

ROYAL GOVERNMENT IN GUYENNE  
DURING THE FIRST WAR OF RELIGION:  
1561 - 1563

by

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- ABSTRACT -

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the principal challenges to royal authority and the means by which royal authority was maintained in France during the first War of Religion (1561-1563). The latter half of the sixteenth century was a critical period for the French monarchy. Great noble families attempted to re-establish their feudal power at the expense of the crown. Francis II and Charles IX, kings who were merely boys, succeeded strong monarchs on the throne. The kingdom was impoverished by foreign wars and overrun by veteran soldiers, ill-absorbed into civil life. Calvinism spread rapidly and became not only a religious but a political movement drawing ideological and organizational support from Geneva. The powerful Hapsburg monarch, Philip II, watched affairs in France with a suspicious eye and frequently manipulated matters affecting the French court. Not only were his border territories in the Pyrenees threatened but the Spanish king rightly feared that religious division in France would have repercussions in his rich low country territories. The province of Guyenne was chosen as a setting for this study because it was the province of the first prince of the blood, it was close to the Spanish kingdom, it had a history of concern for local prerogatives, and it had a large number of Huguenot believers and congregations.

Not least among the reasons for choosing Guyenne in which to study royal government was the availability of abundant documentary sources. This thesis is based primarily upon the examination of memoirs and correspondence. Most important of the memoirs are those of Blaise de Monluc, lieutenant-general of Guyenne. The critical edition of these together with a biography and a study of the historical accuracy and significance of Monluc's Commentaires have been prepared by Professor Paul Courteault. Among the documents available is the extensive correspondence of Catherine de Médicis, the letters of Antoine de Bourbon, those of Monluc, and many letters of Charles IX and of provincial officers.

Royal government in France was not based on a financial, administrative or military foundation adequate for the king to force his will upon his subjects. Interest groups allied to the king had popularized an ideology of royal authority which served royal interests. Personal contact with his subjects, especially with the nobility enhanced royal authority. The basis of royal government, however, was the goodwill and co-operation of individuals in positions of influence. King Charles IX and Catherine de Médicis, the queen mother, constantly sought to gain and maintain such goodwill and support. They granted offices and honours which carried with them the opportunity of professional advancement and personal enrichment. An extensive

correspondence tended to maintain their knowledge of affairs throughout the kingdom and their influence over their subjects. Nevertheless they had to balance individual noble against noble, faction against faction; Parlement against governor in constant negotiation to maintain royal authority.

The identification of the personnel who represented the king in Guyenne reveals ways in which provincial resources could be mobilized for the crown and against the crown. In a period of civil war the military organization of the royal army within the province was of critical importance particularly when the army was largely local. Local notables appointed officers, recruited soldiers and commanded the forces. Just as important to the crown were the financial institutions of the province. As with the military institutions, it is essential to determine the ways in which those institutions facilitated royal government and the ways in which they could be made to serve the particular interests of individuals and groups other than the crown.

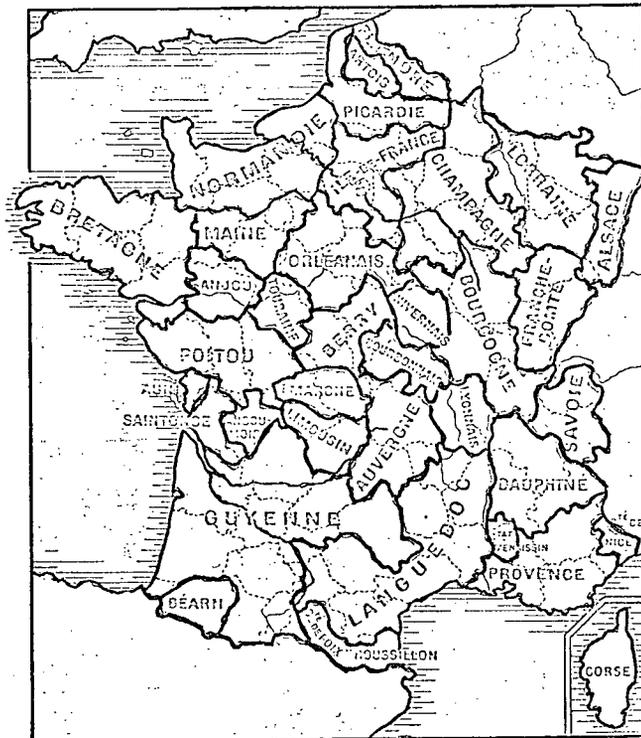
The designation "absolute" as applied to the sixteenth-century French monarchy must be somewhat qualified as a result of an examination of the functioning of local and provincial institutions: voluntary (leagues), representative (Estates) and appointed (Parlement). It is to the nature of that monarchy that the present study is addressed. The province of Guyenne and the first years of civil war provide the historical setting.

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PROVINCES OF FRANCE



## CHAPTER I

### THE MONARCHY AND CHALLENGES TO ROYAL GOVERNMENT

#### Absolute Monarchy

The French monarchy of the mid-sixteenth century was as powerful as at any time in history. Louis XII (1498-1515), Francis I (1515-1547) and Henry II (1547-1559) each contributed to the prestige and authority of the crown. Widely held political theory maintained that the king received his sovereignty from God and was the law incarnate. In spite of the persistent tradition that they must live on the revenue from their own domain, these monarchs increased their ability to tax subjects at will. At the same time they extended royal control over financial administration, legislation and the administration of justice. During this period great feudal rivals were eliminated and their lands returned to the crown. Georges Pagès expressed an interpretation representative of many historians in the words, "Francis I and Henry II were as powerful as any other kings of France; it was at the beginning of the sixteenth century that the absolute monarchy triumphed." <sup>1</sup>

The term "absolute" applied to the French monarchy of the sixteenth century must be carefully qualified. The administration

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted by J. Russell Major, Representative Institutions in Renaissance France, 1421-1559 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1960), p. 3.

encompassed ten or twelve thousand officers and was the largest in Europe.<sup>1</sup> A professional army garrisoned fortified places and enclosed cities throughout the kingdom.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the king's ability to enforce his will from one end of his extensive kingdom to the other was limited. By the time of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559 decades of war in Italy had extended royal credit to the breaking point and the monarchy was deeply in debt.<sup>3</sup> On the one hand the financial position of the crown limited the patronage that could be dispensed. Officers went unremunerated sometimes for years.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand more offices were created for the revenue they would bring. The sale of offices was first systematized under Francis I and grew in spite of periodic legislation to the contrary.<sup>5</sup> This venality of offices limited royal power since an office-holder could only be removed by repurchasing his office or by means of a lengthy trial. Royal control over office-holders was further limited since men named their own successors or resigned in favour

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<sup>1</sup>Roland Mousnier, Les XVI<sup>e</sup> et XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècles (Vol. IV of Histoire Générale des Civilisations, ed. Maurice Crouzet, 3rd edition; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961), p. 116.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Henri Hauser, "The European Financial Crisis of 1559," Journal of Economic and Business History, II (February, 1930).

<sup>4</sup>Alphonse de Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon et Jeanne d'Albret (Paris: Adolphe Labitte, 1882), III, 261.

<sup>5</sup>Mousnier, op. cit., pp. 118-119.

of men of their choice. The large number of royal officers was thus a mixed blessing and important tasks were frequently committed to the holders of short-term commissions.

A second qualification must be placed upon the term "absolute" when it is applied to the monarchy of 1559. The monarchy was personal in nature; it was no abstract kingship to which the French bowed. When the king's power was exercised by someone else on his behalf, other great persons refused to obey. Factions formed at the court, rivalry for power ensued and those exercising royal power were accused of holding the sovereign as a prisoner.<sup>1</sup> The personal nature of the monarchy was recognized by Francis I and Henry II who sought to capitalize on it. Only upon the death of Henry II and the accession of Francis II and Henry III as minors did this characteristic of the monarchy become a serious drawback.

Before speaking of an "absolute monarchy" it is essential to identify at least a third limitation. The French kingdom was far from homogeneous, in fact, it was made up of many states within the state. A man was Gascon or Breton before he was French and consequently the authority of local institutions and local notables could be much greater than that of orders from a distant capital. This characteristic of the kingdom could be exploited by

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<sup>1</sup>James W. Thompson, The Wars of Religion in France, 1559-1576 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1909), p. 18.

the monarch who maintained local institutions and directed them to his purposes. Similarly royal power was enhanced when it was exercised by men of the most prestigious local houses. On the other hand, local officials and local institutions could become preoccupied with local privileges and on occasion, acted in local rather than royal interests.

### The Great Nobles

The old feudalism based on the granting of fiefs was complemented by a "new feudalism" in which the lord-vassal relationship was replaced by a patron-client relationship. A few great nobles were able to gain tremendous power through the size and importance of their followings. Economic conditions forced many of the lesser nobility to seek advancement in the service of these great lords.<sup>1</sup> The client offered loyal service in exchange for advancement and protection before the law. The clients of a great lord occupied positions ranging from minor household posts and men of arms in his company to captains of châteaux and officers in the royal service.<sup>2</sup>

To three noble families, Guise, Montmorency and Bourbon, practically all the nobility were allied by ties of vassalage,

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<sup>1</sup>J. Russell Major, "The Crown and the Aristocracy in Renaissance France," American Historical Review, Vol. 69 (April, 1964), pp. 630-646.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

family or clientage.<sup>1</sup> In 1559 the Guises were most powerful and they dominated all the provinces of the east: Champagne, Lorraine, Bourgogne, Lyonnais and Dauphiné. From the border of Artois to the Pyrenees the Bourbon name was obeyed. In the southwest Antoine de Bourbon was king of Navarre and governor of Guyenne while north of the Loire the prince de Condé governed or had a large following in Picardie, the Île-de-France, Normandie, Orléanais, Vendômois, Touraine and Bretagne. The Guises were allied by marriage to the crowns of France, Scotland and Denmark. Under Henry II they enjoyed royal favour and gained great wealth. The Bourbon ties were ties of blood and Antoine de Bourbon, the first prince of the blood was next in line for the throne after the sons of the king. Unlike the Guises, the Bourbon family was disunited and the younger brother, Condé, possessed greater character and a stronger following but lacked the authority of the first prince of the blood. The third great family was the house of Montmorency and its influence fell between Bourbon and Guise, both geographically and in the politics of the court. The constable Anne de Montmorency was the greatest landholder in the kingdom. Consequently his support came from the large number of vassals who held fiefs from him. His family lacked the blood and the titles of Bourbon or Guise and they owed everything to Francis I and Henry II. Hence

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<sup>1</sup>Lucien, Romier, Le Royaume de Catherine de Médicis (Paris: Perrin, 1922), I, 223.

they were above all, loyal to the crown. Guise and Bourbon ambitions were incompatible and to support either house was to alienate the other. Therefore, the Montmorency family held the balance of power.<sup>1</sup>

### The Guise Regency

Immediately upon the death of Henry II the Guises seized and surrounded the person of the new king, Francis II. They were able to gain control partly through their niece Mary Stuart, Francis' queen. Since the new king was fifteen and technically of age, the Guises had him announce that "his uncles were to manage his affairs."<sup>2</sup> The princes of the blood were sent to Flanders and Spain on state affairs. Before the first prince of the blood was summoned the constable was banished from the court to prevent a meeting of two nobles who might pose a threat to the government of the duc de Guise and his brother, the cardinal of Lorraine. The duke took charge of military affairs and the cardinal controlled financial and state administration.

Francis II was a minor in fact, if not in law, and the Guises exercised a badly veiled regency. Legally, in the minority of a king the regency belonged to the first prince of the blood. Hence the person in the best position to challenge Guise authority

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 228.

<sup>2</sup>Thompson, Wars of Religion, p. 6.

was Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre, and he lacked the fortitude to make such a challenge. Because of their weakness and to buy support the Guises distributed a number of governorships to keep certain notables happy.<sup>1</sup> Many offices and dignities were distributed among the Guise family and following so the Guises determined to placate their critics by requesting the king to create two new gouvernements in the centre of the kingdom for princes of the blood. The duc de Montpensier was made governor of Touraine-Anjou-Maine and the prince de la Roche-sur-yon was granted Orléans-Berry. The appointments were little more than a farce since for the first time lieutenants were appointed over the governors. Thus giving them governorships in central France served to keep these princes of the blood under surveillance and to limit their authority.<sup>2</sup>

The office of governor is an important one in the sixteenth century. In the two preceding centuries members of the royal family had been granted apanages, large territories administratively detached from the kingdom in which those princes had become virtual monarchs. In the century to follow certain of the great nobles were to approximate royal power in the office of governor. The new gouvernements created by the Guises were fashioned from the

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<sup>1</sup>Gaston Zeller, "Gouverneurs de provinces au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle," Revue historique, CLXXXV (1939), p. 225.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 247. cf. Thompson, Wars of Religion, pp. 62-63.

territory of the last apanagists. The Estates-General of 1561 was called by gouvernements for the first time indicating that the entire kingdom was thus divided.<sup>1</sup>

#### Catherine de Médicis as Regent

In March, 1560 the ill-conceived conspiracy of Amboise directed against the Guises was overthrown. In November Condé was condemned for alleged complicity in the plot but the death of Francis II on December 5 brought about a shift in power and the freeing of the prince. Charles IX was only ten years of age and no fiction could make him anything but a minor. A regency was required. The position rightly belonged to Antoine de Bourbon although there was a precedent for a regency of the queen mother.<sup>2</sup> Catherine de Médicis acted decisively, associated Antoine with her as lieutenant-general of the kingdom and claimed the position of regent herself. Catherine had the guardianship of the person of the king. She out-maneuvred the Guises in all their attempts to recapture a measure of control.

She governed as if she were king. She appointed to offices and to benefices; she granted pardon; she kept the seal; she had the last word to say in council; she opened the letters of the ambassadors and other ministers.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Zeller, "Gouverneurs...", p. 231.

<sup>2</sup>e.g. During the imprisonment of Francis I following the battle of Pavia his mother acted as regent. Ernest Lavisse, Histoire de France (Paris: Hachette, 1904), V:2, 37-38.

<sup>3</sup>Thompson, Wars of Religion, p. 75.

The Estates-General met at Orléans in December, 1560 and recommended a general pardon for those accused of heresy throughout the kingdom. The Estates were asked to seek a solution to the financial problems of the monarchy for the king's debts totalled more than forty million francs.<sup>1</sup> Little was accomplished although the way was prepared for large revenues from the clergy over a period of five years. The delegates were to return to their regions and new elections were to be held for a meeting of the Estates-General at Pontoise in May.

#### Prelude to Civil War

In April, 1561 with secret encouragement from his Catholic majesty, Philip II of Spain, a famous association of strongly Catholic nobles was formed. It became known as the Triumvirate in reference to its most important members, the duc de Guise, the constable Montmorency and the marshal Saint-André.<sup>2</sup> This coalition was a blow to Catherine and the appeal of the Triumvirate to Philip II was a further threat to her authority. The association was implacable in its opposition to the Huguenots who had rapidly increased in numbers and gained confidence after the death of Henry II. Nevertheless, the Edict of July was promulgated reserving

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 99.

judgment for heresy to ecclesiastical courts and limiting sentences. The Huguenot movement continued to spread and incidents of unrest were more common than ever. The king of Navarre was susceptible to promises to restore the Spanish portion of his kingdom or to give him compensation for it. Consequently, under the influence of the Spanish ambassador, he inclined increasingly towards the Catholic religion and towards the Triumvirate.<sup>1</sup>

It would seem that the parties were extremely unequal for Montmorency and Guise had effected a reconciliation and Antoine de Bourbon was inclined towards them, leaving leadership of the Huguenot cause to his brother Condé. A split in the Montmorency ranks, however, evened the sides somewhat. The constable's three nephews, the Châtillon brothers, Gaspard de Coligny, François d'Andelot and Odet, cardinal of Châtillon, had all espoused the Huguenot cause.<sup>2</sup> Catherine hoped to effect a reconciliation between the leaders of the Catholics and the Protestants in September, 1561 when the clergy met at the colloquy of Poissy while the other two estates met at Pontoise. Her efforts were doomed to disappointment.<sup>3</sup> She was no more successful in effecting peace through the tolerant Edict of January. The kingdom was hastening

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV. See the pièces justificatives for examples of Spanish influence over Antoine.

<sup>2</sup>Romier, Le Royaume..., p. 229.

<sup>3</sup>Thompson, Wars of Religion, pp. 109-114.

down the path to civil war and the spark was ignited by an incident which took place at Vassy in Champagne. The soldiers of the duc de Guise discovered a Huguenot congregation meeting in a barn, wounded and killed a number of them. "Charles, cardinal of Lorraine, at the colloquy of Poissy had made union between the two faiths impossible. His brother, the duke of Guise, by the massacre at Vassy had made war inevitable."<sup>1</sup>

#### Huguenot Organization

The efficient military organization of the Huguenots and their rapid mustering of forces for the first War of Religion is impressive and for its achievement required both an ecclesiastical organization readily adaptable to the support of a military effort and a plausible rationale with the support, or at least apparent support, of the regent. Individual Calvinist churches were governed by minister and elders who together formed the disciplinary committee known as the consistory. Ministers and elders from a number of neighbouring churches formed a colloquy, a committee concerned with matters referred to it by individual churches and with the general supervision of the churches in the area. Over the consistories and colloquies of a larger region such as a province, authority was exercised by a synod and, in France, a national synod capped the organizational pyramid. Common ties with Geneva tended further to

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<sup>1</sup>Bernerd C. Weber, "The Diplomatic Relations between France and Spain during the Reign of Charles IX (1560-1574)" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1935), p. 57.

strengthen and unify the Huguenot churches. The synodal organization was ideally adapted to the development of a concomitant military organization.

Protestant political ideas were expressed and gained wide attention when Anne du Bourg, imprisoned by Henry II, wrote an attack on the legitimacy of any monarch who tried to force his subjects to live contrary to the will of God.<sup>1</sup> Beza's publication, On the Authority of the Magistrate in the Punishment of Heretics, written in 1554 contained in embryonic form justification of the right of a prince to resist superior authority on religious issues. At the time of the Conspiracy of Amboise, an abortive attempt to overthrow the Guise regency, the highest leaders of the Reformed church including Calvin himself expressed the conviction that the revolt would have been legal had it been led by a prince of the blood and preferably by the first prince of the blood. Predictably, in 1562 when Condé in fact led the revolt, Calvin supported his cause. The Huguenots of France had articulated clearly the doctrine of legal resistance led by a prince of the blood.

The organizational structure for the raising of an army was inherent in the church organization and a doctrine of resistance had been articulated, only the actual mobilization remained and

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<sup>1</sup>Robert M. Kingdon, Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563 (Vol. XXII of Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance; Geneva: Droz, 1956), p. 64.

this was initiated long before the first War of Religion. The churches of Guyenne in November, 1560, were ordered by the Synod of Clairac to begin organizing military cadres. One year later the Synod of Upper Guyenne at Sainte-Foy chose military commanders for the provinces of Bordeaux and Toulouse. The hierarchy of command included colonels over each colloquy and captains responsible for the forces of each church. Thus forces were organized and ready to respond quickly to Condé's summons in 1562.<sup>1</sup>

The Huguenot military leaders found war more acceptable if they could represent their actions as expressing loyal support of the sovereign. In this Catherine de Médicis unwittingly gave them assistance for she requested the Huguenot delegates returning from the Colloquy of Poissy to make a survey of their churches to determine the military force they could muster. Wholehearted support was expressed by 2,150 churches and the survey was followed by guarded instructions to muster military forces of both foot and horse.<sup>2</sup> On March 16, against the orders of the queen mother, the duc de Guise entered Paris with two or three thousand men. He was loudly acclaimed as the champion of Catholicism and the provost of merchants offered him two million in gold to serve in defence of the Catholic religion. On the same day, Condé returned to Paris from the court with seven or eight hundred men. The situation

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 109.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 106.

was explosive and Condé withdrew to Orléans where he mustered an army. Catherine was not permitted to take the young king to Orléans but was detained by the Guise faction as a virtual prisoner.<sup>1</sup>

Once more Catherine helped the Huguenot cause for with the young king she was detained if not imprisoned by the Triumvirate and she exchanged a secret correspondence with Condé, seeking his support.<sup>2</sup> Condé was to publish extracts from her letters in days to come to justify his military actions as an attempt to free the king and the regent. Catherine had no doubt wanted Condé merely to return unarmed to the court for had he done so the Triumvirate would have had no excuse to remain in Paris under arms and continued detention of the king would only have been possible by arms, a crime of lèse-majesté. Condé however, did not obey but from Orléans he offered asylum to Catherine and Charles IX.<sup>3</sup>

The Huguenot army at Orléans was augmented by the arrival of contingents from the provinces of the west and south. Again Catherine contributed for when the comte de la Rochefoucauld,

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<sup>1</sup>Lucien Romier, Catholiques et Huguenots à la Cour de Charles IX (Paris: Perrin, 1924), p. 328.

<sup>2</sup>Hector de la Ferrière, ed., Lettres de Catherine de Médicis (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1880), I, 282n. 283.

<sup>3</sup>Romier, Catholiques et Huguenots, pp. 330-333.

Condé's brother-in-law, sent his lieutenant, Jean de Mergey, to seek orders from her, the regent assured him he would cause no difficulty by joining the prince. She was to spend much of her energy in ensuing months negotiating with Condé and it may be that, expecting to gain his support, she wished him to have sufficient authority to enable her to withstand the threats of the Triumvirate. The Catholic party had hoped that la Rochefoucauld, an old lieutenant of the duc de Guise, would not take arms against his former captain and that the vicomte de Rohan, cousin of Jeanne d'Albret, would not resist the authority of the king of Navarre. But very soon after the taking of Orléans news reached the court that these two lords were making their way from Poitou and Bretagne respectively, leading troops which the king's lieutenants were powerless to stop. The comte de la Rochefoucauld arrived on April 20, 1562 with about four hundred men, mounted and armed. Wherever fighting took place Gascon soldiers were to be found and 4,000 Gascon foot soldiers soon arrived in Orléans under the leadership of the comte de Gramont to be followed by 1,200 soldiers from Languedoc.<sup>1</sup>

Catherine de Médicis maneuvered desperately in the attempt to avert war and to bolster her own control of affairs. While

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Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 152ff.

messengers and envoys were shuttling between Orléans and the court, Catherine sent a message to Jeanne d'Albret, en route from Meaux to Vendôme. The message was twofold, a letter merely requested the queen of Navarre to ask Condé to lay down his arms and return to court but the bearer brought a message orally because Catherine had been obliged to write her letter under the eyes of François d'Escars, the confidante of the king of Navarre. Orally, the messenger was reported to have stated that Catherine desired the opening of hostilities and the triumph of the Huguenots and that she requested Jeanne to go to Amboise and take the young brother and sister of the queen as hostages to Condé in Orléans.<sup>1</sup> The web of negotiations was indeed a tangled one.

Even as Condé's army increased at Orléans and the royal army was amassed to meet it and as both sides sought reinforcements from neighbouring countries, fighting was going on throughout the kingdom. The king's lieutenant in Dauphiné, la Motte-Gondrin, was killed by rebel forces under the baron des Adrets.<sup>2</sup> The commanders-in-chief both of the Huguenots and of the Catholics, were to be plagued throughout the war by the problems inherent in attempting to mount a major army while at the same time protecting the home territories of their adherents and satisfying the ambitions of

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<sup>1</sup>Alphonse de Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile (Paris: Libraires de la Bibliothèque Nationale, 1897), I, 189.

<sup>2</sup>Romier, op. cit., p. 345.

local chiefs. The war took on the appearance of many local wars and often of guerilla warfare. In fact the strategy of the Triumvirate early in the contest was to divide their forces and separate Condé from his reinforcements to the west. Condé found it difficult to recruit adequate foot soldiers for the Huguenot army while on the Catholic side royal demands for reinforcements were to go long unheeded.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile Huguenot and Catholic forces would wage war in Guyenne as armies semi-independent of central authority, recruited locally, under local command and maintained in their home region by local exigencies. It is under these circumstances that the nature of royal government in Guyenne must be studied.

