

**GASPARD DE COLIGNY: (MARQUIS
DE CHATILLON), ADMIRAL OF
FRANCE, COLONEL OF FRENCH
INFANTRY, GOVERNOR OF PICARDY,
ILE DE FRANCE, PARIS, AND HAVRE**

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Gaspard de Coligny: (Marquis de Chatillon), admiral of France, colonel of French infantry, governor of Picardy, Ile de France, Paris, and Havre by Walter Besant

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WALTER BESANT

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THE NEW PLUTARCH

GASPARD DE COLIGNY

Opinions of the Press on "Coligny."

Spectator.

"Coligny is a familiar name to most Englishmen, yet, strange to say, the little volume before us is the first narrative of his life as yet published in England. . . . We recommend this little volume, the first of the 'New Plutarch Series,' as recording a life which has the strongest claims on our sympathy and admiration. Its exterior, we would add, is marked by singularly good taste, as, indeed, we should have expected from the publishers."

Saturday Review.

"Coligny's career is not only full of interest in itself, but is of great historical importance. . . . Mr. Besant has consulted every possible authority concerning the character and deeds of Coligny, and the result of his labour is a volume from which the reader may in an hour or two acquire in the pleasantest way a great deal of knowledge concerning one of the most stirring times of history and one of its principal figures."

Graphic.

"The descriptions of life at Chatillon-sur-Loing, the ancient castle of the knightly race whose blood, it may not always be remembered, still survives in the line of Kaiser Wilhelm, and the account of those curious episodes in Huguenot history, the attempt to plant colonies in Brazil and Florida, may be mentioned as chapters of especial incident in a memoir that is everywhere worth reading."

University Magazine.

"An admirably written sketch of one of those representative makers of history; it is both historical and biographical, a life on the Plutarch model. . . . A careful study, we had almost said an etching, of the great and good man who is its subject."

Nonconformist.

"A most compact and masterly sketch."

Literary World.

"Possesses unquestionable interest for all classes of readers who would be likely to be attracted to a series of biographical books. . . . A glowing picture of the man who, as Michelet rightly observes, was the most impeccable of all the distinguished characters who illustrated that important period of French history."

Examiner.

"We can unhesitatingly recommend the book, and hope it will find as many readers as it deserves."

Daily Chronicle.

"Possesses one great merit in being entirely new, no previous biography of the illustrious Frenchman having hitherto appeared in English. Coligny won distinction as an admiral and general, but it is as one of the great leaders of the Huguenots that he will be remembered. Of his grand efforts in the cause of Protestantism in France a most interesting account is given."

Pall Mall Gazette.

"The life of Coligny is well done."

Bristol Mercury.

"Has undoubtedly supplied a gap in the biographical shelves of English libraries."

Methodist.

"We cordially welcome this well-executed contribution to the literature of religious and political liberty."

Edinburgh Daily Review.

"Reveals to us altogether new facts—new out of France at least, and known to but few there—regarding Coligny as the first to establish the discipline of armies, and as the promoter of colonising expeditions to Brazil and Florida, that there he might provide the toleration denied at home. . . . Apart from the book being a delightful biography, we do not hesitate to say that Mr. Besant has contributed a new chapter to the history of the Reformation."

Christian Life.

"A most timely and interesting book. . . . We agree with the statement that there is no grander figure in the sixteenth century than that of the great Admiral."



GASPARD DE COLIGNY.



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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN sending forth the Second Edition of this Life of Coligny, the first of the Series which we have ventured to call the "New Plutarch," I am anxious to express my grateful sense of its reception by the press and the reading public both here and in America, and my hope that the Admiral may become, among a still wider circle of readers, a great exemplar of the highest life attainable—that in which a man accepts cheerfully the weight of his own responsibility, refuses to follow vain tradition and pretended authority, and acts according to his convictions and conscience. And for my own part, I do not know anywhere in history, unless it be that of Abraham Lincoln, a grander illustration of such a life than this wise, far-seeing, long-suffering statesman.

Some of my critics have objected to the space devoted, in so small a volume, to the colonisation projects. I am, on the whole, inclined to think that, considering how noble a conception they illustrate, the amount of space is not out of proportion to their importance. It has been my especial aim to show Coligny as a man very far in advance of his age. This dream of a trans-Atlantic France, entirely his

own, is worthy to stand beside that other vision which he had of a French alliance with the Protestant Powers, and the aggrandisement of France at the expense of Spain.

The book has been treated, by certain reviewers, as a Protestant manifesto. That is not so. That Coligny was the noblest outcome of the Protestantism of his age is perfectly true. It seems to me also true that no such man could possibly have come out of the camps of Philip, Alva, or Guise. The world was then, as it is now, divided into two classes. In the one are those who take shelter under the wing of Authority. Among them are the ignorant, the superstitious, and the timid; with all those who are ready to accept any raft which seems to offer safety, after long battling with waves of doubt. In the second class are the men who reject Authority; who have the courage to think for themselves; who are not afraid of their Father. Among these we find the men to whom the world has most reason to be grateful, and of whom mankind is most justly proud.

W. B.

UNITED UNIVERSITY CLUB,
September, 1879.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE murder of Admiral Coligny, on the day of Bartholomew, 1572, proved the death-blow to the French Reformation. Other things, of course, contributed to this failure. I advanced the opinion four years ago, in a paper published in the *British Quarterly*, that one great cause was the fact that the scholars and divines of France did not take part in the movement. On the contrary, they held themselves aloof or condemned it. While in England the great scholars and eminent divines all came over to the new Faith, in France we see them either openly hostile or else indifferent, coldly waiting to see the event of the struggle.

There is, in the history of every religious persecution, a dreadful monotony of enthusiasm, patience, and perseverance. All can endure who believe; but the blood of English martyrs bore fruit in English freedom, while that of their French brethren would seem to have been spilt in vain. The little volume which follows tries to show how one man, a man of indomitable patience, steadfastness, and clearness of brain, brought together the Protestantism which lay scattered loosely over the whole country, and which, had it not been for him, would have been stamped out in detail, as it was in Spain and Italy; how he fought a losing fight, but never gave way; and how, when