

**THE MEMOIRS OF A  
PROTESTANT, CONDEMNED  
TO THE GALLEYS OF  
FRANCE FOR HIS RELIGION**

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The Memoirs of a Protestant, Condemned to the Galleys of France for His Religion by Jean Marteilhe & Oliver Goldsmith & Austin Dobson

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**JEAN MARTEILHE & OLIVER GOLDSMITH & AUSTIN DOBSON**

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FRANCE FOR HIS RELIGION**



**MEMOIRS OF A PROTESTANT**


*VOLUME FIRST*

*This Edition is limited to One Thousand copies, of which  
Five Hundred are for sale in America.*

Extra Law. 26. 11. 1750

Recd of Mr. ~~Exmouth~~ Dilly Six pounds  
thirteen shillings and four pence. in  
full for his third share of my trans-  
-lation of a Book entitled Memoirs  
of a Protestant - Condemned to the Gallie  
for Religion, &c Owen Goddards

Feb. 13, 4



[Jean Marteilhe]

THE  
MEMOIRS  
OF A PROTESTANT

*CONDEMNED TO THE GALLEYS OF FRANCE  
FOR HIS RELIGION*

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

TRANSLATED BY  
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
AUSTIN DOBSON

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### INTRODUCTION.

THAT threadbare dictum of Terentianus Maurus touching books and their destinies, was never more exactly verified than by the history of the record of which the present volume is a reprint. In the year 1757 was issued at Rotterdam, by J. and D. Beman and Son of that city, a little thick octavo of 552 pages, "on grey paper with blunt type," of which the following is the textual title:—'*Mémoires d'un Protestant, Condamné aux Galères de France pour Cause de Religion; écrits par lui même: Ouvrage, dans lequel, outre le récit des souffrances de l'Auteur depuis 1700 jusqu'en 1713; on trouvera diverses Particularités curieuses, relatives à l'Histoire de ce Temps-là, & une Description exacte des Galères & de leur Service.*' In 1774 a second edition of the book was published at the Hague, to be followed four years later by a third. In the Rotterdam impression the names of some

of the personages and localities had been simply indicated by initials; in the third issue of 1778, the author having died not many months before, these particulars were inserted at full. It then transpired that the Memoirs, concerning the authenticity of which, from internal evidence, there could never have been any reasonable doubt, were those of a certain Jean Marteilhe of Bergerac on the Dordogne, in the Province of Perigord in France, and that they had been edited and prepared for the press from Marteilhe's manuscripts by M. Daniel de Superville — probably the second of that name, since Daniel de Superville, the elder, a notable personage among the leaders of the Reformed Church, had long been dead when the book appeared in its first form.

Circulating chiefly among the members of a proscribed community, and published in a foreign country, these remarkable autobiographical experiences, notwithstanding their three editions, had practically been lost sight of in France until some thirty years ago; and the account of their revival—as partly recorded in a lengthy note to the excellent *Forçats pour la Foi* of M. Coquerel Fils—

is sufficiently curious. About 1865, according to M. Coquerel, copies of the book were so rare as to be almost unobtainable. There was none in the Bibliothèque Nationale of France; and the only example known in Paris belonged to a Protestant banker, M. Félix Vernes, by whom it had been lent occasionally to historical students and connoisseurs. At Amsterdam, there was a second copy in the library of M. Van Woortz, and it was believed that other copies existed in Holland. There was also, or at all events there is now, a copy at the British Museum. Meanwhile, the book had greatly impressed the fortunate few into whose hands it had come. Michelet, who makes mention of it both in his *Louis XIV et le Duc de Bourgogne*, and his *Louis XIV et la Révocation*, spoke of it in terms of the highest enthusiasm. It was written (he said) "*comme entre terre et ciel.*" Why was it not re-printed? The reply lay no doubt in the difficulty of procuring a copy to print from; and its ultimate reproduction was the result of an accident. In a Catalogue of German books, M. François Vidal, pastor of the Reformed Church at Bergerac, came upon the title of a work purporting