#### Catherine's View of the Monarchy

Catherine de Médicis recognized the financial difficulties of the crown. She saw clearly the personal nature of French kingship and the absolute necessity of personal encounter between the king and the nobility. Perhaps more clearly than anyone else she knew that the monarch must recognize local differences, local privileges. In short, she realized that the power of the throne was grounded upon the goodwill of men throughout the kingdom. Her concern was to gain the goodwill of strategically valuable men

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, p. 291.

and through them to control others. A few months after the Peace of Amboise Catherine had the majority of the young king Charles IX declared and soon thereafter she dictated for him a long letter on the methods by which he could best restore his kingdom to complete obedience.<sup>1</sup> The queen mother's letter revealed those things which she felt needed to be restored. Beginning with the routine and pomp of court life, Catherine dealt with the conduct of court business, the secretaries, the Council, dispatches, audiences, and concluded with clear directions on the question of royal patronage.

The queen mother reviewed in her mind the events of the preceding three years encompassing the brief reign of Francis II during which she had been excluded from government by the Guises and the first years of the reign of Charles IX in which religious differences coupled with rivalry among the great nobles had erupted into bitter civil war. As she looked back in time these events seemed like a bad dream to be blamed on the minority of Francis II, and Catherine was anxious to forget that bad dream and recapture the conditions which had prevailed in the reigns of Francis I and Henry II. Charles must re-establish the Church and through the administration of justice he must cleanse the kingdom and recover royal authority and obedience to the royal will. The routine of court life Catherine considered as essential to restoring confidence

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<sup>1</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, II, 90-95.

in the monarch on the part of the nobility and the people, and the king must be particularly careful that the nobles be associated with him by their presence in his chamber at his rising hour, by accompanying him to mass, and by walking, riding or jousting with him. He must oversee the discipline at the court and ensure that men discharged their duties whether those duties be lighting torches, locking gates, guarding keys, or sending dispatches.

His own existence must be as strictly disciplined as that of his servitors. Rising at a standard hour, probably about six, Charles must admit to his chamber all the princes, lords, captains, knights of the order, gentlemen of the chamber, maîtres d'hôtel and serving men. This custom should build the confidence of the nobility. Rising accomplished, the king must go to business, having all leave save those particularly concerned and the four secretaries. An hour or two reading dispatches must follow after which he should go to mass accompanied by the nobility. If time permitted, a walk for his health might precede the king's dinner scheduled for eleven o'clock. Twice a week Charles should give audience to his subjects after dinner and only after that could he retire briefly to the quarters of the queen mother. Three o'clock could be the time to walk or ride with the nobility two or three times weekly. The king should sup with his family and two evenings per week the ball room was to be next on the schedule. Catherine

suggested above all other reasons that court life should be regulated and disciplined so that the people would know what to expect of their king and so that the nobility would be contented.

Catherine impressed on the young king that he must convey to his subjects his concern for them. This would be possible by dealing immediately with dispatches from remote areas of the province, to correct the impression recently given by delays of a month or even six weeks in answering them. Charles must set aside a convenient hour daily and read dispatches from a particular region of the kingdom. If they should contain matters for the Council he must have the chancellor raise these matters before admitting the maîtres des réquêtes for the Conseil des parties.<sup>1</sup> The king was told to command the secretaries to make appropriate replies to dispatches, replies he must examine, sign and send the next morning before looking at anything new. To convey to his people his concern for them, the king must find time to see all those who had come from the provinces to seek audience. He should discuss with them their offices and the region from which they

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<sup>1</sup>Every morning the Conseil Étroit or Conseil Privé met first to consider the most important military, political, financial and administrative affairs. The Conseil Étroit consisted of a few great nobles with the chancellor present to take orders. Roger Doucet, Les Institutions de la France au XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle (Paris: Picard, 1948), II, 142. The Conseil d'État with a wider membership met to consider matters of finance and administration of justice. Twice weekly it considered particular trials and differences between people (presumably appeals). On those occasions it was called the Conseil des Parties. Doucet, Institutions, II, 145.

had come. In this way his reputation would spread throughout the kingdom.

The balance of Catherine's letter dealt with patronage, a subject which assumed great importance in her mind. Louis XII was the ideal she held up before the young Charles IX for Louis XII had devised a system to eliminate importuning at the court for appointment to office. He maintained a roll containing the names of all the honours that were his to bestow. One or two of the principal officers in each province were responsible to report any vacancies, confiscations or fines to the king by express letter to be placed personally in the king's hands and not to go to the secretaries or anyone else. Louis XII then proceeded to make an appointment on the basis of the information he possessed, attempting to reward the faithful officers who remained in their places and to deny office to any who importuned at the court. The vital concern was that influential local notables be appointed to strategic offices where they could exercise their influence on behalf of the crown. Francis I was supposed to have made a practice of maintaining a nucleus of men in every aspect of royal government in each province. Thus the command of fortified places and high ecclesiastical and judicial offices would be exercised by men who owed their position and its rewards directly to their king. To Charles IX, Catherine suggested that the recipients of his patronage should not be members of the nobility

alone but that in each city he must have the support of the principal bourgeois in order to extend his influence into municipal government.

The advice emphasized by Catherine as she instructed her son in the art of government was that he should be as directly accessible to his subjects as possible and convey to them that he cared for them. Catherine was soon to initiate an extensive itinerary throughout the kingdom on behalf of her son precisely to implement this principle and to allow as many of his subjects as possible to gain access to him, to see him personally, and thus identify with him.

#### Royal Authority In Guyenne

In the province of Guyenne as in the rest of the kingdom royal authority depended on the personal influence of the king over the nobility. The extent of that influence depended on the extent to which particular influential nobles perceived their interests as allied with those of the king. Not only must royal service be to the mutual benefit of the sovereign and his subject but the sovereign must honour the local privileges of the region. The province of Guyenne was far removed from the court and had a history of local resistance to central authority. Definitively re-united to the kingdom for little more than a century, Guyenne was traditionally exempt from the gabelle or salt tax. When Henry II sought to increase his revenue by imposing the gabelle

on Guyenne, that province became the scene of a bloody revolt.<sup>1</sup> The nobility of Guyenne had a history of independent action and armed revolt. They also had an enviable record in royal military service.

Guyenne provides a good setting for the study of royal government because it was the gouvernement of Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre and first prince of the blood. Like his father-in-law, although he was as governor a representative of the crown, his personal concerns as king of Navarre played a much greater role in motivating his actions. Also like his father-in-law, Antoine was often non-resident and in his absence the royal government was exercised by lieutenants of the king who owed allegiance both to the king and to their governor, dual loyalties not always in harmony with each other.

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<sup>1</sup>S. -C. Gigon, La Revolte de la Gabelle en Guyenne, 1548-1549 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1906), pp. 11-12.

## CHAPTER II

### PERSONNEL OF ROYAL GOVERNMENT IN GUYENNE

An examination of royal government in Guyenne during the difficult days of civil war reveals that Catherine's advice to Charles IX was in fact the political creed according to which she herself acted. She recognized the necessity of gaining the goodwill and loyal support of influential members of the local nobility of both great and lesser families. And she realized that merely gaining their confidence was not sufficient for royal officers were subject to influence by local groups and institutions, by great patrons, and even by foreign powers. By judicious use of the patronage at her disposal the regent sought to maintain the support of those best able to mobilize the local resources necessary to uphold royal authority in the province.

Representatives of royal authority in Guyenne received their offices from the king and yet demonstrated remarkable independence of the king in the exercise of those offices. The king did not have a completely free choice in making appointments; it was limited in relation to the highest office by the need to satisfy the first prince of the blood and by the increasingly hereditary nature of the office. In other appointments the king and the queen mother were limited by the desires of Antoine de Bourbon, the first prince of the blood, and by the necessity to

choose from among men of renown within the province to ensure the obedience of the local nobility. Men appointed from among the local nobility were able to gain support in their home province for independent action. The Parlement, the estates, the cities and the nobility were all at times mobilized on behalf of the king's representatives. The cities of Guyenne found financial resources with which to reward the lieutenant-general on more than one occasion. Men who accepted appointment did not simply owe allegiance to the monarch and to local pressure groups but also to great noble patrons including, of course, Antoine de Bourbon, the governor. The appointee might be influenced, because of personal ambitions, by a foreign monarch, Philip II of Spain. The degree to which the crown was able to control its representatives in spite of conflicting influences was the important issue in royal government in Guyenne.

The men who bore the titles of governor, lieutenant, and lieutenant-general in Guyenne were of three distinct ranks. At the peak of the hierarchy, were great nobles, the Bourbon princes of the blood. These princes filled two kinds of post, that of governor and that of commissioner sent into the province on a special mission. At the second level were prominent members of the local nobility with illustrious military careers behind them. The office of lieutenant-general was their charge and their title

was qualified with the words "in the absence of...." Since the governor was consistently absent and the highest authority was delegated to his lieutenant-general, the latter office carried with it a great deal of prestige. The third rank was that of governors of cities or of fortified places and it, too, was filled by members of the most prominent noble families or by lesser nobles of proven military ability. This last office was one which increased in number greatly during the Wars of Religion.

#### Princes of the Blood

The most illustrious and powerful nobles of the kingdom held office as governors of provinces. It was a prestigious office. During their regency in 1560 the Guises divided the major offices among their own family and following. They recognized the necessity of satisfying the princes of the blood for only because the king was legally of age were the Guises able to deprive these princes of a regency that should constitutionally be theirs. To satisfy the Bourbon princes without sending them out to the frontier provinces where they could better mobilize resources against the regency, two new gouvernements were created in the centre of the kingdom. These territories had not previously come under the administration of governors because they had been administered as the personal

domains of royal princes, i.e. as apanages.<sup>1</sup> The office of governor was not intended to carry with it the degree of independence exercised by apanagist princes. Nevertheless, it was an office granted only to men of the highest rank, men whose birth and power demanded adequate recognition.

Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre and first prince of the blood, was governor and lieutenant-general of Guyenne. His tenure illustrates common characteristics of appointment, non-residence, and susceptibility to external influence. Although the post of lieutenant-general had once been a commission to be terminated according to the king's will, it had become an office to be exercised much longer or even for life. Furthermore, it frequently passed from a great noble to his heir, a situation illustrated by events in Guyenne. For most of the second quarter of the century Henri d'Albret, king of Navarre, had been governor of Guyenne with authority extending over Poitou, La Rochelle and l'Aunis. Antoine de Bourbon followed in his father-in-law's footsteps not only as king of Navarre but as governor of Guyenne and of Poitou, by then a separate gouvernement.<sup>2</sup> His authority also extended over La Rochelle and l'Aunis, a region administered by a separate lieut-

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<sup>1</sup>Zeller, "Gouverneurs...", p. 247.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 240.

enant and sometimes referred to as a gouvernement.<sup>1</sup> The first prince of the blood exercised the authority of governor over the western coast of France from the Pyrennees to the border of Brittany. To this were added the offices of admiral of Guyenne and, from March, 1561 until his death in November, 1562, lieutenant-general of the kingdom.

Governors frequently received their offices through inheritance and the same was true in the case of those officers designated "lieutenants-général en l'absence des gouverneurs." Sebastien de Luxemburg, vicomte de Martigues, nephew of Jean de Brosse, duc d'Étampes and governor of Bretagne, acted as lieutenant-general in the absence of his uncle and, when Étampes died childless, Martigues succeeded him as governor.<sup>2</sup> The governorship of Provence was exercised for many years by Claude de Savoie, comte de Tende, a close relative of the Montmorency family which was very powerful in the south of France. Upon his death in 1566 the office passed to his son Honoré de Savoie, comte de Tende and de Sommerive, who as lieutenant had exercised more authority than his father for several years and had come into conflict with him.<sup>3</sup> In 1560 under Antoine de Bourbon, Guy de Daillon, comte du Lude was made

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<sup>1</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 418.

<sup>2</sup>A Lublinskaja, ed., Documents Pour Servir à l'histoire des Guerres Civiles en France (1561-1563) (Moscow, 1962), No. 11. Hereafter cited as Documents Pour Servir à....

<sup>3</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 304-305.

lieutenant-general of Poitou filling an office which had been vacant for three years. In aspiring to that office he was following his father, Jean de Daillon, who had been lieutenant-general under Henri d'Albret in both Guyenne and Poitou until his death in 1557.

Certainly the most striking example of the hereditary nature of the office of governor was the succession of Henri de Bourbon, prince of Navarre, to the offices held by his father. Antoine de Bourbon died in November, 1562 of a wound received in battle and in December "pouvoir de gouverneur et lieutenant général en Guyenne" was granted by the king to the prince of Navarre.<sup>1</sup> The prince was a precocious lad but still short of ten years of age and hardly ready to exercise the powers granted him. In addition to the office of governor he was given that of admiral of Guyenne and his father's company of one hundred hommes d'armes and it was even rumoured that he would succeed his father as lieutenant-general of the kingdom.<sup>2</sup> A few days after having relayed that rumour to his government, the Venetian ambassador reported that the office would be left vacant, that neither the prince de Navarre nor the prince de Condé would receive it.<sup>3</sup> The granting of important offices to Antoine de Bourbon resulted from the need to satisfy

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile (Paris: Libraires de la Bibliothèque Nationale, 1897), I, 467.

<sup>2</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 439.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

the first prince of the blood who should by law have been regent. The multiplication of offices in the hands of his son, however, resulted as much from the desire of the regent to fill those offices with someone too young to exercise them as from the need to grant favours to the princes of the blood. By birth the young Prince Henry was fitted to receive high office and by granting him such offices when he was still too young to exercise them, Catherine forestalled the efforts of those who might have pressured her for appointment. At the same time she left the way open to make her own influence felt more directly in the province.

Antoine de Bourbon was obsessed with the vision of himself as master of an independent kingdom and his personal ambition made him willing to sacrifice all else to the achievement of his goal. An essential part of his dream was the restoration of Spanish Navarre taken by Ferdinand the Catholic in 1512. His tendency to dance like a puppet on a string when the least promise of territorial compensation was dangled in front of him made the king of Navarre a very undependable royal servitor. Catherine knew well his weakness and sought to exploit it but it got beyond her control to the extent that Philip II could manipulate at will the first prince of the blood. By making vague promises hinting that Antoine would be given Sardinia or Tunisia Philip gained from him the reactions he desired. The king of Navarre was the subject of extensive correspondence between Chantonnay, the

Spanish ambassador, and Philip II.<sup>1</sup> Through Antoine de Bourbon the Spanish King was able to achieve changes in the education of Charles IX and of Prince Henri de Navarre when Chantonnay feared those youths were not receiving instruction sufficiently Catholic in flavour. Philip II took advantage of his influence over the Bourbon prince to have councillors changed at the French court and even to have Antoine's own wife banished from the court where in her Protestant zeal she might unduly influence the queen mother.<sup>2</sup> At times Catherine's policy was seriously endangered by Antoine's enslavement to his dream and to the king of Spain. In June, 1562 with sporadic fighting throughout the kingdom, Catherine was determined to negotiate with Condé a peaceful settlement and Antoine was her representative. The two brothers agreed to decree a convention leading to a general disarmament but upon receipt of a long delayed dispatch from the king of Spain promising compensation, the king of Navarre sacrificed the peaceful convention.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, Catherine found it necessary to keep the first prince of the blood satisfied and, if possible, associated with her for his support would have been invaluable to her enemies. In fact, responding to the encouragement of his wife and of his brother and seeing in it the opportunity to

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<sup>1</sup>Numerous examples are included in the pièces justificatives of Alphonse de Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 384-388, correspondence of Chantonnay.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 256.

further his own ends; Antoine de Bourbon had joined the Huguenots for a short time in 1560. The ability of Philip II and of the Protestants to influence Antoine show that at least one governor was susceptible to pressures which led him to act in ways directly opposed to royal authority.

Henri d'Albret resided not in his gouvernement but in the city of Pau in his domain <sup>1</sup> and his son-in-law and grandson in turn did little to improve the residence record of the governor of Guyenne. Authority was exercised in their absence by "lieutenants-général en l'absence des gouverneurs." Periodically during times of civil strife the queen decided to send a commissioner as her personal representative to bolster her authority and to pacify the region. Like the historic position of lieutenant-general, such a commission was primarily, though not exclusively, military and it might carry authority over several provinces rather than one although the commissioner might be governor in one.<sup>2</sup> As a commission, this post was temporary and was revoked at the monarch's will or terminated upon the completion of the mission. Catherine planned such commissions for Guyenne three times during the years 1561 to 1563. In each case the commission was to be granted to a Bourbon prince of the blood, twice to the prince de Condé and once to the duc de Montpensier. Only the duc de

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<sup>1</sup>Gigon, La Révolte de la Gabelle, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Zeller, "Gouverneurs...", p. 227.

Montpensier fulfilled his commission.

In August, 1562 Burie and Monluc, the king's lieutenants in Guyenne, received a tactful letter from Catherine de Médicis encouraging them and complimenting them on the work they were accomplishing in cleansing the province of rebels. She added that she had decided to send Montpensier with his company to reinforce them and also "to have more authority with the quality."<sup>1</sup> To the nobility, extremely conscious of a man's blood, this Bourbon prince represented much greater authority than the lieutenants. Several of the prominent nobles in Guyenne were either openly identified with the Huguenots or leaning in that direction and it was important to the royal cause to reverse the trend. Monluc recorded that Montpensier was sent because he and Burie were hardly in good accord and added the suggestion that command should never be given to two; one lesser captain would even be better than two good ones together. Nevertheless, he concurred in the solution; he would always counsel the king to deal with a division in the army by sending a prince of the blood to take overall command.<sup>2</sup>

Montpensier's requests of the king's council reveal his conception of the nature and importance of his commission. To

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<sup>1</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 376.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Courteault, ed., Commentaires de Blaise de Monluc, Maréchal de France (Paris: Picard, 1911), II, 524, 525. Hereafter cited as Monluc, Commentaires.

his requests for military personnel, munitions and finances for military operations the council replied that he would have to limit himself chiefly to the resources available in the field to which he was going. He informed the council he would need 1,000 livres every month for the maintenance of his table and expenses according to the custom of lieutenants of the king, a statement to which the council replied only, "cella est très raisonnable." The councillors decided that the Parlement of Bordeaux should elect two from its number to fill the need expressed in Montpensier's request for a maître de requêtes to render justice and to hear complaints. A personal guard of thirty arquebusiers, a monthly allowance for payment of couriers and clear instructions regarding his responsibilities for the suspension of disloyal officers and the appointment of interim replacements were all among requests granted to the duc de Montpensier by the council. The first question asked by Montpensier was which knights of the order, experienced captains and other persons of note he would have for his council. The royal advisors, however, did not seem unduly concerned about the composition of Montpensier's council and suggested that he would be assisted by such men of this quality as were in the provinces and that he would be accompanied from the court by three nobles, the seigneurs de la Vauguyon, de Candale and de Chavigny.<sup>1</sup> Jean Peyrusse d'Escars, seigneur de la

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 48.

Vauguyon, belonged to a family highly favoured by Antoine de Bourbon. Henri de Foix, comte de Candale, scion of the family of the noted Odet de Foix, played a prominent part in the Catholic cause throughout the first War of Religion and at Monluc's instigation formed the league of Catholic nobility in the Bordelais. Francois le Roy, seigneur de Chavigny, was governor of the city of Blaye.<sup>1</sup> The latter two were from prominent noble families of Guyenne.

The duc de Montpensier held the office of governor of Touraine, Anjou and Maine along with his commission as lieutenant-general of Guyenne with authority over Poitou, La Rochelle, and l'Aunis. The multiple allegiance and multiple responsibilities which complicated administration of the kingdom are illustrated by the concern maintained by this prince for certain lands of his own inheritance in the duchy of Montpensier.<sup>2</sup> Writing to the lieutenant-general of the kingdom he stated that he had given the government of his duchy of Montpensier to the seigneur d'Effiat, one of his vassals and subjects. This vassal laboured so industriously that the duc's châteaux of Montpensier and Aiguespersé and his town of the same place, on which the safety of the neighbouring area depended, were in an excellent state of defence. D'Effiat,

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<sup>1</sup>Alphonse de Ruble, ed., Commentaires et Lettres de Blaise de Monluc (Paris: Renouard, 1870), IV, 210, note. Hereafter cited as Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 52.

having every desire to respect the authority of monsieur de Saint-Geran, lieutenant for the king in the region in the absence of the maréchal de Saint-André, took from him confirmation of the authority Montpensier had granted. Nevertheless, the seigneur de Haultfueille, established by Saint-Geran as governor of Clermont, Rion, Montferrant and other neighbouring towns, wished to include in his commission Montpensier's town of Aiguespersé. Montpensier wished the king of Navarre to intervene, command Haultfueille to keep out, and thus alleviate the disorder and confusion arising in the duchy.<sup>1</sup>

After undertaking the responsibilities of his commission Montpensier reported to the king from Poitiers. He had confirmed the loyalty of certain cities, adjusted the size of their garrisons, consulted with Sansac and La Vauguyon about the advisability of attacking the Huguenot forces under the seigneur de la Rochefoucauld and decided against it, and had given the order to have certain sums of money conducted to her majesty. After having observed conditions in the region, he recommended that, since Bourges had been delivered, the military forces under Burie requested to be sent from Guyenne should be kept in the province.<sup>2</sup>

Montpensier joined Monluc and Burie only after their major

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., No. 54.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

military victory over Duras at the battle of Vergt, or rather, they joined him.<sup>1</sup> He warmly congratulated Monluc and agreed to support his request for an office and company for his brother, Joachim de Monluc, seigneur de Lioux.<sup>2</sup> Monluc was overjoyed at the arrival of a prince of the blood and gave him detailed recommendations for deployment of personnel in the province including the sending of Burie into France with the troops which had been requested.<sup>3</sup> Montpensier, however, feeling that the work of pacification in Guyenne was proceeding favourably, travelled north into Saintonge. In November Montpensier sent a representative to report to the court on his mission in Guyenne. The isles had been reduced to obedience, fortresses razed, arms seized, and divine service re-established. He reported with concern that La Rochelle had dispatched to the court the élu and some others armed with 4,000 or 5,000 écus with which to reward the officers who could assist them in their attempt to be rid of the garrison. Such men would surely lie about their loyalty and the prince feared that the city would fall into the hands of the rebels who had already plotted to kill, Jarnac, their governor. Much of his report was devoted to military and financial needs but the extent of his authority was indicated by the fact that he pointed out the

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, II, 563.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, 564 and Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 64.

<sup>3</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 171.

necessity of commissioning men to judicial and other essential offices vacant by the absence of the holders, defeated in the rebellion or deceased.<sup>1</sup> He did not seem to think it necessary to make personal recommendations to those offices.

Months before sending Montpensier Catherine had planned to send Condé into Guyenne with a special commission. In December, 1561 when religious passions were inflamed and Burie, the lieutenant-general, appeared incapable of pacifying them, the queen hoped that the presence of a prince of the blood would win obedience from the Catholics and that the presence of their chief would calm the Huguenots.<sup>2</sup> In February, 1562 preparations were almost completed. At the same time Catherine sent Crussol, first peer of France, into Languedoc and Provence with analogous powers. It may be that she did not want to place undue emphasis on her intended reliance on the Huguenot leader and, therefore, avoided making his commission unique. Condé was instructed to visit the cities, restore ecclesiastics to benefices and churches usurped by the Protestants, restore to office those forced out by the seditious, punish pillagers and warn Protestants about unauthorized publishing. To those of the reformed faith who complained

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 74.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, Blaise de Monluc (Paris: Picard, 1909), pp. 1560157.

about having no place to worship God, Condé was to make gently understood that, if they could find a place outside the cities except in a church or temple, he would give orders to the royal officers to turn their eyes the other way.

