negotiations, Venice was reconciled with the Papacy.37 Venice turned over the two prisoners, not to the Pope, as agreed upon, but to the French Ambassador, who then turned them over to Cardinal Joyeuse, the representative of the Pope. The offending laws were not enforced, at least for the time being, and all of the clergy who had been forced to emigrate because of the Interdict were permitted to return, except for the Jesuits, whose return was put off until later.38 In return for these and other concessions, Cardinal Joyeuse, in the name of the Pope, granted absolution to the city, and, to emphasize the change, he celebrated a mass with great ceremony.39

The French King also sought to reconcile the Papacy with England, where James I had been disappointing Henri IV's original hopes for better treatment of English Catholics. In April 1605, the Venetian Ambassador in England recounted in detail the sufferings of English Catholics under the harsh laws against Catholic practices, and in June of that year the too-vigorous enforcement of these laws by local officials led to a rebellion in Wales that initially alarmed the English

38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
government. On November 9, the Venetian Ambassador reported that the incoming Parliament, "full of puritans," sought new laws against the Catholics, and the English King was said to share that desire. Parliament was to have opened on November 15, but its opening was delayed and it was subsequently adjourned until February 1, 1606, following the discovery of a plot by Thomas Percy and several other young Catholic noblemen to blow up Parliament, as well as the King and other dignitaries, on its opening day. In a speech to Parliament before its adjournment James I said that he did not blame English Catholics as a whole for the misdeeds of a few.

Despite his conciliatory words, when Parliament in the spring of 1606 passed two harsh new bills aimed at English Catholics, James I gave his royal assent. One offered large


rewards for denouncing priests, heavily fined those who did not marry or have their children baptized in a Protestant church, and greatly limited Catholics' freedom of movement.\textsuperscript{45}

The other bill made it treason to convert to Roman Catholicism, required all subjects, and their guests and servants to attend Anglican services under pain of heavy fines, and imposed a loyalty oath on all Englishmen over eighteen.\textsuperscript{46} This oath had one section certain to offend the Papacy:

\begin{quote}
I do further swear that I do from my heart, abhor, detest and abjure, as impious and heretical, this damnable doctrine and position: that princes, which be excommunicated by the pope, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever. And I do believe, and in my conscience am resolved, that neither the pope, nor any other person whatsoever, hath power to absolve me from this oath, nor any part thereof.\textsuperscript{47}
\end{quote}

A first refusal to take the oath was punishable by imprisonment; a second refusal by life imprisonment, loss of citizenship, and confiscation of goods.\textsuperscript{48}

The loyalty oath further split English Catholics, and angered Paul V who issued two briefs on the subject in the fall of 1606 and a year later in the fall of 1607 condemning the oath and warning English Catholics not to take it.\textsuperscript{49}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{45}Ibid., 2:409. \quad \textsuperscript{46}Ibid. \quad \textsuperscript{47}Ibid. \quad \textsuperscript{48}Ibid.
\end{flushright}

Nevertheless, George Blackwell, Archpriest for England, while already in prison, took the oath and defended his action.  

In 1608, Paul V replaced Blackwell as Archpriest with George Birkhead, and threatened to excommunicate those Catholics who took the oath. The Venetian Ambassador feared that this action would only increase persecution, and the execution of a Benedictine monk was partly attributed to the excommunication threat, which increasingly forced English Catholics to choose between their consciences and their lives.

Henri IV and his Ambassador in England, de la Boderie, were shocked by the severity of the two laws and tried unsuccessfully to persuade James I to refuse his assent to them. In regard to the propaganda war between James and Cardinal Bellarmine, who had tried to persuade Blackwell to revoke his assent to the oath, Henri IV advised his Ambassador to remain silent on the matter to avoid increasing persecution of the English Catholics.

James I's quarrels with the Pope and the English King's persecution of his Catholic subjects put Henri IV in a very

50Le Cler, Toleration, 2:410.


52LeCler, Toleration, 2:409-410.

53Ibid., 2:410.
difficult position. A too-vigorous support of the heretic King might cause the Papacy and Catholic Europe to doubt the sincerity of the French King's own conversion. Nevertheless, Henri IV continued to need what allies he could get against the Habsburgs, so he attempted to avoid taking sides.