Had Condé fulfilled the commission, the Huguenots might well have been treated more favourably than even the regent had planned. However, the mission was not to be for Philip II had other plans and Antoine de Bourbon responded to the pressure placed on him to thwart Catherine's plans. The Spanish monarch would have preferred the mission to have been conducted personally by the man whom he referred to as the seigneur de Vendôme, for he would never address him as king of Navarre. The Spaniards also made events then taking place in Guyenne work to their advantage. A member of the nobility, the baron de Fumel, had been murdered by his Huguenot tenants and Blaise de Monluc was gathering a military force to avenge the murder and quell the local uprisings. Spanish officers claimed that troops were being mustered for an attack on Spanish Navarre to be led by Condé. Exploiting these claims, Philip II informed Antoine that he would continue negotiations over the loss of Navarre only at the price of Condé's return into Picardy. Antoine had been the first to approve Condé's mission into Guyenne and he was the first to oppose it. As a result the mission did not take place.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, p. 50ff.

Lieutenants-general

In the absence of the governor or of special commissioners royal authority was exercised by several lieutenants-general. There were three or four in the region under the jurisdiction of Antoine de Bourbon, one for Poitou, one for La Rochelle and l'Aunis and two for Guyenne. At least Guyenne had two in practice from December, 1561, and officially, from March, 1563. The career of Blaise de Monluc demonstrates the ambition and opportunism of a lieutenant, and the extent to which he could mobilize local support both for the crown and on his own behalf.

Monluc was from a noble family in the Agenais, a family of better breeding than fortune. As a lad he served as a page in the household of the duc de Guise and in the first years of the reign of Francis I he began what was to be a brilliant military career in Italy. Shortly before the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis he replaced d'Andelot for a time as colonel-general of the infantry, one of the highest posts in the military command. After the peace he retired to the Château d'Estillac near Agen where in the spring of 1560, perhaps to please the Guises, he responded to the plea of some municipal officials and assisted in the expulsion of the Protestant ministers of Agen. In response a band of five or six hundred Huguenots besieged his home. The old captain easily repelled them but as a result of his complaint Charles IX ordered

the king of Navarre to assure the peace of the Gascon hero.<sup>1</sup> Anti-Guise sentiment had swept the country as a result of their harsh reprisals following the Conspiracy of Amboisé, a Protestant plot to remove Francis II from the influence of the Guises. Seeking to take advantage of the unpopularity of the government, Antoine de Bourbon had identified himself with the Huguenot cause. For this reason he was little inclined to favour Monluc's actions in support of the Catholic officials.<sup>2</sup> Duc François de Guise to whom Monluc appealed advised him to regain the favour of the king of Navarre, advice that very nearly led to his downfall.<sup>3</sup>

The king of Navarre and his brother Condé were then at Nérac gathering about them a band of men anxious to avenge themselves against the Guises for the bloody aftermath of Amboise and to Nérac went Monluc anxious to ingratiate himself with Antoine de Bourbon. There he attended the preaching of the reformed faith, convinced Beza and Jeanne d'Albret of his loyalty to their cause and assured Condé that the efforts of the princes of the blood would tend only to the utility of the king and of the kingdom. This sounded like the statement of a good Huguenot, skilful at putting the face of loyalty on actions directed against the

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret, I, 150.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 397-398.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

government of the kingdom.<sup>1</sup> That summer the Guises arrested an agent of Antoine de Bourbon who in his confessions, compromised several nobles, including Monluc, who then hastened to the court to clear himself. He tried feverishly to prove his loyalty to the extent of espousing the unpopular Guise position in the council of the Knights of the Order when the majority came to the defence of Vidame de Chartres, a prominent noble arrested for Huguenot opinions. Monluc was present at the reception of eighteen new members into the order, members appointed by the Guises to redress the Huguenot majority. Monluc had unfortunately curried the favour of Navarre just before the fortunes of the Bourbon princes were eclipsed, albeit temporarily, with the imprisonment and trial of Condé and the disgrace of Antoine. Monluc knew that he had alienated himself from Antoine de Bourbon, and perhaps he knew that Antoine's favourite, François d'Escars was intriguing for office.<sup>2</sup> Convinced, therefore, that he had no chance of receiving an important office in Guyenne, he sought an appointment in Dauphiné, the Guise gouvernement, where his brother, Jean de Monluc was bishop of Valence but his advances in that direction were rejected by the Guises.

Monluc was still at the court when the death of Francis II

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<sup>1</sup>Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 149.

<sup>2</sup>Rochambeau, Lettres d'Antoine de Bourbon et de Jehanne d'Albret (Paris: Renouard, 1877), Nos. CXLV, CXLVI, CXLVII.

brought about a sudden change in the fortunes of the Bourbons, the Constable and the Guises. He assisted at the Estates-General of Orléans<sup>1</sup> and must have realized that the kingdom was not far from open war. Without having obtained office he returned to Guyenne in January where he attached himself to Burie, the lieutenant-general, and proceeded to make himself indispensable, with a view to supplanting the old officer. Charles de Coucys, seigneur de Burie, of a noble family in Saintonge, was, like Monluc, a veteran of the Italian wars but he was almost seventy years of age, old and tired. His wife was a sister of one of Condé's lieutenants and he had a number of relatives in the Huguenot camp, a fact Monluc was later to use against him.<sup>2</sup> The old lieutenant-general had neither the strength nor the heart for the long struggle which lay ahead.

In March Monluc was at Agen to play a prominent role in the assembly of the Estates of the sénéchaussée. Moderating the influence of the Huguenots and reassuring the Catholics he played the role of politique to perfection. This time he was following the policy of none less than the queen mother, a policy of toleration. In June when troubles broke out at Layrolle and Serignac, Monluc sought and was given a mission by the king and

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 393.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 158.

queen to deal with them.<sup>1</sup> The ingenuous Burie recommended him as being worthy of that charge or of a greater one.<sup>2</sup> No one could have been more zealous in applying the policy of toleration than was Monluc. He was certain that pleasing the queen mother was the only route to an office which would bring further honour and riches. Catherine's policy of toleration underlay her attempt to bring about a rapprochement between the Catholic and the Huguenot clergy at the Colloquy of Poissy. One of those who worked hardest there to accomplish the queen mother's goals was Jean de Monluc, Bishop of Valence and brother of Blaise. The miscarriage of the colloquy was a setback for the policy of toleration and Blaise de Monluc returned to the court to see which way the wind was blowing.<sup>3</sup>

When he arrived at Saint-Germain early in December, Monluc, had at last learned to commit himself only with caution, and this time he received with prudent reserve Condé's efforts to recruit him. It was not that becoming a Huguenot was repugnant in itself for Monluc's guide was the attitude of the authority on whom his advancement depended. Some time later in writing to the queen he spoke with horror of the activities of the Huguenots and he assured her that he could never change his religion unless his

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<sup>1</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 211.

<sup>2</sup>Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 153.

<sup>3</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 399.

king changed first.<sup>1</sup> While he was at the court word came of numerous uprisings in Guyenne and it was then that Catherine determined to send Condé to the province. The king of Navarre wished to send letters instructing Burie to take measures to restore order in the meantime but the queen mother suggested sending Monluc and Charles IX signed the patent.<sup>2</sup> Monluc was empowered to use the companies from the garrisons and to raise a few hundred arquebusiers but his commission was intended only as a preliminary to the mission of Condé. However, when Condé was not sent, and Montpensier appeared only briefly many months later, Monluc's role assumed much greater importance. In recounting his commission Monluc made no reference to the impending mission of Condé and presented his own as parallel to that of Crussol thus exaggerating his own importance.<sup>3</sup> With the sending of Monluc the Spanish ambassador, knowing his military reputation and his energetic nature, wrote that Guyenne had found its saviour.<sup>4</sup>

Shortly after his return to Guyenne, Monluc's attitude and actions toward the Protestants underwent an abrupt change. From toleration he turned to stern repression and bloody reprisal for acts of rebellion. Several factors contributed to this change of

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 237.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 400.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., II, 401.

<sup>4</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret, I, 152.

attitude. De Franc, lieutenant in the town of Condom revealed that the Huguenots had a plan for Monluc's assassination.<sup>1</sup> Worse still, they were plotting to seize the king, his brothers, the queen mother and the Guises.<sup>2</sup> But, probably the most important factor to influence Monluc was the degree to which the Huguenot movement was threatening the nobility. One of the prominent nobles, the baron de Fumel, had been killed by the peasants of his own estate, a crime Monluc was charged to investigate. The Huguenots were boasting not only that they would pay no more dîmes to the Church but that they would not pay either the taille to the king or their seigneurial rents and dues to their lords.<sup>3</sup> Like the other nobles Monluc was horrified by these threats to the very foundations of sixteenth century social order. Encouraged by the willingness of the nobility to make him their champion, Monluc counselled harsh treatment of the Huguenots. Writing to the queen and to the king of Navarre, Monluc reported that the reform had the support of no more than one-tenth of the population and that he had the solution; force the lords of the region to their homes, for some among them supplied Huguenot military leadership, put to death the principal ministers and banish the remainder. To accomplish this it would be necessary to move quickly.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 412.

<sup>2</sup>Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., II, 421.

<sup>4</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 114-118.

In March, 1562 when Monluc offered this advice, such councils had some chance of being heard for the Catholic Triumvirate of the duc de Guise, the constable de Montmorency and the maréchal Saint-André, was gaining influence at the court.

Acting decisively, Monluc achieved the pacification of Toulouse.<sup>1</sup> Finally he had accomplished the exploit which was sure to bring him honour and reward. What a blow it was to find that d'Escars had been accredited as lieutenant-general of the province while he himself was still operating without office! In a violent letter to the queen, Monluc asked to be allowed to leave the province and let d'Escars be responsible himself for the disaster which would follow.<sup>2</sup> In the light of Monluc's brilliant service the queen could not allow that situation to come about and d'Escars had to wait almost a year before receiving an alternate appointment. She congratulated Monluc on his success, accorded him 3,000 livres for his personal expenses and a confiscation he had requested, and gave him carte blanche to conduct operations.<sup>3</sup>

Monluc had several opportunities to increase his popular support in Guyenne by contesting orders from the central government,

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 444-459.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 144.

<sup>3</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 331-332, 339; Monluc, Commentaires, II, 469-470.

usually because the orders had been based on lack of knowledge of affairs in Guyenne. This was the case in the summer of 1562 when the court, apparently thinking the pacification of the province well advanced, commanded Burie to lead into France numbers of troops which would almost strip Guyenne of military forces. In opposing these orders Monluc once again raised his stock with the Gascon nobility. Monluc had the opportunity of winning the gratitude of the authorities of the city of Bordeaux by coming to their defence when an attempt was made to seize the city. His popularity and support in the province increased constantly among the Catholics while the Huguenots hated and feared him for he practised justice by executing men to make "examples" of them to the extent that he was accompanied by two hangmen whom people facetiously called his lackeys.

Throughout September Monluc's desire was to do battle with the Huguenot chief, Symphorien de Durfort, seigneur de Duras, but Burie was reluctant and the project required all the available forces in Guyenne. Furious with the old lieutenant-general, Monluc wrote angry letters to the queen mother making references to Burie's Huguenot relatives.<sup>1</sup> He claimed that if he had had sole command, two months would have seen him dead or

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 160.

Duras defeated but that every time he had sought to do battle with the Huguenot leader Burie had ruined his plans.<sup>1</sup> The fiery Gascon captain finally got his opportunity in spite of his associate. The anticipated battle took place at Vergt on October 9, 1562 and the Catholic forces under Monluc won a decisive victory over the Huguenots. As he had done after the pacification of Toulouse, Monluc immediately attempted to exploit his victory by requesting favours from the crown. For his brother he asked a company of light horse and the post of governor in the city of Perigueux.<sup>2</sup> For himself he asked the privilege of granting decrees of pardon and the restoration of the county of Gaure, previously granted him and then taken away in a reunion of the royal domain. The king replied telling him that his requests had been found unreasonable and that he should content himself with the 500 livres he received monthly for his table.<sup>3</sup>

Early in 1563 when victory for the Catholic army seemed likely, Monluc was instrumental in the formation of a Catholic association in the sénéchaussée of Agen<sup>4</sup> and the affiliation

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., IV, 158.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 63.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., No. 76; Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 196.

<sup>4</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 190-195.

of that association with the great ligue embracing all the territory in Languedoc and Guyenne under the jurisdiction of the Parlement of Toulouse.<sup>1</sup> In so doing he was cementing his position as champion and spokesman for the nobility but he was also forming a Catholic organization to parallel the synods of the Huguenots and to keep the latter under control when the garrisons would be disbanded or reduced.<sup>2</sup> A similar league was formed at Bordeaux at Monluc's suggestion by Frederic de Foix, comte de Candale, who informed the queen of its organization in March, 1563. The Catholic nobility in a remonstrance to the crown complained that while they had been commanded to disband, the Huguenots were still allowed their assemblies.<sup>3</sup> Catherine de Médicis, hearing of the leagues, commanded Monluc to destroy them.<sup>4</sup> She had recently had experience with the association formed by Condé and with the triumvirate, both avowedly loyal to the crown yet both committed to achieving a purpose, if necessary, in spite of the crown and she was convinced that all leagues constituted a threat to the crown. Furthermore, like the Huguenot organization, the leagues were locally formed and such a manifestation of provincial independence could not pass unnoticed.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret, I, 344-345.

<sup>3</sup>Documents Pour Servir à ..., Nos. 91, 92.

<sup>4</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 551-552.

<sup>5</sup>Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 197.

Monluc arrived in Bordeaux in March and received notification of his appointment as lieutenant-general of the king in Haute-Guyenne.<sup>1</sup> Burie was to retain authority in that part of the province west of the River Lot. This was a source of dissatisfaction to Monluc for Burie, old and sick, had retired to his lands in Saintonge the previous October. Courteault suggests that Catherine did not want to aggrandize the vain captain too much or to offend the representatives of the old Gascon families too greatly by favouring this parvenu.<sup>2</sup> According to his own more modest account Monluc was prevailed upon to accept the appointment by the combined efforts of all the nobles and officers present in Bordeaux.<sup>3</sup>

Antoine de Noailles, governor of Bordeaux, had died just before Monluc's arrival in the city and his successor did not take office until the end of May. Burie was in Saintonge. The government of the region and the execution of the edict accompanying the Peace of Amboise was left entirely to Monluc who remained in Bordeaux almost three months. In fact, in June Charles IX wrote to Monluc that he had told d'Escars that if he did not go immediately to Bordeaux the king would send another in his place to whom he would give the office. He had also commanded Burie to

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 577.

<sup>2</sup>Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 197.

<sup>3</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 580.

go to his gouvernement to give order and oversee the maintenance of the edict.<sup>1</sup> When Monluc left Bordeaux he had obtained from the Parlement support for the demand he addressed to the king that Guyenne be divided between himself and Burie by sénéchaussées and not by river. He had not been granted authority over the whole of the province and it would only add insult to injury if he had to share with Burie authority over his home region, the Agenais, because it was divided by a river.

At Agen Monluc was given a triumphal entry. City officials presented him the keys of the city while one hundred costumed children shouted, "Vive le roi et le sieur de Monluc son lieutenant!" At Condom the consuls offered him a chain of gold with the order of Saint-Michel worth 308 livres.<sup>2</sup> The Estates of Agenais which met in June was strongly Catholic and protested against the terms of the Peace of Amboise. They regarded Monluc as their liberator and asked that the part of their sénéchaussée lying west of the Lot be taken from Burie's jurisdiction and placed under Monluc. The division of the gouvernement continued to be a bone of contention with Monluc who wrote to the queen that he understood Burie, after leaving the other part of the gouvernement, had gone to the court and that all the region still Burie's was in revolt

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 107.

<sup>2</sup>Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 203.

with no one doing anything about it. "He has promised so many times to give you this gouvernement," continued Monluc ironically, "that you send him promptly to do his duty. As for me, I have no wish to be valet to him or to any other save the king and you; and will do my duty in the charge I've been given...."<sup>1</sup> Monluc was to wait until the beginning of 1565 when Catherine and Charles IX came into the province for further reward. At that time to encourage him Catherine made him a member of the Privy Council. Immediately thereafter Burie, with impeccable timing for once, died leaving no reasonable alternative but to make Blaise de Monluc lieutenant-general of the king in the entire province, an appointment to which was added the office of vice-admiral of Guyenne.<sup>2</sup>

#### Governors of Cities

The third echelon of royal lieutenants in the province of Guyenne was composed of those who commanded garrisons in major cities and had authority over the neighbouring regions. They were known as governors of cities and resided in such important centres as Dax, Blaye, Bayonne and Bordeaux.<sup>3</sup> The governor of a city or fortified place was subordinate to the lieutenant-general though in some cases not subordinate enough to please the latter

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 218.

<sup>2</sup> Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 216.

<sup>3</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 199-200.

officer. Men of the leading noble families such as the Foix-Candale were appointed to these offices, often as one of several offices they possessed.

Antoine de Noailles was captain of the Château du Hâ and governor of Bordeaux, both royal offices, and mayor of the city, a municipal office. The office of mayor had been occupied previously by another royal officer, Jean de Daillon, comte du Lude, who had been lieutenant-general of the king in Guyenne and Poitou in the absence of the king of Navarre. Noailles commanded a lieutenant and one hundred men and for remuneration he received 100 livres monthly, twice the stipend of his lieutenant and one-fifth that of Burie or Monluc. He rendered sufficiently important service that Catherine wrote that the king was "sending him the gold chain of the order of Saint-Michel by the comte Des Cars, not wishing to leave him unremunerated for his service."<sup>1</sup> Burie, the senior official in the region, resented the influence of Noailles and sounded like a petulant child when he gave instructions to his representative to tell the king that the seigneur de Noailles was living in the Château du Hâ where he (Burie) wished to live. Should not Noailles, as mayor of the town, live in the mayor's residence? Burie also reported that the keys of the city were delivered nightly to Noailles and he

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<sup>1</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, X, 81, 88.

felt that when he was in the city they should be delivered to him as lieutenant-general.<sup>1</sup> Like any administration the government of Guyenne could be hampered by the pettiness of its members in their relationships with one another.

Antoine de Noailles had long been a faithful royal officer and had served as ambassador in England.<sup>2</sup> His brother, de l'Isle, became Bishop of Dax and later ambassador to London and to Constantinople. Through his wife, Jeanne de Gontaut, Antoine de Noailles was related to Jean de Saint-Sulpice, the competent and influential ambassador to the court of Philip II. Thus Noailles was a member of a family well rewarded for faithful service to the crown.

At the end of January, 1563, soon after Catherine's letter announcing to him the king's award of the chain with the order of Saint-Michel, Antoine de Noailles addressed a long memoire to the king on measures to be taken in Guyenne to assure the pacification of the province. He outlined the letters it would be important for the king to write, the appreciation to be expressed, recompense to be promised, admonitions to be given and financial arrangements to be made. In his thorough analysis even the lieutenant-general

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 82.

<sup>2</sup>Edmond Cabie, Guerres de Religion dans le Sud-ouest de la France et Principalement dans le Quercy d'après les Papiers des Seigneurs de Saint-Sulpice de 1561 à 1590 (Albi: Imprimerie Noguies, 1906), p. 12.

received due attention; it was necessary to write a very affectionate letter to Burie for the conservation of La Rochelle and the rest of Saintonge and the Angoumois, especially the ports threatened by the English. Similar letters should be written to the la Tremoille brothers, monsieur de Pons, and to all the sénéchaux, especially the sénéchal of Perigord who deserved particular praise and promise of recompense. The comte de Ventadour must be cautioned to take care in the city of Limoges and other important places in Limousin. Lauzun, royal officer in the city of Bragerac, had not been residing in that city and the king should reprove him for it. Good letters should be sent to Candale and to the marquis de Trans, men with much credit and favour in the region, who were very loyal and eager to be employed in the king's service. Candale had often offered to assist Noailles with his presence and that of his numerous followers. La Mote, lieutenant to the château and town of Dax, needed a letter of encouragement for his captain was ill and it would be well to write to the officers of the town also. Bordeaux, Noailles' first responsibility, required repairs to its walls and, above all, pay for its soldiers. The governor had held assemblies of the inhabitants several times, assisted by d'Escars in the last, and with his memoire he was sending his majesty the record of the deliberations and the dispatch of d'Escars.<sup>1</sup> Whereas many of Monluc's letter consisted either of particular details or of

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret, I, 469.

grand designs, Noailles' memoire provided a thoughtful and practical analysis of actions required from the king to maintain and exploit the loyalty of his subjects in Guyenne.

Lack of such accurate information at the court about affairs in Guyenne led to many difficulties. Antoine de Pardaillan, baron de Gondrin, left the court at Fontainebleau congratulating himself on his appointment as governor of Bordeaux and captain of the Château du Hâ. The regent had heard his request and bestowed an appropriate reward on the loyal noble. What a blow it was to learn that the office was not vacant! The death of Noailles had been nothing more than rumour. Some time later this man who had come so close to office only to be disappointed wrote to the queen expressing his lack of confidence in her governors in several major cities. He assured her that he had no ulterior motive in so doing but reminded her that when the gouvernement of Bordeaux had not been vacant, she had promised him preference in the next similar appointment.<sup>1</sup> After the death of Antoine de Noailles the office was requested by Francois d'Escars and he had received it but the sending of the letters patent was delayed. Monluc protested the granting of this new favour to d'Escars<sup>2</sup> and the delay in sending the letters patent led him to

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir.à..., No. 86.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 209.

believe that the appointment had been revoked.<sup>1</sup> In addition to d'Escars and Gondrin there were at least two other candidates seeking the appointment, Noailles' son and Jean de Vaillac, the latter supported by Monluc. Jean de Vaillac even exercised the office for a time under a commission from Monluc.<sup>2</sup> All the candidates pressed their cases at the court, assuring the queen of the men and means they would bring to the task. Gondrin, for example, told Catherine that if it pleased her to make provision for him, her majesty and the king would have "a faithful subject and servitor who would have the means of making the king obeyed and preventing troubles, as much as any man in Guyenne," a reference to the favour he possessed and the size of his suite.<sup>3</sup> The efforts of Vaillac and Gondrin to obtain the office were of no avail and they continued to serve as commanders of companies in the province.

Appointments at each level in the royal government of the province were much sought after. Burie, already occupying a high office, the duties of which he failed to fulfil, enlisted the support of the duc de Montpensier and requested the office of admiral of Guyenne after the death of the king of Navarre.<sup>4</sup> That

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., IV, 243.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 86.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., No. 80.

office was granted to the young Prince Henry of Navarre but Burie was made vice-admiral. Monluc had avidly sought appointment both in Dauphiné and in Piedmont before beginning his rise in Guyenne and many candidates sought appointment as governors of cities. Their eagerness stemmed from ambition or merely from avarice for each office carried financial remuneration and the multiplication of offices brought a commensurate multiplication of income. Moreover, the office carried opportunities for financial gain from groups who wished to influence the officer, and this income was much greater than the stipend itself. The financial returns alone, however, do not explain the zealous seeking after the office. For the Gascon nobility the path to honour and renown lay most often in military office and advancement. That riches should accompany honour was to be expected. In fact, Courteault said of Monluc that he could not conceive of honours without money.<sup>1</sup>

The appointment to office required sponsors, the more influential the better. In seeking appointment Monluc attempted to enlist the support of the duc de Guise, son of his original patron, and to ingratiate himself with the king of Navarre. D'Escars relied upon his friendship with Antoine de Bourbon who interceded for him at times with the king, the queen mother, the duc de Guise and the cardinal of Lorraine. In the youth of Henry II d'Escars

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<sup>1</sup>Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 207.

had been one of his favourites. For appointment in the province of Guyenne it was helpful to have some connection with the governor, Antoine de Bourbon. In 1559 Antoine's war council consisted of Burie, Monluc, Jarnac and d'Escars, all of whom were to be granted important offices in the region under his jurisdiction. Appointments were made by the crown but it would appear that they were normally recommended by the governor for the crown's ratification. Thus upon the death of the governor, Noailles wrote the queen asking confirmation of his office<sup>1</sup> and Burie wrote thanking the king for confirmation of his.<sup>2</sup>

Remuneration did not consist merely of salary for the performance of duties. Many things were required for a man's honour, chiefly that he live as befitted his station and that his whole family reflect his honour. It was feudal tradition that the king maintain the families of his vassals. Monluc took advantage of his victories to press his claims upon the crown and in addition to honours for himself he sought them for his brother and for his sons. Monluc was also keenly conscious of the impression he conveyed by the manner of dress, by the table he spread, and by the generosity he displayed. On one occasion he had the opportunity to entertain the duc de Guise and the duc de Saxe in his pavilion. It was Monluc's boast that after the duc de Guise there was no

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 78.

<sup>2</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret, I, 466.

table in the camp longer or better than his. After enjoying a sumptuous repast Monluc's guests complimented him and he replied that if they would speak to the king on his behalf for silver vessels, the next time he would be able to serve them as they deserved. They did indeed tell the king, Henry II, about the dinner, assuring him that even the king could not have provided better meats, better wines or colder and that Monluc deserved silver vessels for his table. The king promised to provide them.<sup>1</sup> Monluc missed few opportunities to seek tangible rewards even to the extent of replying ungraciously to letters of congratulation that when he spread his table words made poor meat.<sup>2</sup>

When men amassed multiple offices it was impossible for them to personally perform the accompanying duties. Indeed, some officers seem to have been little inclined to fulfill the requirements of any of their offices. The governor of Guyenne was not resident in the province. Burie and d'Escars were both rebuked by Charles IX for non-residence. Jarnac repeatedly asked permission to leave La Rochelle and attend to affairs at his home.<sup>3</sup> Both Burie and Jarnac were old men and the strain of events, not surprisingly, was hard on them. That they wished at times to escape from the pressure was to be expected. Even at the level of the governors of cities non-residence was a problem as Noailles pointed out to the queen. Monluc seems to have been the exception among the highest

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, II, 362-364.

<sup>2</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 214.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 51.

officers of Guyenne for he was always in the field even to the extent of taking only ten days to settle affairs when his wife died. His advice to the king's lieutenant was to keep constantly on the move so that men, always expecting the officer's arrival, would be more anxious to obey.<sup>1</sup>

A local noble of great renown because of his military exploits, the number and reputation of his clients, and the patronage he bestowed, could gain great support from the provincial Parlement, the local estates, the cities and especially from the nobility. At times, listening to the voices around him, he would forget that he was the representative of a far away central government. Although he might be the local champion, the liberator, the hero, he could still be useful to the crown. In fact, his local renown was the very factor that made him most useful to the crown if he could be controlled as Monluc was by flattery and gifts. Because of the absence of the king of Navarre, the age and indecision of Burie, and the events of civil war which called for the military talents of the ambitious and energetic Blaise de Monluc, he was the central figure in the drama of royal government in Guyenne during the first War of Religion. His contribution supplemented by the work of a few intelligent realists like Antoine de Noailles went a long way toward the maintenance of royal authority in the province.

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 469.

### CHAPTER III

#### MILITARY ORGANIZATION AND ROYAL AUTHORITY

In an extended remonstrance addressed to Charles IX Monluc offered the king detailed advice regarding the appointment of military officers.<sup>1</sup> The king's willingness to see his officers personally was considered by the veteran soldier to be essential to obtaining loyal service. Law required that aspirants to such judicial offices as president, councillor and lieutenant-general be examined by the doctors of the law and the councillors of Parlement under the chairmanship of the chancellor. Monluc assumed that this practice was carried out and he recommended its adoption for appointments to military office as well. The Gascon captain accused the king of awarding the offices of governor and captain too easily, even in response to the requests of the women he danced with. Such an officer was extremely important to the defence of a city for he could overcome its weaknesses and prepare its forces. Moreover, enemies, knowing his well-deserved reputation, would avoid attacking. Young men should not expect immediate advancement but should be prepared to serve an apprenticeship under older, experienced officers. Like the position of governor and captain of a city, the offices of

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, III, 374-398.

maréchal de camp and maître de camp for cavalry and infantry were crucial offices not to be lightly filled. Men filling them must be neither rivals nor over-dependent on each other. Since victory and defeat depended on these officers, the king and his lieutenants should consider repeatedly and even tremble over the appointment. Monluc feared that all these offices like the honour of Knight of the Order were being given out too freely where once they had been titles of honour reserved for people of good name.

The remedy proposed by the man who claimed to be the oldest captain in the kingdom was to institute an examination before a special board. The duc d'Anjou, Charles' brother, who had won two battles even though he was still a youth, could serve as military chancellor and the panel of doctors and councillors would be composed of old, experienced captains. Anyone who requested office would be summoned before the examining board to give an account of himself. He would be asked where he had performed his apprenticeship and under whom and what deeds of honour he had won. Only on the recommendation of the experienced captains would any appointment be made and the king could avoid importuning for military office by making the fact known.

Monluc claimed that many benefits would result from the adoption of his recommendations. The apprentices to the carrying

of arms, knowing that they couldn't enter by the window would work and study diligently to impress those who must open the door to them. Those appointed to office would not slacken their efforts for they would wish to vindicate their choice by the captains and to ensure their continued promotion. Appointment of generals of cavalry and colonels of infantry would be beyond this scheme, according to Monluc, for these offices must be given to princes and great lords. However, even youth and inexperience on their part would not matter provided the maître de camp was an experienced soldier chosen with care.

Since many would be anxious to advance by arms, Monluc recommended that the king keep a roll by province of all men of promise and their particular qualities so that vacancies in a province could be filled from among those listed. Monluc was certain that those who knew they were on the list would take heart and work hard to render service to the king and that those not on the list would expose themselves to a thousand dangers to get their names placed on the list. The king must be prompt to add the names of worthy men to the list which Monluc suggested should bear the name, "book of honour." Like Catherine de Médicis,<sup>1</sup> Monluc attributed the use of this technique to Louis XII who even handled judicial appointments by means of a roll of possible candidates according to a story Monluc recalled from

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<sup>1</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, II, 94.

his youth. Further illustrations of the benefits of such a technique for the allocation of patronage were drawn from the practice of Odet de Foix under whom Monluc had served his own apprenticeship and from Monluc's personal experience as governor in Sienna and Montalcino.

Not only should the king reward the faithful by appointment to office but he should be accessible to his subjects. A gracious word spoken by the king was most important for the encouragement of his loyal supporters. If the spoken word could be accompanied by financial reward so much the better! Monluc's recommendation was that Charles IX make these financial rewards personally. Not only would it increase the subject's ties to his sovereign but the award would reach its destination directly without having to pass through the hands of officials where much was certain to stick.

Monluc's suggestions to Charles IX regarding military appointments in the provinces obscure the situation as it was in the early years of the Wars of Religion. His remonstrance implies a greater degree of royal control over such appointments in Guyenne than Charles IX was able to assert. If the wrong people exercised the office of captain no one should bear greater responsibility than Monluc himself for he had as much control over recruiting and appointments in the province as anyone as the events of 1561 to 1563 show. Charles IX had apparently

rejected the charge that he was responsible for the appointment of inferior captains by shifting the blame to his lieutenants.<sup>1</sup> Monluc refused to accept the blame and stated that the king had caused the problem by granting the office to so many humble people that gentlemen no longer desired such an appointment. Titles that were once the preserve of the high born were now accessible to the common cattle-drover.<sup>2</sup> Monluc was concerned about the titles and honour given these men rather and the fact that they were granted the authority to command a small group of soldiers. He felt a partial solution would be to increase companies to one thousand, the size of the legions of Francis I.

#### Military Organization and Forces in Guyenne

French armed forces of the sixteenth century fell into two major categories, those of the ordinaire des guerres and those of the extraordinaire des guerres, divisions historical rather than logical. The former was provided with its own resources and trésoriers. The ban and the arrière ban and companies of ordonnance came under the ordinaire des guerres. The extraordinaire des guerres consisted of bodies of troops

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, III, 390.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. "Du temps que je commencay à porter les armes, le tiltre de capitaine estoit tiltre d'honneur, et des gentil-hommes de bonne maison ne se desdaignoient de le porter. Je n'ay pas appelle d'autre tiltre mes enfans. A present le moindre picqueboeuf se faict appeller, s'il a eu quelque commandement."

initially recruited for short time service but later as part of a standing army. It operated with exceptional resources, often improvised, and was administered by special personnel. Under its administration fought such forces as companies of mercenaries and gens de pied et de cheval, both French and foreign.

### L'Ordinaire des Guerres

Of feudal origin, the ban and the arrière ban<sup>1</sup> consisted of all those who had a military obligation to the king as possessors of fiefs. Personal service was normal but a man unable to serve could present a replacement and a man ineligible to serve, a commoner or churchman, must pay a tax which usually amounted to one-fifth the value of his fief. This feudal military force was attached to the feudal administrative units, the bailliages and sénéchaussées. Letters patent for the convocation of the ban and the arrière ban were sent to baillis and sénéchaux. Two montres or reviews took place: a preliminary montre en robes at which the roll was checked, replacements presented, defaulters tried, non-servers taxed and the taxes sent to an elected receveur; and a montre en armes when the king wanted the ban to march.

Units of the ban were enseignes consisting of three

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<sup>1</sup>For the development of the ban and the arrière ban in the sixteenth century see Doucet, Institutions, II, 610-617; and Gaston Zeller, Les Institutions de la France au XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1948), pp. 312-314.

hundred men when on foot, of fifty hommes d'armes or of one hundred archers. Although the service had originally been unpaid as the feudal due of vassals, the Estates-General of 1484 requested that men of the ban be paid and by the middle of the sixteenth century that pay was one hundred livres for a captain, fifty for a lieutenant, forty for lesser officers such as ensign bearer, twenty for hommes d'armes, ten for archers, and six to eight for foot soldiers.

Exemptions from service under the ban extended from the great officers of the crown to the officers of sovereign courts and the bourgeois of major towns. Men who served in companies of ordonnance were of necessity exempt since they couldn't serve in two companies at the same time. Men fit for service tended to pass into the companies of ordonnance and the ban lost its effectiveness as it became comprised of old men unfit for service and replacements outfitted at the least possible expense.

During the first of the civil wars the duc d'Etampes, governor of Bretagne, made repeated reference in his correspondence to men of the arrière ban. In June, 1562 the duc de Montpensier requested troops from Etampes to assist him in Angoumois.<sup>1</sup> Etampes wrote to Catherine that men serving under the arrière ban made up the major part of his forces, that they

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 26.

would provide the service they owed the crown but that he could not force them to serve outside the region because of the protests they would make about their privileges. However, he assured Catherine that if she could arrange to have them paid at the king's expense, he would hope to be able to find both foot and horse soldiers of the arrière ban who would render good service wherever she should wish to employ them.<sup>1</sup> Etampes wrote simultaneously to Antoine de Bourbon telling him of Montpensier's request, surveying the scanty reliable forces he had in the major cities of Bretagne, and stating that the remainder of his troops were of the arrière ban and so concerned about their privileges that he would have to fight them to make them go outside the region. Again he stated that if the king should care to send him a commission and some money he would be able to raise men to serve in the region or wherever his majesty desired.<sup>2</sup> A third letter of the same date was addressed to Charles IX by Étampes to assure the king that a good number of the noblesse of the region were most anxious to obey the king's command but that they had been awaiting his will for about six weeks and would not wait much longer. Furthermore, if Charles should command Étampes to serve outside the region, these men would be unwilling to do service under the arrière ban but if the king could see fit to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., No. 27.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., No. 28.

grant their solde a good number would serve.<sup>1</sup> Less than ten days later Etampes wrote again to the king of Navarre stating that since Catherine and Antoine had both commanded him to go to the assistance of Montpensier and the inhabitants raised difficulties about the maintenance of their privileges, he had undertaken to increase the forces in his majesty's pay to a number indicated in a statement he was sending. He promised that these troops would always be ready to march at Antoine's command but that he was retaining the "arrière-bans et autres forces ordinaires" of the region for local defence.<sup>2</sup>

In Guyenne Monluc and Burie received royal instructions early in May to take the field. They were to assemble the noblesse of the region and the arrière ban in order to supplement the forces at their disposal.<sup>3</sup> Letters patent were published at Aix en Provence the preceding month for the convocation of the ban and arrière ban according to the comte de Tende. That these troops were not raised according to his command or by him as governor is clear from the report he sent before the queen.<sup>4</sup> However, it is equally clear that under normal circumstances they would have been and that he considered the military authority his

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., No. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., No. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 175.

<sup>4</sup> Documents Pour Servir à ..., No. 16.

prerogative as governor, a prerogative being usurped by his own son and lieutenant, the comte de Sommerive.

The freedom of men of the arrière ban from service outside the kingdom, a privilege in effect from 1548 to 1557<sup>1</sup> seems to have been extended, at least in Bretagne where men of the arrière ban saw their obligation limited to service within the gouvernement. Many of these men, however, were willing to change their status, and pay, by enlisting in other kinds of forces for royal service.

Under the administration of l'ordinaire des guerres besides forces of the ban and the arrière ban were the companies of ordonnance. These companies originated in the reforms of Charles VII, became a permanent force in the king's employ and formed the nucleus of the royal army.<sup>2</sup> The gendarmerie making up the companies were volunteers of "la qualité de gentilhomme", at least seventeen years of age for an archer and nineteen for an homme d'armes. They were grouped in lances, small groups arranged about an homme d'armes armed with a lance. Usually a company had about half again as many archers as hommes d'armes and many more supporting foot soldiers. Command of these companies was reserved for princes of the blood, great officers of the crown, and men of great reputation. The captain's stipend was eight hundred livres;

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<sup>1</sup>Doucet, Institutions, II, 616.

<sup>2</sup>For the companies of ordonnance see Doucet, Institutions, II, 620-623.

the remuneration of the lieutenant who often exercised effective command, five hundred; of the enseigne and guidon, four hundred; of the hommes d'armes, one hundred eighty; and of the archers, ninety.<sup>1</sup> In addition to payment in cash from the royal finances, men of these companies were supposed to receive payment in kind from the city of their garrison. Montres for control and payment were scheduled for every three months in February, May, August and November in the presence of commissaires ordinaires des guerres and contrôleurs ordinaires. These officers were accountable to a trésorier de l'ordinaire des guerres and a statement was ultimately submitted to the king's council. At the time of review men, mounts and armour were carefully inspected and the garrison city was to provide each soldier with three month's supply of candles, vinegar and salt; the city was similarly responsible for fodder for the horses, lodging and firewood for the men. The companies were often required to be on the move with their itineraries determined by the governor and their movements watched by a commissaire appointed by the king. One quarter of the men were normally on three month's leave at any time although the practice developed of granting longer leave without pay in peace time and recalling all soldiers of the company in time of

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<sup>1</sup>The scale of pay was higher during the Wars of Religion although the likelihood of receiving the pay was often remote. See Doucet, Institutions, II, 625. The pay of the hommes d'armes was raised to 400 livres and that of the archer, to 200.

war. The chief officers were expected to serve four months annually in the company with the captain taking personal command for the period from May through August when fighting usually took place. Companies of ordonnance were the strongest element in the armies of Louis XII and Francis I but development of firearms contributed to a decrease in the value of such troops and especially of the heavily armed hommes d'armes who were supplanted by the more mobile chevaux-légers with modern arms.<sup>1</sup>

Companies of ordonnance in the province of Guyenne were under the command of such men as the king of Navarre, the marechal de Thermes, de Terride, de Jarnac, Burie and Monluc.<sup>2</sup> As difficulties began to mount the weight of command fell upon Burie and Monluc who were without money and almost without troops. Each had a company of fifty hommes d'armes and they could mobilize the company of Antoine de Bourbon, a force of one hundred lances garrisoned at Agen, and the company of the marechal de Thermes comprising fifty lances.<sup>3</sup> Henri de Béarn, young son of the king

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<sup>1</sup> At this period the proportion was one and one-half archers to each hommes d'armes and the archers were light cavalry (chevaux-légers). Ferdinand Lot, Recherches sur les Effectifs des Armées Françaises des Guerres d'Italie aux Guerres de Religion, 1494-1562 (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1962), p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 138.

<sup>3</sup> Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 155. De Ruble states here that Burie and Monluc each had a company of ordonnance of thirty hommes d'armes but in the Pièces Justificatives of the same volume, pp. 427-432 there appears an "Ordonnance de Burie pour la pacification de la Guyenne" given at Agen in October 1561 and signed among others by Burie and Monluc, captains of fifty "hommes d'armes des ordonnances."

of Navarre, must also have had a company for his father told Burie to ask captain Arne, guidon of Antoine's company, to mobilize what he could of his company so that the governor could command them together with Monluc's company and that of his own son.<sup>1</sup>

Companies of ordonnance as standing forces were maintained when their commanders died and their disposition depended on the royal will. When the marechal de Thermes died his company was divided between Francois d'Escars, favourite of the king of Navarre, and the vicomte de Martigues, nephew and lieutenant of the governor of Bretagne.<sup>2</sup> Monluc's protest to the king and queen over this division demonstrated his concern at the prospect of losing troops from Guyenne and perhaps, his jealousy for d'Escars but it also revealed some characteristics of the company of ordonnance. Relatives of de Thermes, of de Bellegarde, lieutenant of his company, and of de Masses, his enseigne, formed the major part of the company. In fact de Bellegarde, the lieutenant, was himself a brother-in-law of the maréchal and de Masses, his enseigne, was similarly a close relative. Monluc asked the office sénéchal of Toulouse for Roger de Saint-Lary, seigneur de Bellegarde, and his request was granted but his request of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., I, 424.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 23, "Charles IX au vicomte de Martigues," mai, 1562.

function of viguier for the enseigne was denied. Monluc was convinced that the soldiers, loyal relatives of the late maréchal de Thermes, would be unwilling to carry arms if the company were divided and his jealousy clearly showed in his letter to the queen, "I wish to spend my life close to you... and not to kill day and night here to make great and rich others whose only service is to make those who do serve discontent." He identified the object of his choler for he suggested that Catherine grant him leave and send d'Escars who had obtained a commission as lieutenant of the king in Guyenne while Monluc had neither "gaiges ni estat" appropriate to the service he rendered and served at his own expense.<sup>1</sup> Two months later Monluc once again wrote to the queen complaining about the division of the company which he called one of the best of France.<sup>2</sup> The old captain emphasized the strategic importance of the gendarmerie and noblesse for the enemy had more gens de pied. Thirty-two hommes d'armes and forty-two archers of the company had gone to their homes not wishing to serve under d'Escars but rather to have their old officers over them. D'Escars may have been regarded as an outsider in Guyenne for he came from Haute Vienne<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 132-146.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., IV, 146-148.

<sup>3</sup> Cabié, Guerres de religion dans le sud-ouest de la France, p. 5, n. 1.

but had spent most of his career at the court. As early as 1536 he was in the forefront among the favourites of the Dauphin, later to be Henry II.<sup>1</sup> The situation was further complicated because Hugues de Thermes, guidon of the company, had gone before the king after his father's death to request the command.<sup>2</sup> While en route to the court he was taken by a Huguenot band and imprisoned at Orléans. Released by Condé about two and a half months later, he returned to Bordeaux but Burie who had heard that he was coming with fifteen commissions from the king<sup>3</sup> assumed that the commissions were forged and that their carrier was a Huguenot spy. The unfortunate young baron de Thermes was imprisoned at the Château du Hâ and at the news of his arrest the hommes d'armes devoted to the son of their old captain, abandoned the company.<sup>4</sup> In spite of Monluc's protest and the ambition of Hugues de Thermes the company was divided and Masses, enseigne of the maréchal became lieutenant of d'Escars' company while Boisjourdan, a guidon of the old company became Martigues' lieutenant.<sup>5</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Lucien Romier, La carrière d'un favori: Jacques d'Albon de Saint-André (Paris: Perrin, 1909), p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 147n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 50, "Burie et Monluc à Antoine de Bourbon," 7 aout, 1562.

<sup>4</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 147.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., IV, 139. Perhaps de Ruble failed to identify Hugues de Bazordan, seigneur de Thermes. cf. Monluc, Commentaires, II, 441.

services of the officers of the company, and thus of the men, were assured by their promotion.

New companies of ordonnance were created not only by the division of existing ones but by royal decree and their command was a coveted prize. Joachim de Monluc, seigneur de Lioux, brother of Blaise, was popular with nobility and people. After leading a makeshift company of the noblesse against the Huguenots in the defence of Perigueux his request for a company of ordonnance of fifty hommes d'armes<sup>1</sup> was supported by the duc de Montpensier, Burie and Monluc.<sup>2</sup> Blaise de Monluc maintained that should the sedition continue in France, he could come to the queen's aid and leave his popular brother to fill his role in Guyenne. As further reason to grant the company, he suggested that he himself deserved much recompense for his services and the company for his brother could be regarded as a first instalment. In spite of the efforts of his sponsors Joachim de Monluc did not receive a company of ordonnance.<sup>3</sup>

#### L'Extraordinaire des Guerres

Companies of gens de pied came under the administration of

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 63. "Joachim de Monluc à Antoine de Bourbon." 11 octobre, 1562.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., No. 64, "Le duc de Montpensier à Catherine de Médicis," 14 octobre, 1562; Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 170, "Monluc à la royne," 12 octobre, 1562.

<sup>3</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 171n.

l'extraordinaire des guerres.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the sixteenth century their importance increased and they comprised an ever greater proportion of the armed forces. The improvement of light fire-arms gave them an advantage over troops armed with lances. These bands were raised by commissions of the king usually granted to a captain with whom he dealt directly. The commission decreed the exact number of men to be raised and the captain was expected to raise no more for some would be without pay, forced to live off the land, and to raise no fewer for he would be making an illicit profit, pocketing the pay of the soldiers not recruited. Men were enrolled after being presented to commissaires and contrôleurs de l'extraordinaire des guerres. They were recruited by the captain in a designated region under the surveillance of governor, sénéchaux, and baillis. Unlike the companies of ordonnance, bands of gens de pied usually had as captains men of war, sometimes of humble origin, who effectively commanded their own companies. Remuneration, supposedly paid at monthly reviews, consisted of one hundred six livres for the captain, fifty-six for the lieutenant, twenty for sergents and caporaux, and six to nine for pikemen and musketeers.

Although Doucet states that the king dealt directly with the captains for the raising of gens de pied et de cheval the practice in Guyenne and in the other parts of the kingdom was to grant

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<sup>1</sup>For companies of gens de pied see Doucet, Institutions, II, 632-638.

commissions to the governor, lieutenant-general or another great military figure in the province. These commissions were sometimes, if not always, blank so that the man to whom they were given could choose the captains and delegate the authority for recruiting the troops. Monluc recounted that Catherine de Médicis and the king of Navarre resolved to send him into Guyenne "avec patentes et permission de lever gens à pied et à cheval."<sup>1</sup> He arrived in Bordeaux near the end of December 1561 and proceeded to raise two hundred arquebusiers and one hundred argoulets whom he put under the command of Tilladet, a protege of his.<sup>2</sup> Almost immediately Burie, on Monluc's advice, asked for a supplementary levy of five or six hundred arquebusiers.<sup>3</sup>

The gens de pied raised by Monluc were to become an important part of the royal army for those commanded by captain Charry became the nucleus of the first regiment of the gardes français established in 1563.<sup>4</sup>

In similar fashion, letters and commissions had been sent to Burie in September for the raising of troops.<sup>5</sup> On May 8, 1562

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, II, 345.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, 348.

<sup>3</sup> Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 156.