The final crisis of Henri IV's life began with death of the German prince John-William, ruler of the territories of Cleves, Jülich, Berg, Mark and Ravensburg in March 1609. These lands were small in area, but were heavily populated, wealthy, and strategically placed to facilitate, or block, an invasion of the United Provinces, of the Spanish Netherlands, or of the Archbishopric of Liege. John-William, who had been mentally deranged, died childless, throwing the succession open to a multitude of claimants. The Counter-Reformation had been highly successful in the lands of the late prince, but the two rulers with the best hereditary claim to the lands, John-Sigismund of Brandenburg and Wolfgang-William of Neuberg, were Protestants. Consequently, Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph II, claiming sovereignty, appointed an administrator for the lands until he could secure a Catholic successor. Nevertheless, in June 1609, Brandenburg and Neuburg signed the Treaty of Dortmund, in which they agreed to rule the lands in common until the succession could be settled either through negotiations between the two princes.

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or through arbitration by a committee of German Protestant rulers. The same month, Rudolph II replied by proclaiming the sequestration of the lands, and sent Archduke Leopold, Bishop of Passau and Strasbourg, to take possession of the lands. Aided by Spanish gold and Spanish troops from the Netherlands, Archduke Leopold captured the town of Julich, and began massing troops in Strasbourg for further conquests. Brandenburg and Neuburg then appealed for help to the Evangelical Union, a league of German Protestant rulers organized in 1608. The Evangelical Union did not feel strong enough to oppose the Emperor alone, so it sent Prince Christian of Anhalt to secure the aid of France.

Henri IV, as early as 1605 had warned the German Protestant rulers that they must find a solution to the succession question of Cleves-Julich. He was willing to go to war to keep the Habsburgs from occupying such important territories, but by the end of September, the Venetian Ambassador in England reported that the conflict was cooling down, and added, incorrectly, that Archduke Leopold had pulled out of

56 Mousnier, Assassination, p. 133; Ibid., 1:299.
57 Holborn, Germany, 1:299.
58 Mousnier, Assassination, pp. 132-33.
However, on November 30, the young Prince of Condé, whose teenage wife Henri IV had sought to make his mistress, fled with his wife to the Spanish Netherlands. Condé's defection was particularly serious, not only because of the enormous number of vassals and supporters such an important prince could command, but also because, if the King had no legitimate issue Condé had the best hereditary claim to the French throne. If Condé could cast doubt on the validity of the French King's marriage to Marie de Medici, the heir to the throne would have been in Spanish hands. Condé later went to northern Italy where the Count of Fuentes, the Spanish Governor of Milan showed his regard for the importance of his guest by entertaining him lavishly. After Condé's flight, France and the Habsburgs moved steadily, if cautiously toward war. Henri IV tried to win the support of James I by offering to repay promptly a portion of the enormous debts France owed England for previous aid, but the only firm commitment the

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60 Mousnier, Assassination, p. 135.

61 Ibid.

French King could obtain was from the wily Duke of Savoy. Nevertheless, Henri IV was making plans for what could have become a general European war when he was murdered on May 14, 1610.

Why was Henri IV planning to enter into a major war with the Habsburgs with few and unreliable allies? Edmund H. Dickerman has suggested that such a war offered the ill, aging French King a chance to return to the triumphs of his youth or else to perish gloriously on the battlefield. On the other hand, J. Michael Hayden has denied that a major conflict was being planned at all. Those sources who were best informed and most reliable, Henri's former ministers Villeroy, Sillery and Jeanin, never claimed that Henri IV was planning more than a one, or at most a two, front war. French armies would attack primarily Cleves-Jülich itself, though there might have been a secondary attack on Spanish-held northern Italy. Furthermore, the French King might have won sufficient concessions without bloodshed, since his

64 Hayden, "Continuity," p. 4.
opponents were giving in. For example, the Cardinal-Archduke Albert, nominal ruler of the Spanish Netherlands, had agreed to Henri IV's request to permit French troops to pass through his lands on their way to Cleves-Jülich. Even so, less than a month before Henri IV's assassination Villeroy had warned the French Ambassador to England that all things tended toward a general war.

As late as March 20, 1610, Henri IV had praised Paul V's impartiality and his attempts to mediate between the contending parties. Villeroy was less pleased when the Pope finally sided with the Habsburgs, but he noted the Pontiff's continuing efforts to bring peace between France and Spain.