<sup>4</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 174n.

<sup>5</sup> Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 424, pièce justificatif, "Le roi de Navarre a M. de Burie," 4 septembre, 1561.

Charles IX wrote at least eight letters to Burie and Monluc, surely a reflection of the degree of disruption in the kingdom. Charles IX commanded them to take the field with all the companies of gens d'armes at their disposal and the six or eight enseignes of gens de pied they had raised.<sup>1</sup> He included once again blank commissions for the raising of gens de guerre.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the king's approval followed the raising of gens de pied et de cheval rather than preceding it. This was certainly the case when after the battle of Vergt Monluc recruited gens de pied and officers from the ranks of the defeated Huguenot army of Duras.<sup>3</sup> The six companies of gens de pied raised after the battle of Vergt were granted by Monluc to the captains Mauvesin and Peyrelongue, two of Duras' best.<sup>4</sup> When a city or a region was taken by royal forces, the king's lieutenant undertook to see that it was adequately garrisoned and Charles IX wrote Monluc sending the

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 21, "Mémoire de Charles IX au Burie et Monluc" includes reference to "eight ensigns that they were asked to have raised," the editor's footnote gives an alternate reading of "seven" and some of the letters of 8 May, 1562 refer to six.

<sup>2</sup>Eight letters to Burie and/or Monluc dated 8 May, 1562 are contained in the pièces justificatives of Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 441-442. On the same day Charles IX wrote to Noailles and to the Parlement of Toulouse and issued instructions to Negrepelisse whom he was sending into Guyenne and Languèdoc to persuade the noblesse to join Monluc and Burie.

<sup>3</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 183.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., IV, 315.

confirmation and authorization for the companies raised by the baron de Pardiant and the seigneur de La Chappelle on Monluc's orders for the defence of Lectoure.<sup>1</sup>

Just as blank commissions for the naming of officers and raising of troops had been sent to Monluc and to Burie, so they were sent to Montpensier when he was preparing to enter Guyenne as lieutenant-general.<sup>2</sup> The king urged him strongly to send into France under Burie's command reinforcements for the royal army and to raise new companies to be employed by Monluc in Guyenne.

Among the forces of l'extraordinaire des guerres were the chevaux-légers, lightly armed cavalry. Captain Peyrot de Monluc, son of Blaise, was frequently entrusted with the command of substantial numbers of the troops under his father's authority.<sup>3</sup> Peyrot normally commanded a company of one hundred chevaux-légers. After the Peace of Amboise when Monluc was commanded to disband most of the forces in Guyenne he asked that his son's troops be converted into a company of fifty hommes d'armes, a change which would bring them under the ordinaire des guerres as a company of ordonnance.<sup>4</sup> Monluc also requested that some of the new companies

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<sup>1</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 450.

<sup>3</sup> Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 187.

<sup>4</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 287.

be maintained and the king replied that although he would prefer to see them disbanded, Monluc might maintain as many as he should judge to be indispensable.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the companies they commanded, some of the king's officers were granted personal guards. Antoine de Bourbon obtained for himself a personal guard of twenty-five Swiss soldiers.<sup>2</sup> Monluc and Burie were each authorized to have a garde particulière of thirty hommes de pied and twenty arquebusiers a cheval.<sup>3</sup> In October and November 1563 Monluc asked that he and Burie be allowed to maintain their guards<sup>4</sup> but the next month he announced that his guard had been disbanded in accordance with the command he had received.<sup>5</sup>

The defence of fortified places was undertaken by special troops sometimes headed by a captain given the honorable title of governor.<sup>6</sup> Old soldiers, wounded or otherwise incapacitated for active service, served under the name of mortes-payes.<sup>7</sup> These

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., IV, 217.

<sup>2</sup> Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 298.

<sup>3</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 211 and n.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., IV, 281, 286.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., IV, 304.

<sup>6</sup> Doucet, Institutions, II, 647.

<sup>7</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 290. Monluc requested the queen to see that the mortes-payes of the châteaux de Bordeaux get their pay since they had not been paid for a year.

men, capable of manning firearms and performing similar defensive duties were given a reduced pay of five livres per month.<sup>1</sup> Not only the old and lame found opportunity for defensive military service but frequently an urban militia was formed of those untrained for military service but anxious to help protect their property and goods. The Huguenots of Bordeaux addressed a remonstrance to the city council in which they expressed their desire to pledge themselves for service in a municipal militia rather than entrust the defence of their city to foreign troops.<sup>2</sup> Soon after the outbreak of war Antoine de Bourbon, lieutenant-general of the kingdom, addressed to the prévôt des marchands and to the échevins of the city of Paris instructions regarding measures to be taken for the constitution of a municipal militia.<sup>4</sup>

The total number of troops in Guyenne fluctuated greatly but it may be estimated with reference to a number of sources. In 1559 the statement of payment of soldiers in garrisons enumerated one thousand ninety in Guyenne.<sup>4</sup> The companies of ordonnance are not mentioned in that document and the only garrison listed for Bordeaux was forty men under captain Baillac (sic) in the château Trompette although the payment of Noailles

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<sup>1</sup> Doucet, Institutions, II, 647.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 84.

<sup>3</sup> Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 398.

<sup>4</sup> Lot, Recherches sur les Effectifs, p. 254.

and his lieutenant is listed. Four years later Noailles' garrison at the Château du Hâ was twice the size of de Vaillac's and it may well have been so in 1559.<sup>1</sup> From August to October, 1562 Charles urged Burie to bring into France reinforcements from Guyenne. At the end of October Burie wrote that the king had asked him to lead three thousand Spanish and two thousand French hommes de pied.<sup>2</sup> However, he claimed that it was very difficult to make the Spaniards march. Burie had already had an experience with mutiny among the Spanish troops in which four or five hundred of the first had deserted their enseignes and made their way back towards Spain without a captain, an enseigne or a drummer.<sup>3</sup> Now he wrote that of eleven or twelve enseignes, about three thousand men, he had led from Gascony only about fourteen or fifteen hundred remained, a number which would shortly be re-organized into six enseignes. In addition to the forces under Burie, de Terride and Monluc had troops at Montauban where they were besieging the city. The Spaniards and the companies of Charry were led into France by Louis Prévôt de Sansac because Burie's attention was demanded by the uprisings in his gouvernement.<sup>4</sup> These troops were augmented substantially by men of the Huguenot

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 199.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Pour Servir á..., No. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., No. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 174.

army who changed sides after the battle of Vergt.<sup>1</sup> Monluc stated that Sansac led twenty-three enseignes of Spanish and French to the aid of the king, a force of about five thousand men. A statement for the payment of gens de guerre a pied in the garrisons of cities and châteaux of Guyenne in March 1563 showed one thousand four hundred men to be paid.<sup>2</sup>

### Recruitment and Appointments

The recruitment of all types of troops was dependent upon the royal will and the execution of that will in the province was under the authority of the governor and lieutenant-general, the king's personal representative. In Guyenne a second person shared the responsibility of the lieutenant-general; Monluc exercised equal authority with Burie. When Condé failed to accept the commission to go into Guyenne and pacify the province, Blaise de Monluc had been sent without a definite title but with a definite mission.<sup>3</sup> At that time he and Burie commanded companies of ordonnance of equal size, received equal stipends, were both sent commissions for the raising of troops. It was not until early in March 1563 that Monluc received word of his appointment as lieutenant-general with authority, like Burie, over half the

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, III, 53, 54.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., IV, 199.

<sup>3</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 400.

province,<sup>1</sup> nevertheless he had styled himself at least a month earlier as "seigneur du dit lieu (Agenois), chevalier de l'ordre, cappitaine de cinquante hommes d'armes de ses ordonnances, et lieutenant de sa Majesté au gouvernement de Guienne."<sup>2</sup> Whether or not he had the title, Monluc occupied a position and exercised a responsibility equivalent to those of Burie, the lieutenant-general in the absence of the king of Navarre.

The office exercised by the two veteran captains of campaigns in Italy was primarily a military office. Some have held that it was historically an office exclusively military and, therefore, confined to the frontier provinces and that the office spread to other provinces during the Wars of Religion because every province became a frontier in a period of civil war.<sup>3</sup> Zeller identified the origin of these ideas in the writings of members of the sixteen th century Parlements, writers who had a rival's interest in de-emphasizing the administrative role of the governors.<sup>4</sup> Only occasionally did the Parlement of Bordeaux venture into military matters. On one such occasion it seconded the lieutenant's judgment and requested the king to leave Burie

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, III, 66.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., IV, 190.

<sup>3</sup> Zeller, "Gouverneurs...", p. 231. Zeller attributes this interpretation to such notable historians as Paul Viollet and Gustave Dupont-Ferrier.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 251-256.

and the three thousand Spaniards in Guyenne.<sup>1</sup> Following the Peace of Amboise the Parlement disagreed with Monluc and recommended to the king total disarmament. In this military matter the king was inclined toward the decision of the Parlement but allowed his lieutenant to exercise his own judgment as to how many troops he regarded as indispensable.<sup>2</sup> The governor and lieutenant-general was the supreme military authority within the province.

Since the lieutenant-general commanded military forces in the province he was in a position to dispense a considerable amount of patronage, a practice over which the king desired to maintain control. In his choice of captains for the companies he levied, the lieutenant-general could offer incentives to local notables for the pay accompanying the office was considerable and the office offered further opportunity for honour and enrichment. At the same time he could increase his own influence by appointing men loyal to him or by gaining the loyalty of men through this patronage. Thus some of the first troops raised by Monluc were placed under the command of François de Cassagnet de Tilladet, seigneur de Saint-Orens et de la Roque, sénéchal de Bazadois, who had first borne arms under Monluc in Italy. The fortunes of

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 299.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 216 and n.

Tilladet continued to be tied to those of his mentor and in 1567 under a commission from Monluc he became colonel of the legions of Guyenne. The next year Monluc claimed for him the collar of the order as recompense for his services and in 1575 he was maître de camp in the army of Monluc, maréchal of France.<sup>1</sup> Immediately after the fall of Orleans to Condé in April 1562, Charles IX wrote Monluc asking him to come immediately with his own company, those of the king of Navarre and the maréchal de Thermes, and six companies of gens de pied which he must raise. Monluc quoted Charles as saying, "I am sending you the commissions, leaving the names of the captains blank, for you know better than I who deserve it."<sup>2</sup> Monluc left Bordeaux for Agen and there assigned the six commissions to captains of his choice: two to Charry; two to Hugues de Bazordan, seigneur de Thermes; one to the baron de Clermont, his own nephew; one to the captain Corné.<sup>3</sup> The troops were recruited by their captains from among loyal men of their own region and the captains were appointed by Monluc from the ranks of men loyal to him. Therefore, the forces recruited and deployed in Guyenne took on the aspect of a personal army, strongly loyal to Blaise de Monluc.

Families frequently benefited through the influence of

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, II, 348 and n.

<sup>2</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, II, 339-340.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., II, 441.

their more illustrious members. Blaise de Monluc's rise had been facilitated more than once by his older brother Jean de Monluc, bishop of Valence.<sup>1</sup> Both Jean and Blaise, in turn, sponsored their younger brother Joachim, sieur de Lioux.<sup>2</sup> Blaise de Monluc's second, third and fourth sons, Pierre-Bertrand called Peyrot; Jean, chevalier de Malte; and Fabien, were all associated with their father in military matters. In 1560 captain Peyrot was sent from the court by the duc de Guise with a message for his father.<sup>3</sup> When the Peace of Amboise was announced he was leading into France twelve companies of gens de pied and one of chevaux-légers.<sup>4</sup> Philippe de La Roche, baron de Fontenilhes, was Blaise de Monluc's son-in-law and also guidon of his company.<sup>5</sup> Membership in the family and leadership in the company were interrelated and Monluc had great confidence in his son-in-law who played an important role in the field especially at Vergt.<sup>6</sup> The Monluc family was not unique in the practice of nepotism and it is not surprising that the lieutenant of Burie's company was his nephew Corré.<sup>7</sup> Nepotism had much to recommend it as a useful practice

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, I, 133.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, 21 and Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 169.

<sup>3</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, II, 398.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., II, 592.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., II, 415.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., II, 546-562.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., II, 474.

in military organization for, provided the relative appointed was a competent person, the likelihood of greater co-operation contributed to improved service for the monarch. That the king exercised some control over appointments was demonstrated by his refusal to grant a company of ordonnance to Joachim de Monluc in spite of his brother's lobbying and by the refusal to grant Monluc's request that Peyrot's company of chevaux-légers be converted into a company of ordonnance.

The appointment of a group of noble counsellors chosen by the king to accompany a great noble on a mission was intended to increase the effectiveness of his mission. Thus when Montpensier was sent into Guyenne the king's council decided that he should be accompanied by the seigneurs de La Vauguyon, de Candale and de Chavigny.<sup>1</sup> When he arrived in Guyenne these three lords were with him and also the seigneurs d'Estissac and de Lauzun.<sup>2</sup> Jean de Peyrusse, sieur d'Escars, comte de La Vauguyon was a member of a family in good favour with Antoine de Bourbon. Henri de Foix, comte de Candale, was the lieutenant of Belzunce who was governor of Dax.<sup>3</sup> Francois Le Roy, seigneur de Chavigny et de la Baussoniere, comte de Clinchamp, was to become lieutenant-general of Anjou, Touraine and Maine and governor of Mans in 1564.<sup>4</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 538.

<sup>3</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 200n.

<sup>4</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 538.

important office of lieutenant-general in Poitou was held by Louis Madaillan d'Estissac<sup>1</sup> and Francois Ier Nompar de Caumont, seigneur de Lauzun was lieutenant for the king of the châteaux, city, and comté of Blaye.<sup>2</sup> All five were prominent nobles who contributed to the dignity and authority of Montpensier's commission.

The king not only saw that Montpensier was accompanied by a council of nobles on his mission into Guyenne but he attempted to send proven nobles into the province at other times to encourage his officers and increase the support of the noblesse. Thus in May, 1562 Charles promised Monluc and Burie that he would send into Guyenne for their assistance Biron, d'Ossun, Candale and Negrepelisse.<sup>3</sup> These men were sent from the court to the province because as men of prominent families in Guyenne, they had gone to the court seeking appointment and honours. In their activities within the province they showed little hesitation in co-operating with Monluc as did Candale in the formation of Catholic leagues.<sup>4</sup>

The raising of troops was undertaken locally as the

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, II, 538.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, 205.

<sup>3</sup> Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 441.

<sup>4</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 214.

appointment of commanders for them often was. In theory, the king maintained the ultimate control since he issued letters patent and commissions and on the occasions when he had not authorized the levy or the appointment before the fact, his confirmation was given after the fact. Also in theory, control of the purse strings by the king ensured his authority over military and administrative affairs. However, local authorities found many opportunities to manipulate royal funds, to augment them from the spoils of war, and to use them for personal gain. Effective royal control over affairs in a disrupted and distant province was impossible to maintain.

#### Command

As in other aspects of authority military command was centralized, in theory. In practice the central command depended on local response for its effectiveness. As lieutenant-general of the kingdom, Antoine de Bourbon was supreme commander. The three Triumvirs were among his high officers: the constable was Antoine's lieutenant; the duc de Guise, chief of the avant-garde; the maréchal Saint-André, chief of the arrière-garde.<sup>1</sup> The royal army they commanded consisted of thirty thousand men, in camp or promised.<sup>2</sup> Three thousand German lansquenets, fourteen enseignes

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 235.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., IV, 287.

of Swiss and at least three thousand Spanish troops were included in that number. These foreign troops illustrate the difference between an army on paper and an army in the field. The three thousand Germans represented half the number initially anticipated by Antoine who decided to settle for three thousand "now" rather than six thousand "sometime." The reiters arrived at the end of July, 1562 and, after hearing from Condé, most of them changed sides and put themselves in the service of the Huguenots.<sup>1</sup> The Spanish troops entered Guyenne in September but were detained in that gouvernement by Burie and Monluc.<sup>2</sup> Burie found them difficult to handle and the fact that they were unpaid contributed to their dissatisfaction. About five hundred mutinied and Monluc's skill was required to pacify them.<sup>3</sup> At Vergt the wily Gascon commander exploited the rivalry between Spanish and Gascon.<sup>4</sup> Of all the foreign troops expected only the Swiss took the field reliably as anticipated.

Forces from within the kingdom were likewise difficult to deploy through a centralized command. From August, 1562 the king, the queen and the lieutenant-general of the kingdom commanded Burie to lead from Guyenne into France both the Spanish companies

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., Nos. 59, 61.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, II, 554-557.

and troops raised in Guyenne.<sup>1</sup> Repeated letters and even a personal messenger, the seigneur de Malicorne, lieutenant of Randan's company, drew no immediate response in terms of conducting the troops to join with the royal army.<sup>2</sup> Both local concerns and local independence postponed the active response to that request. In November the gens de pied under, Jacques Prévost, seigneur de Charry and some of the Spaniards were finally led into France by Louis Prévost, seigneur de Sansac, governor of Angoumois.<sup>3</sup>

The pre-eminent role of the lieutenant-general in military affairs of the gouvernement was advantageous if he was a forceful person and a competent commander. When authority was divided or the lieutenant-general was ineffectual the fact that he had theoretical authority was no advantage to the military cause in the gouvernement. The rivalry of Burie and Monluc had few serious repercussions for the forceful Monluc was a more energetic person and a more able commander. Either they served in different parts of the province or Monluc managed to get his own way by manipulating Burie or bullying him. Rivalry in Provence had much more serious results. The governor was Claude de Savoie, comte de Tende, nephew of the constable Montmorency. His son Honoré de Savoie, comte de Sommerive, was lieutenant. The latter embraced

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., II, 514 and n.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 59.

<sup>3</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 77.

the party of the Guises while his father was very moderate. The son raised troops in the king's name in spite of his father's opposition and eventually the moderate father was maneuvered into the Huguenot camp.<sup>1</sup> The tragedy lay in the fact that both father and son made war, pillaging successively the same towns, both in the king's name.

The armies engaged in battle in the provinces of the west and southwest of France were predominantly locally-raised troops commanded by royal officers of local origin. As a result they demonstrated strong regional loyalties and were frequently reluctant to fight beyond the limits of their own provinces. Both officers and men preferred to remain in their home territory although on which side they fought seems to have been of secondary importance for many. The fact that the lieutenant-general in large measure chose the captains and recruited the troops had the advantage that a strong personal loyalty to the local commander tended to unify the troops. The Gascon nobility certainly united behind Monluc and expressed their confidence in him in April, 1562 as the civil war was just beginning.<sup>2</sup> The noblesse of Guyenne were convinced that the acceptance of the new religion meant the overthrow of the accepted social order and they found evidence to strengthen their conviction in the

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<sup>1</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 304.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 441.

assassination of the baron de Fumel by his own peasants, one of the first events of the strife in Guyenne.<sup>1</sup> Refusal to pay the tailles to their secular lords was a small step for those Huguenots who had refused the payment of dîmes to the Roman Catholic Church. The noblesse feared that their financial and social position and even their lives were threatened by the Reform, a fear that was heightened as most of the men of finances of Guyenne joined the Reform and many of the officers of justice of the Parlements and sénéchaussées.<sup>2</sup> The Reform itself had a distinctly local character because of the nature of its organization and leadership. In its struggles the spirit of provincial resistance was reborn so that in the Bordelais region the revolt of the gabelle was evoked.<sup>3</sup> It was to be expected that the noblesse would seek in the king's lieutenant-general their champion. He was one of them and to a class, largely military, his renown as a military leader was important. Monluc, on his side, was not reluctant to court the noblesse for he was sure that the crown would have to lean increasingly on the nobility and to be their chosen leader could only strengthen his position.<sup>4</sup>

During the first War of Religion Blaise de Monluc was by

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., II, 400; Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, II, 395.

<sup>3</sup> Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, pp. 161-162.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 164, 167-168.

far the most important military figure in Guyenne. He possessed a high degree of independence in the exercise of military affairs. He recruited men, appointed officers and even imposed taxes for the expense of the army.<sup>1</sup> Many soldiers were available and willing to fight, seemingly with little concern about which side engaged their services. This fact raises a serious question about the contention that the Huguenot army was merely the congregation of the faithful under arms. While the synodal organization of the Protestant Churches may have provided the skeleton of the Huguenot army, much of the flesh on that military body must have come not from the congregations but from the ranks of professional soldiers seeking employment. That situation is in accord with Romier's observation that,

the many soldiers and captains from the Italian Wars could not be threatened with the loss of their regular employment without precipitating great disorder.... On the other hand the economic and social condition created by costly external wars must resolve itself in an explosion of anarchy.<sup>2</sup>

The conflict in Guyenne was greatly magnified by the presence of many veteran soldiers who knew no other career and who found in civil war the employment they had lost with the cessation of hostilities after the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559.

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, III, 420. Cf. discussion in the next chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Lucien Romier, Les Origines Politiques des Guerres de Religion (Paris: Perrin, 1914), pp. 235-236.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINANCE AND ROYAL AUTHORITY

Continual war placed a heavy financial burden upon the kingdom during the sixteenth century. No sooner had the expense of foreign wars been removed than the expense of civil war replaced it as a drain upon the budget. These expenses lent impetus to financial reforms and gave rise to new financial expedients throughout the course of the century but in spite of reform and expedient the royal budget was always in the red. Frequently the king was unable to meet his commitments, creditors went unpaid and extensive loans were re-financed at higher interest. The most dramatic attempt to consolidate the royal debt was the Grand Parti of 1555, an attempt to systematically retire the debt over a period of only ten years. Creditors were to be paid four times yearly from revenues of the receipts general of Lyon, Toulouse and Montpellier with interest at 5% per term or 20% annually. In practice, payments remained in arrears and further loans were contracted. Many of these were incorporated into the Grand Parti so that by 1559 with other loans it represented a debt of more than 16,500,000 livres with annual interest of 3,200,000 livres.<sup>1</sup>

The financial failure of the French monarchy was postponed

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<sup>1</sup>Roland Mousnier, Études sur la France XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle, 2 ptie, (Paris: Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 1959), p. 338.

a year or two after that of the Spanish monarchy<sup>1</sup> but it was hastened by the sudden death of Henry II in 1559.<sup>2</sup> Although the royal debts were very quickly acknowledged by his successor, Francis II, the confidence of bankers who had extended far too much credit and had recently experienced the financial collapse of Spain, was shaken by the succession of a boy to the throne. Therefore, at the outset of the civil wars the ability of the monarch to raise large sums from international bankers was seriously curtailed and financial problems were to plague the monarchy constantly and to hamper its military efforts as it attempted to combat the challenge of religious division and civil war.

In time of war, when the outcome depended upon the exploits of the royal troops it was most important that their loyalty and service be assured. Therefore, the extent to which the troops remained unpaid should serve as a reasonable index of the financial difficulties of the monarchy. It is an index relatively easy to examine because the governors and lieutenants-general, responsible for the command of the troops and the maintenance of garrisons within their gouvernements, were greatly concerned about the payment of their soldiers and that problem became a regular

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 335-338.

<sup>2</sup>For the crisis of that year see Henri Hauser, "The European Financial Crisis of 1559," Journal of Economic and Business History, II, 2 (February, 1930), 241-255.

theme in their letters to Charles IX and to Catherine de Médicis.

The constant pleas of governors that their troops be paid probably did not arise primarily from any humanitarian concern for their soldiers but from the practical realization that unpaid troops were dissatisfied troops and it was a small step from dissatisfaction to disloyalty. Even at the time of recruiting, the necessary resources were not always provided. D'Escars, following the king's orders, raised a company of thirty arquebusiers for Savignac for which provision was not made so Burie met the expenses personally and asked reimbursement thereafter.<sup>1</sup> Burie asked money for a montre in January, 1562 recognizing that it would be necessary to maintain four or five hundred gens d'armes in the Agenais all summer.<sup>2</sup> Montpensier wrote from Poitiers that the troops were forced to pillage or starve and he asked permission to impose a levy on the inhabitants of the city.<sup>3</sup> In August, 1562 Burie was begging the king for the solde for his company<sup>4</sup> and in December he was still asking.<sup>5</sup> The men left in garrison by the duc de Montpensier had not been paid by him and Burie did not dare decree a tax to raise their solde without the king's authorization,

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 426. "Burie au roi," 28 septembre, 1561.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., I, 427. "Burie au roi," 28 septembre, 1561.

<sup>3</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 54.

<sup>4</sup>Ruble, op. cit., I, 451. "Burie au roi," 29 aout, 1562.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., I, 466. "Burie au roi," 14 decembre, 1562.

especially since it amounted to twenty thousand livres per month. At the same time the baron de Jarnac reminded Catherine that the soldiers needed for the defence of La Rochelle had to be paid or they would turn to sack and pillage.<sup>1</sup> His request arrived almost simultaneously with a letter from La Rochelle, written by Burie, stating that Monpensier had left troops there without providing for their payment.<sup>2</sup> The situation was so dire according to Jarnac, governor of La Rochelle that men of his company who had received no money for a year had been forced to leave for their homes penniless after having eaten their horses in the garrison.<sup>3</sup>

Pay had been scarce for the six companies of gens d'armes raised by Monluc and for his own company of chevaux-légers. Since they hadn't been paid for over four months, the realistic Monluc wondered if they could be given two months' pay before they were disbanded. At the same time he pointed out that the company in garrison at Mont de Marsan and those in Bordeaux had received nothing for more than eight months and the mortes-payes had been unpaid for a year.<sup>4</sup> If any funds reached the troops, they were inadequate for Monluc indicated that Peyrot's chevaux-légers had received only one thousand livres in six months.<sup>5</sup> At the normal

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., No. 80.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., No. 79.

<sup>4</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 286-290. "Monluc à la royne pour les affaires de Guyenne," octobre ou novembre, 1563.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., IV, 291.

pay of twenty livres per month <sup>1</sup> twelve times as much money would have been required to pay the company excluding its officers. Ransom demands for prisoners prolonged the civil wars in Monluc's view, however, he could not forbid the practice because "neither gendarme nor soldier was paid." <sup>2</sup>

The problem of maintaining unpaid troops was not eliminated by disbanding them for men accustomed to earning their living by their arms would probably continue doing so and were not likely to view their employers with a theologically or politically critical eye. D'Étampes expressed concern over the order to demobilize some troops saying that to do so would weaken him and strengthen his enemies "for such men go where the money is." <sup>3</sup> That men should change sides to increase the likelihood of being paid is not surprising for they changed on occasion for other reasons. After the defeat of Duras at Vergt, Monluc recruited from the defeated army six companies of gens de pied with two purposes in mind: to diminish the enemy and to fill his own ranks with needed troops. The effects were at times as devastating if unpaid soldiers did not desert but merely resorted to looting and robbery; allies could do as much damage to citizens and their

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<sup>1</sup>Doucet, Institutions, II, 644.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 478-479.

<sup>3</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 38.

cities as could enemies.<sup>1</sup> The baron de Jarnac feared such conflict between soldiers and inhabitants in La Rochelle if the men remained longer unpaid. Looting and robbery would lead to great scandal and he urged Catherine to avoid them by finding the means to pay the troops.<sup>2</sup>

The financial system at the beginning of the century lent itself to control by an oligarchy of financial officers. Only the revenues of the Domain were centralized under the Changeur du Trésor and the revenues from taxes were handled by nine receipts general.<sup>3</sup> There was no unified accounting for all revenues and the system for effecting payment was often extremely complicated.<sup>4</sup> Thus it was extremely difficult to co-ordinate financial matters, to determine resources available or to devise means of supplementing resources. Francis I introduced reforms in 1523 which centralized and simplified the financial system by establishing two central agencies, the Trésorier de l'Épargne and the Trésorier des Parties casuelles, the first of which became the major agency of centralization. As the pressure of fiscal operations on the Trésorier de l'Épargne mounted, it was relieved by a return to earlier practices. The accounting remained centralized in his

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 76.

<sup>3</sup>Doucet, Institutions, II, 597.

<sup>4</sup>Mousnier, Etudes sur la France au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle, pp. 282-284.

hands but the administration of funds was decentralized to some degree under the local recettes généraux as funds were increasingly spent locally.<sup>1</sup>

Revenues were classified as ordinary and extraordinary and early in the century only domainal revenues were considered ordinary. Taxes of all kinds were classed as extraordinary since they had originated as temporary expedients in times of financial pressure such as the Hundred Years' War. They were to become in the course of the century classified as ordinary in contrast to new expedients developed to meet the financial demands of the time.

Like the administration of the armed forces the supporting financial resources were divided into the receipts of l'ordinaire des guerres and the receipts of l'extraordinaire des guerres.<sup>2</sup> The former consisted of the taille and taillon sent by receveurs généraux and receveurs du taillon to the two trésoriers de l'ordinaire des guerres. The funds were then sent to the payeurs des compagnies de gendarmes responsible for paying the troops. Doucet observes that the taille and the taillon had both been considered historically as extraordinary taxes and were only

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<sup>1</sup>Mousnier, Études sur la France au XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p. 334.

<sup>2</sup>Doucet, Institutions, II, 648-649.

classed as ordinary resources in relation to those which supplied the extraordinaire des guerres.<sup>1</sup> Funds for the finances extraordinaires were drawn from the Épargne in the form of mandates carrying receipts addressed to the recettes générales. The funds were then distributed to the soldiers by payeurs des compagnies as in the case of the finances ordinaires.

When Montpensier was sent into Guyenne he asked for a clerk of the trésorier de l'extraordinaire des guerres supplied with receipts and signed blanks to serve for discharge to the receveurs from whom money would be taken.<sup>2</sup> The royal council informed him that one hundred thousand livres had been assigned by the trésorier de l'Épargne for the military needs of Burie and Monluc. He was instructed to ascertain how much had been spent and to make his needs known from the field when he knew them specifically. No one was going to receive from the royal treasury a single sou until well after he needed it and, in case the need should become too pressing, the duc de Montpensier could take the plate from the churches, an unpopular activity for which the council was always ready to grant authority.

The annual revenues of the crown at the beginning of the Wars of Religion amounted to about 16,000,000 livres, three-

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<sup>1</sup>Doucet, Institutions, II, 648n.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 48.

quarters from revenus ordinaires and one-quarter from revenus extraordinaires. Of the revenus ordinaires about 6,000,000 livres was derived from the tailles and crues, 2,700,000 from the aides and the gabelles, and 3,500,000 from the domain. Décîmes, gifts, forced loans, and the sale of offices contributed to the revenus extraordinaires.<sup>1</sup> Mousnier maintains that the people of France could well have paid higher taxes but that taxes were not raised because of the way in which they were viewed rather than because of any inability to pay. The tax was considered as something abnormal by the sixteenth century mind for the king should live on the proceeds of his domain. Therefore, the crown sought other expedients for meeting its expenses.<sup>2</sup>

After the credit inflation of 1559, the French court, unable to obtain the needed financing on the open market in such banking centres as Lyon, appealed to the pope, to the king of Spain and, not least, to the people of France for gifts and loans. Many loans were forced, especially if a man were so indiscreet as to let it be known that he had money available. The cardinal de Ferrare, for example, let it be known that he was planning to send 2,000 écus to Fabricio Serbelloni, the pope's nephew at Avignon. He found himself approached by the

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<sup>1</sup>Mousnier, Études sur la France au XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p. 325.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 326

queen and the duc de Guise who insisted that he give this sum to the seigneur de Suze who was being sent into Dauphiné by the Triumvirate. In vain did he protest that he did not yet have the money on hand for he was required to pay half immediately and to present a note for the balance.<sup>1</sup> The gift and loan requested of the pope enabled him to make certain demands upon the French court. Upon the assurance that the king would re-establish the Roman Catholic Church, punish the heretics, and send the chancellor from the court, the pope agreed to grant a gift of 100,000 écus and a loan of similar amount.<sup>2</sup>

Loans were often raised through the intermediary of municipal officials rather than directly from individuals. When the civil war entered the stage of decisive operations about the beginning of August, 1562, Catherine called the council of the city of Paris and asked for a loan of 200,000 écus. It was opened to the inhabitants for subscription with registers in various parts of the city. The first name recorded was that of the prévôt, Guillaume de Marle, who gave part of his plate and another of the donors was Diane de Poitiers, mistress of the late Henry II, who brought a gift of 1,222 livres.<sup>3</sup> In June, 1563 the

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 198.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., IV, 199.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., IV, 292.

"échevins et conseillers de Paris" were once more requested by Charles to borrow from the inhabitants of the city, this time to the tune of 100,000 livres.<sup>1</sup> At the least pretext money was raised and charged against a city. Thus when the city of Bourges fell to the Catholic army, a contribution of 50,000 écus was required for the expenses of the war. The amount was later reduced to 20,000 écus to be raised by a tax on the reformed inhabitants.<sup>2</sup> Also calculated to defray slightly the cost of military endeavours were the terms offered the city of Rouen before its fall. That city was required to pay 80,000 livres to ransom itself from pillage.<sup>3</sup>

In his address "A Monseigneur" at the beginning of his Commentaires, Monluc directed to the duc d'Anjou a personal defence in which he repudiated the charge that he had accumulated a great fortune. He stated that he lived on his stipend and loaned any extra capital out at interest.<sup>4</sup> At a time when forced loans were the order of the day a man was expected to have his money, and probably his plate, loaned for the king's service. The tone of Monluc's writing suggested that to have too much cash on hand when the monarch was in dire need was considered tantamount

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 103.

<sup>2</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 310.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., IV, 346.

<sup>4</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, I, 14-19.

to treason

One of the most basic expedients to supplement the resources of the monarch was the attempt to find someone else to foot the bill for at least part of the military effort. This was accomplished by making cities responsible for the payment of troops garrisoned in them, a practice reinforced by royal policy in 1562. In May Charles IX wrote Negrepelisse requesting him to raise four companies of gens de pied at Toulouse to be maintained at the expense of the city and for its safety.<sup>1</sup> The execution of this policy was supervised by the king's council for Montpensier stated that the council had resolved that the people of Chinon and Loudun would have two hundred hommes de pied and one hundred arquebusiers à cheval for the defence of the cities, châteaux and pais d'élection of the region, two-thirds of the expense to be borne by Loudun and one-third by Chinon. These regions, however, had not obtained commissions to raise the required taxes.<sup>2</sup> The troops, presumably, remained unpaid. Monluc's adjustment of the size and composition of the garrison at Lectoure was approved by the king provided that garrison was paid at the expense of the city and of the neighbouring villages "suyvant la permission et octroy que j'ay faict expedier aux habitanz d'icelle pour asseoir et imposer sur eulx

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 17.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 76.

les sommes de deniers qui seront necessaires pour ledict payement."<sup>1</sup>  
 After the Battle of Vergt when Burie took most of the forces from Guyenne to go into Saintonge, Monluc made use of three companies from Comminges which cost the king nothing for they were paid by the bishops and the region.<sup>2</sup> That the policy of local responsibility for payment of the troops was a newly enforced policy during the first War of Religion is indicated by the letter of Guy Chabot de Jarnac to the queen in which he complained of the difficulty in governing because of the changing of ordonnances,<sup>3</sup> a letter written within a few weeks of Montpensier's statement that La Rochelle was strongly opposed to supporting a garrison.<sup>4</sup>

The inhabitants of some regions demonstrated that they were willing to spend considerable time and money to avoid the expense of supporting a company in garrison. Montpensier instructed the contrôleur Ruzé to tell the king, the queen, and the council that since the king and queen had decided to maintain at the expense of the cities and surrounding regions the soldiers necessary for their defence, the duc asked that he be sent a commission and authority to impose the sums from which the pay could be taken. He was speaking of La Rochelle where all knowledgeable advisors stated at least eleven or twelve hundred

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., No. 74.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 170.

<sup>3</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 79.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., No. 74.

men would have to be maintained and, therefore, the expense would be considerable. The leaders of the city were businessmen prepared to invest a lot of money to avoid paying for the garrison and Montpensier discovered that they had sent the élu and some others to the court bearing four or five thousand écus and means of obtaining more to give to those in a position to help them in what they sought.<sup>1</sup> Whether they planned to approach Florimond de Robertet, sieur de Fresne, the secretary of state within whose departement the region lay, is not known. What is known is that they intended not merely to ask that they be relieved of the garrison but to offer some incentive to those able to influence the decision.

Particular extraordinary taxes were used as another expedient in the attempt to meet the financial demands of civil war. Local opposition to such taxes was at times aroused, especially when local interests were threatened. Catherine was informed by the baron de Jarnac that the interruption of the liberty of commerce and traffic of merchandise would destroy La Rochelle for there was nothing in the region but commerce. It would also result in a serious diminution of royal revenues. Either special taxes or other restrictions were interfering with the commerce of the city and the municipal officials were most concerned about it, so much

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 74. "Instructions du duc de Montpensier au contrôleur Ruzé, 12 novembre, 1562, La Rochelle.

concerned that they sent a deputation to the governor at Jarnac, his home. Jarnac, the governor, in turn planned to go to the court on their behalf.<sup>1</sup> A spate of letters from Burie and from the jurats of Bordeaux to the king and queen late in 1561 protested against the new tax of one écu per barrel on wine. Sales of wine to England represented an important part of the economy of the city and English merchants, because of the price increase dictated by the tax, were threatening to buy in Spain.<sup>2</sup> Nothing stirred local sentiments against the crown like an unpopular tax, a fact illustrated by the revolt of the gabelle in Guyenne just twelve years earlier.

A financial expedient first systematized during the reign of Francis I was the sale of offices, a practice which affected adversely royal authority. This practice enabled the king to raise large sums of money on occasion but at very high price for "each time the king sold an office, he created a creditor for the state."<sup>3</sup> That is, in salary and taxes the crown paid more than it received. At the Estates-General of Orléans, the Third Estate evaluated the salaries of new officers created by Henry II alone at 1,200,000 livres-tournois per year and Mousnier has calculated

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 425, 433.

<sup>3</sup>Mousnier, Études sur la France au XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p. 300.

that the king paid 33% interest for the capital he received.<sup>1</sup> Even more serious than the cost was the fact that men who owned their offices could be much more independent in the exercise of them and thus the king's control over his officers was weakened. The royal officers of Guyenne were among the leaders of the rebellion according to Monluc.<sup>2</sup> The venality of offices contributed also to social unrest for when the king was unable to meet his commitments for the salaries of officers, they took matters into their own hands insofar as they were able and thus abused those under their authority.

Men of the church were theoretically exempt from taxation but in reality they contributed significantly to the expenses of the king. Décimes were classified as free gifts to indicate that the clergy was exempt from taxation and was contributing of its own free will to the defence of the kingdom.<sup>3</sup> Under Henry II the decimes increased in size and frequency and during the reign of Charles IX they were systematized by the Contract of Poissy in 1561. In the sixteen years in which the Contract was in effect the clergy contributed 62,400,000 livres.<sup>4</sup> In fact, at the Estates-General of Pontoise in 1561 only the clergy had

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 416.

<sup>3</sup>Mousnier, Études sur la France au XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle, pp. 323-324.

<sup>4</sup>Doucet, Institutions, II, 837.

shown itself willing to give any financial support to the king. The secular estates had proven willing to air their grievances and even to threaten the position of the queen mother but unwilling to give anything in support of the monarch, and by these actions they had condemned the Estates-General to disuse. The clergy, on the other hand, proved useful to the crown and thereby enhanced its own position.<sup>1</sup>

Contributions from the clergy were not only in the form of *décimes* but in the sale of the temporal holdings of the church. For example, in July, 1563 after the Peace of Amboise when royal military strength was turned to ejecting the English from Normandy, Charles IX gave instructions to the royal officers decreeing the sale of 100,000 *écus* of the temporel of the church.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, as Charles and his advisors looked for resources during the first War of Religion, the silverware of the churches seemed to hold promise as a means of raising funds. Governors of the provinces were instructed to take the silverware from the churches to underwrite their military expenses.<sup>3</sup> Several governors expressed their unwillingness to undertake such an unpopular assignment for while they might be protectors of the church they could see potential danger in duplicating the Huguenot actions of

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<sup>1</sup>J.Russell Major, "The Third Estate in the Estates-General of Pontoise, 1561," *Speculum*, XXIX (1954), 476.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 108.

<sup>3</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., Nos. 43, 48, 51 "for Bretagne, Guyenne and La Rochelle et l'Aunis respectively.

raiding the churches, albeit with royal blessing. The duc d'Etampes suggested that for such a task commissions should be sent to the bishops or the men of justice<sup>1</sup> and Jarnac also wished to avoid being directly involved in such work.<sup>2</sup> The governors and lieutenants desired to dissociate themselves from a potentially unpopular royal fiscal policy.

The governors and lieutenants-general, as important officers of the crown, were both the recipients and the distributors of patronage. The king found it difficult but essential to reward them for their service; difficult because the royal treasury was pressed beyond its resources; essential because these military leaders could be as useful to his enemies as to himself. Local groups such as the municipal leaders in a major city of a gouvernement found it desirable to reward the king's lieutenants whom they regarded as their protectors both at the court and against the rebels. Even the Huguenots considered it worthwhile on occasion to offer substantial sums of money to a lieutenant of the king in exchange for certain guarantees. The lieutenant-general in turn, was in a position to arrange remunerative appointments for his protégés or, at least, to recommend them to the king as worthy recipients of royal largesse.

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 43.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 51.

High office did not automatically ensure the enrichment of its holder, however. In fact, the officer often assumed the financial obligations of his monarch with little immediate reward. Fifteen months after the battle of Vergt, Monluc was still writing to the king and queen to ask reimbursement for the 5,600 livres he had advanced personally in order to raise the royal companies. By the time of writing he claimed to be out of pocket not only the 5,600 livres advanced to the trésorier de l'extraordinaire des guerres but a further 300 écus spent trying to recover the debt. Martineau, Monluc's secretary, had been at the court almost five months working on his behalf. In the same letter the old lieutenant asked for his pension of 2,000 livres for the previous year, and, concluding the letter, he referred to a letter of ten days earlier in which he had told Catherine of the illness and imminent death of the bishop of Condom and had asked her to remember him in the appointment. The good bishop had recovered and Monluc relayed this news to the queen.<sup>1</sup> Later in the year a new bishop was appointed and Monluc received annually a sum of 5,000 francs from the bishopric for five years until his third son, Jean de Monluc, received the office.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the period of his command in Guyenne, Blaise de Monluc complained that his services were not being

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 315.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, I, 17.

recognized with appropriate financial rewards, a consistent theme with many variations. A typical example is found in the letter to the queen mother in which he stated that he had served faithfully for forty-five years and was unable to show that his house was worth one écu more than in the beginning. Having lost hope of recompense he asked to be allowed to retire to his home.<sup>1</sup> Catherine found it possible to flatter and mollify him with the granting of periodic honours.

The sentiments of Monluc were echoed by other royal officers such as d'Escars who wrote that he had been forced to spend 15, or 16,000 livres in ten months as governor of Bordeaux and one more month would see his total ruin.<sup>2</sup> That the king's personal representative should assume the king's expenses was expected and accepted by men of the time. The Parlement of Bordeaux decided that Noailles should raise three hundred men partially at his own expense.<sup>3</sup> The comte de Suze wrote from Avignon that for three months he had commanded sixteen ensigns and about three hundred horse and the only financial help he had received had been 2,000 écus given him by the legate when he left the court and 10 or 12,000 francs from the city and region. He had attempted to meet his expenses through loans on his own

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 306.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 116. "Le comte d'Escars à Catherine de Médicis," 6 septembre, 1563.

<sup>3</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, II, 440.

property.<sup>1</sup>

The problem facing the monarch was to maintain the loyal support of his officers, the lieutenants-general, in a time when the cash resources upon which he could draw for patronage were stretched to their limit and beyond. Frequently the lieutenants received from one hand of the king gifts which were taken away by the other. The congratulations of the king and queen to Monluc after the battle of Vergt emboldened him to ask the return of revenues from the comte de Gaure granted him by Henry II and taken away by Francis II.<sup>2</sup> Charles IX replied that his inability to reward the Gascon captain for his worthy service saddened him but the revenues of the comte de Gaure had been reclaimed for the crown in a general reunion of the domain and to set a precedent by returning them to Monluc would endanger more than one hundred thousand livres of rentes.<sup>3</sup> Offices, both ecclesiastical and administrative, were granted to the lieutenants on occasion, not to be exercised directly by them but so that they might enjoy some of the revenues from the office to which they in turn appointed someone. Monluc enjoyed revenue from the bishopric of Condom and the duc d'Étampes wrote Catherine thanking her for the abbey she had given in his favour and promising to see that

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 57.

<sup>2</sup>Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 196.

<sup>3</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 76.

appointments would be made from among loyal men.<sup>1</sup> Burie had been given the office of prévôt général of Guyenne, an office which he granted to a man of arms of his company. Burie's man had resigned the office to a man who joined the Huguenots and was taken at Vergt and Burie asked the king to grant the office to the bearer of his letter, a man he did not name.<sup>2</sup> While Burie may not have received revenue from the office or from its sale he was able in the first instance to use it as part of the patronage that was his to grant.

The granting of revenues from confiscations and fines was another means used by the king to reward the faithful and maintain their loyalty. Henri de Foix, comte de Candale, upon returning from a mission to England wrote to the queen of the expenses his officers had been forced to bear in the protection of his domains. He asked her to authorize a personal guard at expense of the Huguenots or at least of those who had been condemned by the Parlement of Bordeaux. This could be accomplished if Catherine were to regularize the gift she had made him of the products of diverse fines.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the requests reaching the court were more specific like Burie's letter containing an indictment against a merchant of Villeneuve d'Agen named Taisses.

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 27.

<sup>2</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 466. Pièces Justificatives, "Burie au roi," 14 decembre, 1562.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., I, 456. "Candale à la reine," 30 septembre, 1562.

The merchant was imploring pardon but Burie asked that the king condemn him and grant the product of confiscations pronounced against him to Burie himself.<sup>1</sup> The motive of the lieutenant-general in condemning Taisses was certainly open to question. Monluc, too, received the gift of a fine from Catherine; in his case, a long unpaid fine levied against Colineau the receveur du taillon of the Bordelais.<sup>2</sup> More than a year later Monluc was still trying to obviate the requirements of the chancellor in relation to forwarding the money to l'épargne and thence back to Monluc. The only property held by Colineau was his office, worth about fifteen hundred écus, and pledged to Monluc against the fine. The office was exercised in Monluc's name but the funds continued to go to his majesty's service and Monluc was unable to obtain authorization to take his part.<sup>3</sup> Confiscations were granted to officers other than lieutenants-general for Charles IX wrote Monluc that he was sending him certificates for the confiscation granted by the king to captain Monluc, his son, and to the seigneur de La Mothe-Rouge.<sup>4</sup> A measure of Catherine's need to keep the first prince of the blood identified with her cause was the gift from Charles IX to the king of Navarre, only two months

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., "Burie à la reine," 6 octobre, 1562.

<sup>2</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 156.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., IV, 289.

<sup>4</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 76.

before the latter's fatal wounding of all the confiscations which would be pronounced against the rebels in the provinces of Antoine and his wife.<sup>1</sup> The tendency of the crown to reward its officers by granting them revenues obtained from fines and confiscations may explain in part the zeal displayed by Burie for the investigation of such revenues in order to prevent men of the Parlement from unduly enriching themselves.<sup>2</sup>

Pensions granted by the crown rewarded loyal service in a continuing fashion and thus represented a continuing expense if funds were found to pay them and a continuing cause of dissatisfaction if funds were not found. Monluc first received three thousand francs annually with another two thousand added when Henry II rewarded him with a pension for his exploits in Italy and added the collar of the order of Saint-Michel, and a rente from the royal domain of three thousand francs on the comte de Gaure.<sup>3</sup> A further pension of three thousand francs from Catherine when she and Charles IX were in Angoulême brought Monluc's total pension to eight or nine thousand francs.<sup>4</sup>

The gages or pay accorded a man were, of course, part of

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 428.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 82.