The accession of Paul V had not fundamentally changed Henri IV's policy of attempting to keep as allies both the Pope and the Protestant states. Indeed he could do little else if he wanted France to maintain its independence of the Habsburgs, because the non-Habsburg Catholic states were simply not strong enough to permit a foreign policy at once anti-Protestant and anti-Habsburg. Letters from Henri IV

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67 Ibid.
70 Dickerman, Villeroy, p. 117; Villeroy to de la Boderie, Paris, May 9, 1610, Ibid., p. 152.
in 1610 reveal that he still regarded the Habsburgs as his primary enemy. Replacement of the conciliatory Clement VIII by the more aggressive, legalistic Paul V made it increasingly difficult for France to maintain friendly relations with both the Papacy and with such states as Venice and England, but Henri IV nevertheless was able to continue doing so. Within France, Papal Nuncios promoted the Counter Reformation more vigorously and successfully than those of Clement VIII, although the decrees of Trent remained unregistered, and Catholicism still had not returned to Bearn. Henri IV, as shown by the Chateaudauphin affair, was sometimes willing even to expel the Huguenots from certain limited areas, provided such measures did not weaken royal authority or disrupt the peace of the realm, in order to please the Papacy. Henri IV's policies, even in matters of religion were essentially secular and political.

CONCLUSION

If Henri IV never fully satisfied Popes Clement VIII and Paul V, it was largely because of a difference in priorities. Clement VIII and Paul V were Counter-Reformation Popes, primarily concerned with stemming the tide of Protestantism, and with removing the abuses in the Catholic Church that gave rise to Protestantism. If the King of Spain was overbearing at times, he at least battled the infidel and the heretic, and supported the reforms of Trent. By contrast, Henri IV saw the Habsburgs as the most dangerous enemy. He rejected Clement VIII's requests for his participation in proposed crusades against the heretic English and the infidel Turks, because he saw the Habsburgs as the true beneficiaries of such hostilities, and he defended, also for reasons of state, Geneva against Spain's ally Savoy.¹ At home, Henri IV opposed the introduction

of the Trentine decrees and the Jesuits' return at least partly because both would stir up too much opposition from the Huguenots and the Gallican Catholics. In addition, Henri IV, at least for a while, saw the Jesuits as a subversive, pro-Spanish element. Henri IV was determined to maintain France's religious peace, so his kingdom could be strong and united against the continuing Spanish threat.

Even the religious toleration for which he has been justly famed was for Henri IV primarily a means of attaining and preserving France's internal peace and order. The significance of the Chateaudauphin affair was that even Henri IV was willing, if reluctant, to please the Pope by banishing heresy from a limited area, provided France's internal peace was not threatened.

Indeed, the disturbing feature of Henri IV's religious policies was that religion was so often subordinated to politics. If the partisans of the Ligue too often made religion the sole consideration in politics, Henri IV too often made politics the sole consideration in religious matters. To be sure, Henri IV was by no means unsympathetic to the Catholic

2Henri IV to Sillery, April 1, 1600, and Henri IV to Sillery, May 12, 1600, Henri IV, Lettres inedites du roi Henri IV a monsieur de Sillery, 1 avril-27 juin 1600, ed. Eugene Halphen (Paris: J. Aubry, 1600), pp. 5-6, 59-60.

revival taking place in early Seventeenth Century France, but his overriding concern for politics could put him in opposition to reforms in such matters as ecclesiastical benefices. Also, if Henri IV would tolerate the Huguenots primarily for the sake of the peace of his kingdom, his grandson might see no further reason to tolerate them when they were no longer a threat to the peace of the kingdom.

Certainly, if Henri IV had never existed, or at least had never become King, France's recovery from the religious wars would have been much slower and more difficult. No other figure of his day had his understanding of when to use firmness and when leniency in winning over the opposition, and no other figure was able to gain the confidence of both sides to the extent he was. The last Valois were too weak in body and will to pacify France, while the Guises were too partisan. If there had not been a Henri IV France might have become, at least temporarily, a Spanish dependency. The Spanish, or their sympathizers controlled large areas of France, including many major cities, at Henri IV's accession, and they might have won the rest, had Henri IV not partly defused the religious issue by his conversion, and then united both Huguenot and Catholic moderates against the Spanish-Ligue forces.

Had Navarre not converted, however, he might have been never more than a nominal ruler, and might have ended his
days in battle, or in exile. The vast majority of Frenchmen were still Catholics, and could not accept the idea of a King of a religion different from their own. Once he converted, however, and offered moderate and generous terms to those who had rebelled against him, support of the Ligue melted away. But Henri IV went a step further, and made repeated and ultimately successful attempts to be reconciled with the Papacy itself, thereby further removing doubts as to the sincerity of his conversion, and gaining a valuable ally in Rome.

If Henri IV and his conversion and reconciliation with the Papacy had been important in France, it was also quite important in a Rome chafing under Spanish domination. The French King's reconciliation with Rome, and his support of the Papacy prevented a possible schism of the Catholic Church in France, and also made possible greater Papal independence of Spain.
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