<sup>3</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, I, 17; II, 192-193. In the introduction to his Commentaires Monluc maintained that the pension he received from Henry II was 2,000 francs and at the end of livre III he stated that it was 3,000 francs.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., I, 17.

the patronage accompanying the office granted him. The range was extremely broad and was represented at one extreme by Antoine de Bourbon, lieutenant-general of the kingdom, who did not underestimate his own importance in accepting two thousand five hundred livres monthly.<sup>1</sup> In the camp of the royal army the two marshals of the camp and the colonel general of the infantry received three hundred livres monthly and the maîtres de camp, two hundred.<sup>2</sup> In the province of Guyenne Burie and Monluc each received five hundred livres,<sup>3</sup> half what the duc de Montpensier was granted when he was sent on a special mission into the province.<sup>4</sup> Noailles, governor of Bordeaux, and captain of the Château du Hâ with one hundred men under his command, was paid one hundred livres per month and the services of his lieutenant were valued at half that amount.<sup>5</sup> The commissaires and contrôleurs who supervised the reviews of the troops each received about thirty-five livres.<sup>6</sup> The holder of a high non-

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<sup>1</sup>Ruble, Antoine de Bourbon, IV, 235.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 200.

<sup>4</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 48.

<sup>5</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 199. "Estat de ce que monte le paiement pour mois entier des gens de guerre a pied qui sont restes en garrison pour le service du roi es villes et chastéaux de la Guyenne," Toulouse, 4 mars, 1562 (1563). The gages of Noailles and his lieutenant had doubled from the statement for 1559 found in F. Lot, Recherches sur les Effectifs, p. 254.

<sup>6</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 201-202.

military office, that of first president in the sovereign court of the Parlement of Bordeaux, received two hundred livres per month,<sup>1</sup> an income he could undoubtedly augment.<sup>2</sup> The salary of a counsellor of the Parlement of Paris was 600 livres annually as compared to 375 livres for the same office in Bordeaux.<sup>3</sup>

Salary and rewards from the crown were by no means the only source of revenue for the king's lieutenants. Major states that "the provincial estates levied taxes to pay royal officials to convince the king that they were unable to pay the taxes he requested and that their respective provinces had privileges that must not be overridden."<sup>4</sup> Although it is impossible to ascertain what was expected in return, it is clear that the city of Toulouse appreciated Monluc's efforts and offered him gratification of 500 livres per month and wished to give him the sequestered property of Pierre d'Assezat, a town councillor charged by the Parlement with the crime of lèse-Majesté. D'Assezat was acquitted by the king's council and Monluc, therefore, did not receive his property.<sup>5</sup> There were times when representatives of

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<sup>1</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, II, 114.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 82.

<sup>3</sup>Mousnier, Études sur la France au XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle, p. 301.

<sup>4</sup>J. Russell Major, "Crown and Aristocracy in Renaissance France," p. 643.

<sup>5</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, III, 89; IV, 198.

the Huguenot organization offered financial inducement to the king's lieutenants in an attempt to win them over or, at least, to gain their promise of neutrality. Monluc's account of such an experience was certainly coloured to make much of his loyalty and honour but probably represented actual events nevertheless. Sums of 30,000 and 40,000 écus were offered Monluc on successive visits by Huguenot spokesmen if he would merely abstain from taking arms against them.<sup>1</sup>

The king's governors and lieutenants were in a position to dispense limited patronage particularly in the form of military appointments.<sup>2</sup> The nobility of Guyenne sent one of their number before the king shortly after the first War of Religion to carry their remonstrance. Among their chief grievances was the opposition of the Parlement of Bordeaux to the granting of gifts to nobles by Burie and Monluc. It was claimed by the nobles that they were a part of the king's army and the nobility of Guyenne led by the seigneur de Burie and de Monluc and that these leaders, lacking financial means to reward those who were most faithful and those put to greatest expense in the king's service, had made them small grants of property. The property granted was apparently that taken in war from the rebels and the king's

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<sup>1</sup> Monluc, Commentaires, II, 403-413.

<sup>2</sup> Supra, Chapter III.

council supported the judgment of the Parlement, local watchdog for royal prerogatives, by ruling that no lieutenant could grant the property of someone else.<sup>1</sup> The type of patronage most often shown by the great nobles was in recommending to office and the amount of patronage a noble could dispense depended upon the degree of influence he possessed at the court. Thus governors and lieutenants recommended individuals for recognition but the king was most often the source of patronage.<sup>2</sup> Even a lieutenant-general seeking office attempted to gain the support of such men as the duc de Montpensier, the king of Navarre and the duc de Guise.<sup>3</sup> There would appear to be much justification for the statement, "Just as the medieval king was the principal lord in the kingdom, so the Renaissance monarch was the greatest patron."<sup>4</sup>

Monluc claimed that after a lifetime of service to the crown he could not show his house to be twenty thousand écus richer for it and in his remonstrance to the king, Monluc defended himself against the charge of having used his office to amass a fortune of 300,000 écus. He suggested ironically that he wished the charge were true, providing the funds had

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., Nos. 91, 92.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Nos. 63, 64.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., No. 80. Burie requested the office of Admiral of Guyenne and enlisted the support of Montpensier.

<sup>4</sup>Major, "Crown and Aristocracy in Renaissance France," p. 643.

been taken from the Huguenots. According to his own account he had taken from the Huguenots, of course, but only as legitimate spoils of war and to prevent his soldiers from revolting at the sight of a vanquished enemy treated better than they were themselves. Furthermore, he claimed, he had found it essential to overcome a reputation as a Huguenot sympathizer. Certainly, had the royal financial officers been in his place they would have taken a million écus where he took only three thousand.

Monluc touched on the system of royal patronage to recommend that Charles IX maintain in his coffers purses containing various amounts with which he could personally reward his faithful subjects according to their qualité. He predicted that the royal financial officials would advise the king that it was beneath his dignity to distribute purses personally. Such advice should be ignored, claimed Monluc, since it would be offered by those whose concern was to keep the money passing through their own hands so that some might stick. His estimate was that the man who was granted two thousand écus by the king received only five hundred by the time it had passed through official hands. Giving financial rewards personally would strengthen the relations between the king and his nobles provided such gifts were distributed equitably. On the latter point, Monluc suggested with a little bitterness that someone in Guyenne had received the lion's share. Perhaps he was alluding

to his long resented rival, Francois Peyrusse d'Escars.

It is highly probable that in spite of his spirited defence, Monluc had accumulated a fortune of at least 300,000 écus and his own defence contributes insights into the ways in which he could have accomplished it. Following his address to Charles IX, Monluc directed a remonstrance to the king's brother, the duc d'Anjou. In that remonstrance he maintained that fame and glory were much more important to him than riches. Much evidence suggests that glory was indeed important to Monluc but there is little to suggest that he conceived of glory and riches as separate entities. Monluc observed at length that the king was the source of all benefits and requested that his children receive due financial recognition. He compared his own unselfish service with that of several prominent families who had served Louis XI and had been immortalized in verse.

To prove his own scrupulous honesty and disinterested service Monluc recalled all the offices he had held and the opportunities they had presented for personal enrichment, opportunities he had eschewed, of course. Many captains of gens de pied became rich on the pay of their soldiers and on the money provided for their victuals. With a good fourrier and a little help it was easy. He, Monluc, had been a captain of gens de pied seven or eight times without exploiting the opportunity. The

maître de camp had even greater opportunities for he could make a deal with the commissaires des vivres. And he himself was not slow to discover where there was an opportunity for gain. He had always had a good nose. Yet he had three times held the office of maître de camp without enriching himself.

As a governor of places he always had the opportunity of taking money from eighty or a hundred men who wished to escape military service. Having held these offices as long as he had and supervised as many montres as he had in his life, "avec quelque peu d'épargne, mon Dieu, quelle montagne d'or aurois-je!" And yet he claimed that was a mountain of gold he had not mined. As lieutenant of the king in Sienna and Montalcino, Monluc had faced great opportunities to increase his fortune. Local merchants were more than willing to work out agreements relating to the grain supply for the soldiers and loans could be made at high interest. Nevertheless when Monluc was relieved his successor found grain still in the warehouse and the poor had been fed with the surplus.

As a man progressed through the cursus honorum the opportunities for personal gain increased and Monluc indicated a few of the ways in which other governors and lieutenants-general exploited their positions. It would not be difficult, he maintained, to make arrangements with the receiver general of the province

and to fill one's personal coffers and to tap the money for montres, garrisons and the movement of artillery. Monluc could have raised many taxes, for the king had given him authority to do so, and he could have turned those taxes to his own profit. A third source of income could be the exaction of payment from towns and villages for the promise of exemption from the support of a garrison. On this point at least, Courteault states that there is abundant evidence that Monluc refrained from this common practice as a matter of scruple.<sup>1</sup> Monluc observed that he could have followed the example of others who exacted extortion from the Huguenots for the promise not to attack them even when they were living peaceably on their estates in accordance with the edict.

Monluc declared his innocence of all the artifices he mentioned and reminded his reader that the gain he had had from Clairac was with the specific permission of the king.

It is impossible to ascertain the extent to which Blaise de Monluc used the techniques he described to increase his estate and to what extent he increased it by other means. Some other sources were the stipends of his offices, the pensions granted by the crown, the income from multiple offices granted to him,

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, III, 421, n.1.

gifts from cities and the estates of his wives. Beyond his own fame, his chief concern was the honour and fortune which should come to his sons and grandsons. For this reason he reminded Charles IX and the duc d'Anjou of the letter written by the king on December 3, 1570 bearing the promise,

Tenez-vous tout assure que j'auray souvenance à jamais de vos longs et grands services, desquels, si vous ne pouvez recepvoir la recompence condigné, vos enfans achèveront d'en cueillir le fruict, joint qu'ils sont tels et m'ont ja si bien servy que d'eux-mesmes ils ont merité que l'on face pour eux ce que je seray bien aise de faire, quand l'occasion s'en presentera.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, III, 411.

## CHAPTER V

### LOCAL INSTITUTIONS AND ROYAL AUTHORITY

#### The First War of Religion - Summary of Events

Upon the death of Francis II and the succession of Charles IX Catherine de Médicis managed to obtain the regency. She organized the government around herself and three Bourbon princes, Antoine de Bourbon (king of Navarre), the cardinal de Bourbon and the prince de Condé. They were assisted by the constable Anne de Montmorency, the three Châtillon brothers, the duc de Montpensier and the prince de la Roche-sur-Yon.<sup>1</sup> The Guises left the court temporarily deprived of a share in government.<sup>2</sup> Catherine wrote to Sebastien de l'Aubespine, her ambassador in Madrid, that "it has been found best by all the princes of the blood, the lords of the council, and other great personages of this realm that the principal and sovereign authority in it should remain in my hands."<sup>3</sup>

Catherine was determined to preserve the monarchy and to maintain herself in power and to those ends she attempted to steer a middle course between rival factions, both religious and political.<sup>4</sup> Her method was the method of conciliation and she

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<sup>1</sup>Thompson, Wars of Religion, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 569.

<sup>4</sup>Franklin C. Palm, Politics and Religion in Sixteenth Century France, (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1927), p. 11.

found it inconceivable that there should be circumstances for which that method might prove inadequate.<sup>1</sup> In the summer of 1561 ecclesiastical estate was convened at Poissy with both Catholic and Protestant theological leaders present. Catherine aimed to effect a reconciliation but in that she was unsuccessful. The powers of diplomacy were limited in matters of conscience. Nevertheless Catherine achieved at least an outward reconciliation between Guise and Condé.<sup>2</sup>

Catherine's policy of conciliation found expression in the Edict of January, 1562. The Edict of July had forbidden judges and magistrates from pursuing the Huguenots; the new edict for the first time granted them the right to meet in public.<sup>3</sup> Following the massacre at Vassy in March, 1562 the Triumvirate consolidated its position in Paris and threatened to completely dominate the crown. Catherine desired to maintain as much independence as possible and for that purpose she attempted to maintain the support of Condé. In this attempt she contributed to the mobilization of Protestant forces.<sup>4</sup>

Conditions in the kingdom were ripe for civil war. In fact,

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<sup>1</sup> John Neale, The Age of Catherine de Médicis (London: Cape, 1943), p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Thompson, Wars of Religion, pp. 102-103.

<sup>3</sup> F. A. Isambert, Recueil Général des Anciennes Lois Francaises (Paris: Plon, 1882), XIV, 124-129.

<sup>4</sup> Supra, p. 15

before the massacre of Vassy many parts of the kingdom had been subjected to riots, iconoclastic demonstrations, and all kinds of disorders.<sup>1</sup> The Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis flooded the kingdom with soldiers and officers from the Italian Wars. These men could not be threatened with the loss of their regular employment and income without precipitating great disorder.<sup>2</sup> The problem was intensified by the economic impact on the state and its kings of those costly foreign wars and by the fact that many of the soldiers had been converted to Protestantism during their service.<sup>3</sup> The religious division contributed an issue for civil war and Huguenot church organization contributed a basis for recruitment and organization of a military force.

From April to June, 1562 the king was in the control of the Guise faction and the Protestant army increased at Orléans as Condé promoted the political theory that the king was a captive and the Huguenots were struggling for his release.<sup>4</sup> Under those circumstances Catherine's only hope to prevent civil war and lessen Guise control was to persuade Condé to disarm and return to the court, thereby removing the Guise excuse for maintaining

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 2. In January 1561 the Parlement of Bordeaux wrote to Charles IX of the "inconveniens, scismes et divisions" which continued daily in Guyenne over the religious issue.

<sup>2</sup>Lucien Romier, Les Origines Politiques des Guerres de Religion (Paris: Perrin, 1914), II, 235.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 253.

<sup>4</sup>Thompson, Wars of Religion, p. 138.

a large force under arms. Condé's insistence on the removal of the Guise faction as a prerequisite to disarmament only ensured the continuation of preparations for war.<sup>1</sup>

In seige and battle during the summer of 1562 the Catholic army regained much of the Loire region from Condé's forces. The military skill and tireless efforts of Monluc saved Toulouse and Bordeaux, the major cities of the southwest from the Huguenots. That forceful Gascon officer was responsible also for regaining the city of Lectoure from the Huguenots. His victory over a large Huguenot force under Duras at the battle of Vergt (October) was particularly significant for it prevented those Huguenots south of the Loire from joining the prince de Condé. It may thus have provided the measure of the Huguenot defeat at the crucial battle of Dreux two months later.<sup>2</sup>

The concern of Philip II over affairs in France acted as a spur to the Catholic cause and repeatedly hampered Catherine's attempts at conciliation. His Catholic majesty could not help but be concerned with heresy in France for that nation was a wedge between Spain and her valuable provinces of the Low Countries. Violent religious changes in France threatened the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 150

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 157. It is a commentary on the general accuracy of Monluc's colourful and egotistical commentaries that such a careful historian as Thompson used them as the basis of this part of his narrative.

Netherlands. As early as January, 1561 a Spanish envoy carried to the French court the word that Philip II would be compelled to suppress any new sect permitted in France "to preserve the territories of his brother-in-law and to prevent his own dominions from being infected."<sup>1</sup> Catherine wrote and attempted to explain her conciliatory policy to her son-in-law.<sup>2</sup> The Spanish ambassador, Chantonnay, was instrumental in the formation of the Triumvirate and exercised great influence over its policies.<sup>3</sup> The Spanish court brought constant pressure to bear on the court of France to extinguish heresy in the kingdom.

Foreign involvement in French affairs extended to England where the Huguenot appeal to Elizabeth was accompanied by the promise ultimately to restore Calais to the English.<sup>4</sup> Both the Spanish and the English were held back from full scale involvement in France because neither could afford the risk of commercial injury through the breaking of their relations in Holland and Flanders.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the English occupied Havre early in October and thus goaded the Catholic forces into redoubling

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<sup>1</sup>Bernerd C. Weber, The Diplomatic Relations between France and Spain during the Reign of Charles IX, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 577-578.

<sup>3</sup>Weber, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>4</sup>Lavissee, Histoire de France, VI: I, 68.

<sup>5</sup>Thompson, Wars of Religion, p. 163.

their efforts to take Rouen from the Huguenots. The help of a small English force was insufficient to ensure Rouen's defence but in the course of the seige Antoine de Bourbon was mortally wounded.

According to the decision of the Estates-General of Orléans the prince de Condé should have succeeded the king of Navarre as lieutenant of the realm and the prince sent out commissions to all major officers ordering them to recognize his authority as the king's lieutenant-general and governor of France. The court and the Catholic party, however, set aside the ruling of the Estates and no successor was immediately named. The Spanish government pressed the candidacy of the cardinal of Bourbon but expressed its willingness that Catherine have the entire government of affairs.<sup>1</sup>

In December Condé's forces faced the much larger army of the duc de Guise in the battle of Dreux. In the course of the fighting the marshal Saint-André was killed and Condé and the constable Montmorency taken prisoner by opposite sides. The depleted Huguenot forces under Coligny, prevented from joining with the English in Havre, retreated to Orleans.<sup>2</sup> The assassination of the duc de Guise in February, 1563 was a serious blow

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<sup>1</sup>Thompson, Wars of Religion, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 180-181.

to the Catholic forces; two of the triumvirs were dead and the third, a prisoner. Catherine de Médicis wanted to negotiate a peace and to unite Catholic and Huguenot against the English in the recovery of Havre. She was anxious to avoid a military victory that would enable either side to dominate the crown.<sup>1</sup>

The prince de Condé and the constable Montmorency were freed from prison to lead negotiations for a peace settlement. On March 19, 1563 the Edict of Amboise was decreed by the king and his council.<sup>2</sup> It was definitely conciliatory towards the Huguenots and the Parlement of Paris objected to its registration as did Parlements in Rouen, Dijon, and Toulouse.<sup>3</sup> Although peace had been decreed the pacification of the kingdom did not take place overnight. Many Catholics objected to the pardoning of Huguenots and the restoration of their property. In attempting to pacify the Protestants the crown offended many Catholics. In Guyenne those who saw themselves or their positions threatened found means of achieving their own ends. The Parlement of Bordeaux demonstrated its concern with the status and prerogatives of its members. The nobility continued an association officially disbanded by the crown. In both cases local institutions resisted royal orders while identifying themselves staunchly with the crown.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>2</sup>Isambert, Recueil des Anciennes Lois, XIV, 135.

<sup>3</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, II, iv.

### Catholic Leagues in Guyenne

The emergence of Catholic leagues in Guyenne and Languedoc signalled the beginning of a trend that was to have great significance for the crown as the Wars of Religion continued. In 1576 Henry III saw in a Catholic League an organization which could provide either the opportunity for strengthening the crown or a powerful threat to royal authority. He decided to exploit the opportunity and declared himself head of the League.<sup>1</sup> The early leagues, however, were not greeted with royal enthusiasm. A Catholic league was formed at Toulouse in March, 1563. The cardinals, Armagnac and Strozzi, as well as Monluc were influential in its establishment.<sup>2</sup>

This organization, composed of many clergymen, nobles, and bourgeois of Languedoc and Guyenne, and under the direct jurisdiction of the Parlement of Toulouse, actually took up arms and pledged itself by oath to march wherever required for the defense of the Catholic religion.<sup>3</sup>

At Agen a league was formed one month before that at Toulouse<sup>4</sup> and shortly thereafter the League of Cadillac was established by Monluc's lieutenant, Candale, and named for Candale's estate, the place of its founding.<sup>5</sup> Some of the leagues formed consisted

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<sup>1</sup>De Lemar Jensen, Diplomacy and Dogmatism, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>Dom Claude Devic and dom Jean Joseph Vaissete, Histoire Générale de Languedoc (Toulouse: E. Privat, 1872-1892), V, 249.

<sup>3</sup>Jensen, Diplomacy and Dogmatism, p. 39.

<sup>4</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 190-195. (This document is the act establishing the league, its charter.)

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., IV, 214.

chiefly of artisans whose guilds "offered an ideal institutional structure for the organization and co-ordination of Catholic opposition to the growing Huguenot forces."<sup>1</sup>

Monluc, however, encouraged the noblesse to form an association. Such noble leagues were by no means a new phenomenon in France. "Organized resistance to royal centralization among the seigneurs of the second rank showed itself in the leagues of 1314 and 1315."<sup>2</sup> The associations formed in southwest France during the Wars of Religion were not primarily for the defence of local rights but for the defence of feudal prerogatives. Nobles whose interests were bound up with those of the king saw that the defection of royal officials to the Huguenots was undermining the royal administration of the province. Their own feudal position was similarly threatened as emboldened tenants, converted to the Huguenot cause refused the décimes to the church, the taille to the crown and their feudal dues to the noblesse.<sup>3</sup> Not only did the royal cause depend upon the goodwill of the local nobility but the well-being of the local nobility depended upon the triumph of the crown. In leagues the Catholic

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<sup>1</sup>Jensen, Diplomacy and Dogmatism, p. 39 and Thompson, Wars of Religion, pp. 212-223.

<sup>2</sup>John Le Patourel, "The King and the Princes in Fourteenth-Century France," Europe in the Late Middle Ages, Hale, et al, ed. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965), p. 182.

<sup>3</sup>Supra, p. 97.

nobility pledged person and goods to the defence of their own cause.

The Edict of Pacification of March, 1563 forbade the establishment of new associations and commanded that those already formed be dissolved.<sup>1</sup> Catherine's firm letter to Monluc coincided with the edict. She evidently regarded the formation of leagues as an inexcusable expression of provincial independence. She soundly rebuked Monluc for his leadership in the venture and commanded him to undo the work he had done.<sup>2</sup> In spite of Monluc's assurance that the league of Agen was dissolved, it continued, without royal permission, and after August, 1564 came to be known as the league of Guyenne.<sup>3</sup>

In June, 1563 the king's council received a series of articles from the noblesse of Guyenne who had gathered in Bordeaux and sent a representative to be their spokesman at the court.<sup>4</sup> The queen mother had received prior notification for in April, Antoine de Pardaillan, baron de Gondrin, had written to report the establishment of the association of the noblesse of

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<sup>1</sup>Isambert, Recueil des Anciennes Lois, XIV, 145.

<sup>2</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 551-552. (March 31, 1563)

<sup>3</sup>Caleb G. Kelly, French Protestantism 1559-1562. Series XXXVI, No. 4 of Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1918), p. 79.

<sup>4</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., Nos. 91, 92.

Guyenne.<sup>1</sup> His description made the association sound sinister in purpose for he felt certain that the group, formed with a common purse, represented a plot on the part of some of the leading nobles, to foment trouble and maintain strife when the peace had just been published. Gondrin was convinced that the majority of the magistrates of Guyenne were crooked, favoured the subversive association of the nobility, and worked hand-in-glove with them to enrich themselves. The reasons for Gondrin's opinion of the association and the nature of the association itself are clarified by the remaining contents of his letter. He proceeded to speak of the "good and just quarrel" of the prince de Condé and to assure Catherine that the majority of the nobility and soldiers of the region would never have taken arms had they not been persuaded of the captivity of the king and the queen mother. From the tone of his letter, Gondrin had been allied with the Huguenots. As he assured Catherine of his loyalty, he explained his actions during the recent hostilities with the standard Huguenot rationale. Thus his distrust of a Catholic association is understandable. As the promulgation of the Edict of Pacification reflected the royal policy of pacifying the kingdom by making concessions to the Huguenots, an association ardently committed to the Catholic cause could very well become a threat

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 86.

to the peace.

That most of the Catholic nobility were disloyal to the crown, or even to the queen mother, and sought in an association an outlet for their disloyalty is an untenable suggestion. Before the outbreak of civil war, Burie declared that the nobility awaited only the king's orders to give battle to a common enemy. He referred to the nobility, sustained by the king, arising en masse against the rebels, seeing that their privileges, their revenues and their ancient rights were threatened.<sup>1</sup> At the outset of the war as Monluc and Burie took the field with their forces, they reported to Charles IX that Negrepelisse with a large number of gentlemen from the region of the Agenais, Armagnac, Quercy, Perigord, Ronergue, and Commenge had come before them to offer their persons and goods for the king's service.<sup>2</sup> Negrepelisse asked to come before the king to declare the support of the nobility. Charles IX assured him that hearing of their devotion gave him great satisfaction and then emphasized the fact that the nobility could do nothing better than to present themselves, well-equipped, to his lieutenants, Burie and Monluc, and serve under them.<sup>3</sup> The king's authority was channelled through his appointed lieutenants and not through a band of nobles,

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<sup>1</sup> Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 150, Memoire de Burie au roi, 6 juillet, 1561.

<sup>2</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 121.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 17.

however loyal they might be.

In their communication to the king, the noblesse of Guyenne maintained that they had created an association of good faith with no other purpose than to pledge themselves to employ their lives and goods for the king's authority.<sup>1</sup> They attributed the queen mother's concern and suspicion to the fact that those disloyal to the king slandered anything introduced to resist them and had, therefore, attempted to make the association appear unjust. Whatever the source of Catherine's concern, however, when Monluc had made it known to them, they had immediately obeyed and the association was dissolved "comme si jamais telle association n'eust eu commencement." The vicomte d'Uza, spokesman for the noblesse, was to remind the king of the faithful service rendered by the nobles of Guyenne and to obtain letters of declaration and confirmation maintaining them in their ancient liberties, franchises and privileges. They believed that the Huguenots had greater credit with the Parlement than they, especially with the first president. Particularly galling to the Catholic nobles were the letters received by Huguenots declaring them good and faithful servitors of the king while the loyal Catholics possessed no such declarations. Charles IX assured them he would investigate the charges against the first president

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., Nos. 91, 92.

of the Parlement; if necessary he would summon the man to the court. As for declarations of their loyalty, there had never been letters patent declaring them other than good subjects as in the case of the Huguenots who had been declared rebels.<sup>1</sup>

The formation of leagues was the action of men who saw their positions threatened by the growth of the Huguenot movement. Monluc saw in these associations a means of strengthening the Catholic position by compensating for the demobilization of garrison troops required by the Edict of Pacification.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, he found in the sponsorship of leagues an opportunity to enhance his own position as their promoter and spokesman. The immediate reason for Catherine's fear and distrust of associations may have stemmed from the actions of Condé. To unite his cohorts in their common task, the prince had them sign on April 11, 1562 an act of association in four articles. By their signing they undertook to employ body and goods, to the last drop of their blood, to the deliverance of the king and queen mother, the conservation of their edicts and ordonnances and the just punishment of those who held them in contempt. Those who signed committed themselves to fight together until Charles IX came of age, and undertook in person the government of his kingdom.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., Nos. 91, 92.

<sup>2</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 344-345.

<sup>3</sup>Mémoires de Condé, t. III, p. 258.

The avowed purpose of Condé and his associates was laudable, but under such loyal-sounding aims, they made war against the crown. Any group organized and committed to a particular purpose, if need be in spite of the crown, represented a threat to royal authority. Catherine demanded obedience to the king and to his appointed lieutenants rather than to a charter.

Another source of concern to Catherine was the news that Monluc was intriguing with the Spanish. He had threatened to invite the Catholic king into Béarn if Jeanne d'Albret continued to support the Protestants for, he said, the nobility and all the region favoured the Spanish king.<sup>1</sup> As early as October, 1562, it was rumoured that Monluc was planning to deliver the whole of Guyenne into the hands of Philip II.<sup>2</sup> The lieutenant-general of Guyenne entered into correspondence with Philip II early in 1564 in which he denounced the policies of the queen mother and her chancellor. He proposed to the Spanish king the formation of a league consisting of the pope, the emperor, the king of Spain, and all the Catholic princes of Germany and Italy.<sup>3</sup> Philip II showed interest and sent a spy to confer with Monluc.<sup>4</sup> Catherine was no doubt disturbed to find that a royal officer would intrigue

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Courteault, Blaise de Monluc, Historien (Paris: Picard, 1908), p. 470.

<sup>2</sup>Weber, Diplomatic Relations between France and Spain, p. 89; Courteault, Blaise de Monluc, Historien, p. 485.

<sup>3</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 319-327.

<sup>4</sup>Courteault, Blaise de Monluc, Historien, p. 486.

with the sovereign of another state and, possible gain the support of the local nobility for a project detrimental to royal authority. That in itself was sufficient reason to be suspicious of any expression of provincial independence and to decree that associations must be dissolved.

### Local Estates

First among the concerns of the noblesse of Guyenne was the finding of a forum for the expression of their loyalty and of their concerns.<sup>1</sup> They asked that Bordeaux be given the privilege of holding local estates and they pointed out that most provinces and even most parts of their own province had the custom of meeting in that way to consider what must be done for the king's service and for the conservation of the kingdom. They were concerned about being deprived of a means of making known their complaints and grievances. Charles IX was reluctant to permit such a convocation of estates and replied that he did not wish to change that which was customarily done. Thus the nobles were unable to solve through the convocation of local estates the problem they had tried to solve by the formation of an association, the problem of finding a forum in which to make their voices heard.

The decision of the king's council not to convoke the

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., Nos. 91, 92.

local estates in Bordeaux was reinforced in the months that followed by letters from Catherine to d'Escars and to the Archbishop of Bordeaux.<sup>1</sup> The latter had requested royal authorization for such a gathering to consider an old problem, the gabelle du sel.

The reluctance of Catherine and Charles to authorize a meeting of the provincial estates in Bordeaux stemmed in part from events of 1561. The Estates of Orléans, convened the day after the death of Francis II, adjourned at the end of January with Charles IX commanding the deputies to return to their bailliages in order to find means for paying the king's debts. New assemblies were to be held in each bailliage or sénéchaussée in March and in the principal city of each gouvernement during the same month.<sup>2</sup> These assemblies were to restrict their deliberations solely to financial questions, and to name thirty-six delegates, one for each order in each government, to meet in the Estates-General at Méhun on the first of May.

Although the strictest limitations had been placed on the meetings of local estates in March, they refused to obey these limits and restrict consideration to the problem of paying the

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<sup>1</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, II, 115 and note.

<sup>2</sup>Lucien Romier, Catholiques et Huguenots à la Cour de Charles IX (Paris: Librairie Académique, 1924), p. 58.

king's debts. The assembly of the three estates in the prévôté of Paris immediately turned its attention to the question of the regency even though the president had announced that they must concern themselves only with finding means to pay the debts of the king. They rejected the regency of Catherine, proposed Antoine de Bourbon, first prince of the blood, as regent, and revised the list of members of the privy council to exclude the Guises and all other seasoned supporters of the king. At the court it was thought that this coup had been directed by the comte de La Rochefoucauld and by Antoine Fumée at Condé's suggestion.<sup>1</sup>

It was not only in Paris that the estates were recalcitrant. The three estates of Guyenne, assembled at Bordeaux, similarly ignored the directive to concern themselves only with financial matters. The king had published an ordonnance (18 February, 1561) convoking the sénéchaussées of Guyenne, Landes, Perigord, Quercy, Armagnac, Limousin, Agen and the bailliage of Labour, Comminges and the jugeries of Rivière-Verdun to deliberate on the propositions presented to the estates of Orléans and to name their deputies.<sup>2</sup> Monluc reported to the queen on the assembly of the three estates in the city of Agen and assured her that the three representatives chosen to go to Bordeaux on the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 89-91.

<sup>2</sup> Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 110n.

twentieth of the month were wise, virtuous, humble, and obedient and would make their way to Bordeaux in accordance with the royal letters to give a response to the lieutenant of the king.<sup>1</sup> Upon meeting in Bordeaux the delegates re-examined the proposals of the king's council to the estates of Orléans and then turned their attention to religious discussion and adopted a position of absolute intolerance.<sup>2</sup> Their views were directly opposed to the policy Catherine was following as she prepared the Edict of July and planned for the Colloquy of Poissy. The provincial assemblies were in no way helpful to the king in the solution of the financial crisis and they raised barriers before royal political and religious policies. Catherine seized the only recourse available and prevailed upon Charles to annul the decisions taken, fix the dates for electoral assemblies for May, the provincial assembly for June, and the opening of the new Estates-General for August at Pontoise.<sup>3</sup>

By the time the deputies were all present in Bordeaux and ready to assemble, Burie had received a letter from the king countermanding the order to convoke the assembly.<sup>4</sup> The estates

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 110-114.

<sup>2</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup>Georges Picot, Histoire des États Généraux (2nd edition; Paris: Hachette, 1888), II, 55.

<sup>4</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, p. 40.

of Guyenne were delayed by the late arrival of several deputies and Burie received the king's letter June 13th. The king's letter indicated that the decisions of the earlier assemblies (20 March) were sufficient. The king's council was already showing a reluctance to convoke the provincial estates for the likelihood was that their demands would be even greater than in the previous meeting. The deputies, most of whom had been waiting in Bordeaux for some time, ignored the king's letter and met anyway. The third estate showed a desire to use force to stamp out the reform but members of the nobility were more moderate in their attitude to the Huguenots. In fact, one representative of the second estate was Symphorien de Durfort, baron de Duras, who was to become the military leader of the Huguenots in Guyenne in the following year. But they demanded that the king convoke the Estates-General annually, and recognize its competence in matters of government "according to the ancient laws and observances of the kingdom."<sup>1</sup> Burie forwarded the procès-verbal of the assembly to the king without comment. The local estates had not proved useful but had shown themselves entirely too independent and hard to handle for the king's liking. Therefore, it was not strange that the request of the nobility of Guyenne two years later for an assembly of the three estates

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

in the sénéchaussée of Guyenne should bring a negative response from the king and the queen mother.

### The Parlement of Bordeaux

Catherine de Médicis attempted to mobilize every possible resource on behalf of royal authority and in the interests of pacifying the kingdom. In 1560 she convened at Fontainebleau an assembly of notables which included the royal council, the princes, great officers of the crown and knights of the order.<sup>1</sup> On that occasion Jean de Monluc, bishop of Valence, urged the convocation of the Estates-General and the establishment of a national council to reform the church. The following year the clergy met at Poissy with the charge of finding a common ground between Roman Catholic and Protestant. Meetings of the Estates-General at Orléans and at Pontoise were unable to achieve solutions either to the political or to the religious problems of the kingdom. At the height of the first War of Religion Catherine de Médicis confided to the duc d'Étampes, governor of Bretagne, that since the bishops at Poissy had done nothing to appease the troubles on account of religion, she intended to try another strategy. She planned to "assemble many good men from the courts of Parlement to consider means of ending the troubles in the kingdom and maintaining obedience to the king."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lavisse, Histoire de France, VI: I, 21-24.

<sup>2</sup>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, I, 243.

No such assembly was held but the Parlements did play a significant role in the maintenance of the monarchy nevertheless. As a sovereign court the Parlement of Bordeaux verified and registered royal edicts, arranged for the publication of those edicts, filled gaps in legislation with its own decrees, took an active part in the maintenance of order and heard appeals from local courts in the province.<sup>1</sup> Generally the Parlement cooperated with the governor in the maintenance of royal authority and that spirit was demonstrated in a letter to Antoine de Bourbon after a Huguenot plot had threatened the city. The men of the Parlement assured him that they had sent deputies before Burie to pledge themselves to the last drop of their blood and the last écu of their purses.<sup>2</sup>

Jealous defence of royal prerogatives led the Parlement of Bordeaux to issue a remonstrance to Charles IX against letters patent granted by Jeanne d'Albret.<sup>3</sup> Monluc called to the attention of the court letters patent by which the queen of Navarre authorized Calvinist preaching in all her towns and châteaux.<sup>4</sup> The Parlement considered the letters patent as

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<sup>1</sup>Gaston Zeller, "L'administration monarchique avant les intendants," Revue historique. Vol. 197 (1947), pp. 185-187 and Doucet, Institutions, I, 210-211.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 31.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., No. 94.

<sup>4</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 239-253.

contrary to the king's edict and derogating from the king's authority. By promulgating them through the sénéchal of the duchy of Albret before presentation to the Parlement Jeanne d'Albret had registered them unlawfully and had trespassed on the sovereignty of Guyenne. Men of the sovereign court took particular exception to Jeanne d'Albret's use of the words "for such is our pleasure," since their use pertained to the king alone.<sup>1</sup> While they awaited the king's ruling, the men of Parlement issued a provisional decree forbidding the sénéchaux of the duchy of Albret to publish similar letters patent on pain of a thousand livre fine.<sup>2</sup>

Frequently the Parlement of Bordeaux offered advice to the king. In 1561 in view of local conditions, it counselled the return of arms to the Catholics or the organizing of bands to disarm the Protestants.<sup>3</sup> As the archbishop of Bordeaux was about to leave for the Council of Trent, the Parlement, fearing that his leaving would bring great trouble, asked the king to dispense with the trip.<sup>4</sup> In addition to offering advice, the Parlement of Bordeaux acted to enforce the king's will to such an extent that a constant stream of judgments emanated from that

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 94.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 240, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 424.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 461.

court during the period of civil war.<sup>1</sup>

Although the men of the Parlement of Bordeaux were clearly loyal to the king, like other royal officers they saw their office as a means for personal advantage. Two factors suggest that members of that sovereign court could exploit their positions. On one hand they delayed the registration of legislation alien to their personal interests. On the other they were widely accused of enriching themselves from the fines they levied. In a remonstrance of August 31, 1563, Parlement informed Charles IX that his patents regarding the deposition of arms, the dissolution of associations and the announcement of his majority had been published but that his commissioners would be prevented from executing their commissions until the Parlement had received an answer from him on their remonstrance.<sup>2</sup> Their particular grievance was the lack of immunity provided for them under the disarmament clauses. It galled these men, who referred to themselves as the king's "lieutenantz naiz," that the nobility were exempted while they, who must render justice not only on the third estate but on the nobility and the clergy, were required to strip themselves of arms. The Parlement emphasized the fact that its members represented the king's name and

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<sup>1</sup>e.g. Ibid., p. 446, "Arrêt du parlement de Bordeaux contre 104 de rebellion," 28 juillet, 1562.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 114.

authority in his absence and saw no reason why they should be less privileged than such extraordinaires as the prévôts de l'hôtel. Not only did they forward a remonstrance to the king but the Parlement made its concerns known to Burie, Monluc and d'Escars.<sup>1</sup> The latter replied that men of the Parlement should set the example in speedy obedience to the king's will.<sup>2</sup>

The Parlements were in constant rivalry with governors for administrative authority.<sup>3</sup> At the end of 1562 after four or five months in military campaigns, Burie returned to Bordeaux and became most concerned about conditions in that city. The multiplication of commanders led to "monopolies, partiality and confusion so that there followed indignities, larceny and robbery even by those who should repress these things."<sup>4</sup> The best solution, in Burie's eyes, was to make him solely responsible for the city, to place the keys of the city in no one else's hands while he was there. The interests of the king would be best served, in fact, if Burie were sent a commission to undertake a full scale investigation of the administration of justice for he was convinced that there would be a major discrepancy

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 114.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., No. 116.

<sup>3</sup>Zeller, "L'Administration monarchique...", p. 185.

<sup>4</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 82. "Instruction baillée par monsieur de Burye au thrésorier Le Pyn pour faire entendre au roy."

between the record of fines and confiscations on one hand, and the amount by which the king's revenues had benefited on the other. If the king would send the commission empowering him to undertake such an investigation, Burie would choose those he thought best from the Parlement to assist him. He would also have the clerk of the court provide him immediately with a statement of all those convicted and subjected to fines and confiscations together with the amounts. He was sure he could recover a vast sum that had gone astray within the court, and set an example that could be followed throughout the kingdom to the king's profit.

Charges made by the king's lieutenant against the officers of the Parlement must be balanced against the counter-charges of members of that court. Nobles in the Catholic army enriched themselves by confiscating the goods of the Huguenots. In this practice they had the blessing of their commanders who did the same. In a request addressed to the king the nobility of Guyenne declared that during the days of the civil wars when the king's army and the nobility of the province were led by Burie and Monluc, those lords, lacking finances from the king to reward the most faithful nobles, granted them some small gifts of property.<sup>1</sup> The first president and members of the Parlement questioned the

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., Nos. 91, 92.

authority of the lieutenants to make such gifts, and inconvenienced the receivers with summonses, arrests and fines, much to their annoyance. The nobles accused the court of favouring the Huguenots but the king's council sided with the Parlement. In their view it was not a matter of favouring the Huguenots but of upholding law and tradition. The council decreed that the lieutenants had usurped a royal prerogative in granting goods to their followers and that Parlement was merely defending that royal prerogative.<sup>1</sup> In the rivalry between the Parlement and the lieutenants or governors both sides strongly supported royal authority and their own. The crown tended to favour the Parlement as it had more to fear from the independence of the governors.<sup>2</sup>

#### Councils and Commissions

To assist and to control its officers the crown made use of councils. Before leaving for Guyenne Montpensier asked for a maître des requêtes to act as his judicial assistant, to hear pleas, and to render justice to those found guilty of sedition, rebellion, and other crimes worthy of death. The royal council determined that he should be assisted by two councillors from the Parlement of Bordeaux and a blank commission for the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Zeller, "L'Administration monarchique...", p. 211.

councillors to be elected was given to Montpensier.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, when Monluc was sent into the province he was accompanied by two councillors from the Parlement of Paris.<sup>2</sup> They soon showed Huguenot sympathies and Monluc harassed them until they fled.<sup>3</sup> They were replaced by two men commissioned from the Parlement of Bordeaux and while awaiting them Monluc obtained the assistance of the lieutenant criminel from Agen and six councillors of that sénéchaussée.<sup>4</sup> In days of strife it was often essential for the lieutenant to administer justice in any location and on short notice. Therefore, it was advantageous to be accompanied by advisors who were learned in the law and experienced in trial procedure.<sup>5</sup>

During the civil wars the crown depended increasingly on the use of commissions. A commission differed from an office in that it was created for a specific mission and it terminated with the completion of that mission or at the king's pleasure. The

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Monluc, Commentaires, II, 402; Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 117.

<sup>3</sup>Ruble, Jeanne d'Albret et la Guerre Civile, I, 163-164.

<sup>4</sup>Monluc, Commentaires et Lettres, IV, 123-124.

<sup>5</sup>In some provinces religious controversy penetrated and paralyzed the sovereign courts. The duc d'Etampes, governor of Bretagne asked that a maître des requêtes be commissioned to assist him in the administration of justice since the deadlock in the Parlement rendered it impotent. Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 22.

use of commissions became necessary as the sale of offices and succession practices enabled officers to become entrenched and to demonstrate considerable independence in the exercise of their posts. Secondly, the conversion of royal officers to the Protestant faith left offices vacant or, more often, allowed the holders to exercise their authority on behalf of the Huguenots. Finally, the disruptions caused by war at times emptied offices altogether and at other times led to the claiming of one office by several men.

The Edict of Pacification of 1563 was brought to Guyenne by two men commissioned to present it to the Parlement of Bordeaux for registration and to see to its execution throughout the province.<sup>1</sup> They were delayed in the Parlement of Bordeaux because that body wished "to make remonstrance to the king for the conservation of the authority of his sovereign court."<sup>2</sup> The two commissioners reported immediately to the king, the queen mother and to Monluc as governor of Guyenne. The important mission of executing the Edict of Pacification was entrusted to capable and conscientious men who did their utmost to fulfil their responsibility. In such commissioners the crown placed greater confidence than in its regular officers.

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<sup>1</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No 109. "Mémoire des commissaires royaux Antoine Fumée et Hierosme Angenoust." Angenoust was a councillor of the Parlement of Paris. Fumée was grand rapporteur of France. The Fumée family represented a veritable dynasty of "maîtres de requêtes de l'Hôtel du roi," Doucet, Institutions, I, 155.

<sup>2</sup>Documents Pour Servir à..., No. 109.

### Summary and Conclusion

In the first half of the sixteenth-century the position of the king in France was greatly enhanced. The power of the great feudal lords as rivals to the king waned. In 1523 the domains of the duc de Bourbon returned to the crown; the duchy of Bretagne followed in 1532. The only remaining principality of any size was the kingdom of the Albrets in the south. The king was able to tax his subjects virtually at will and the efficiency of financial institutions was improved. Accounting was centralized but the collection and expenditure of funds often took place on the local level. The officer class increased in number and function so that most agents of public authority were the king's representatives.

The king appointed great nobles as governors of provinces and when they entered into rivalry with the Parlements, he usually supported the Parlements. Thus the power of those courts increased and the power of the great nobles was curtailed to some degree. Nevertheless, the governors were extremely important to royal government for in their provinces they were the personal representatives of the king. These men had to be chosen with care but in a period of youthful kings and civil war the choice was out of the king's hands in some cases. The governorship of Guyenne was held by the ruler of Navarre throughout the century.

This increased the base of authority upon which that prince could act; it extended the limits of his independence. The governor frequently resided outside his gouvernement and in his absence lieutenants-general exercised royal authority. The king appointed these lieutenants-general but they owed a dual allegiance to king and governor.

The application of the royal will in distant parts of the kingdom was hampered by the very distance and by the slowness of communications and civil war only exaggerated such conditions. Boundaries of authority were very badly defined, both politically and geographically and frequent clashes took place between different representatives of royal authority. The sale of offices raised some revenue but contributed to the entrenchment of officers in positions which they exploited for their own benefit and from which it was almost impossible to dislodge them. For this reason the king resorted increasingly to the use of commissions to carry out his orders at every level, a solution which increased not only his authority but his expenses.

The Wars of Religion split the kingdom over religious and political issues and the king was subjected to attack by extremists of both sides. The actions of loyal supporters of the crown could be just as detrimental to royal authority as those of enemies. Blaise de Monluc, lieutenant-general of the

king in Guyenne, acting ostensibly to curb the threat to royal authority, intrigued with the king of Spain and threatened to turn over the province of Guyenne to him. Doubtless this fact contributed to Catherine's reluctance to see Monluc appointed lieutenant-governor. The same vanity that made him responsive to flattery and reward made him susceptible to intrigue. Not only were extreme Catholics a threat but nobles committed to the Huguenot cause recruited thousands of soldiers in the same province.

Recruitment and command of military forces contributed to the ability of a local strongman to act independently. He had the power to name captains and to raise men. Since Monluc had a brother, sons and son-in-law all commanding one or more companies, he had a veritable private army. Under those circumstances orders from the court were interpreted with considerable latitude.

Local forces were at times marshalled effectively to oppose an unpopular royal policy. When the citizens of La Rochelle opposed payment for the support of a garrison in the city, they dispatched a delegation to the court well-equipped with bribe money to accomplish their purpose. Whether or not they achieved their goal, Jarnac reported that the men of the garrison were reduced to eating their horses before they disbanded and went

home. Similarly the threat of a tax on export wine united the bourgeois, nobility and clergy of Bordeaux in opposition. The king, however, frequently had the last word in financial matters. In Guyenne one year the Estates voted a sum less than that asked on the pretext that inhabitants of parts of the province had already paid their quota. Therefore, Etienne Lemaçon, the receiver general in Guyenne was short. Charles IX insisted that the amount be raised in spite of all opposition and that it be furnished in the meantime by François de Laville, a colleague of Lemaçon.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of so many threats royal government in Guyenne was generally effective in maintaining the king's authority. The energetic Monluc and such faithful governors of cities as Noailles could pledge sincere allegiance to their monarch. The former practised swift retribution in the form of hanging; the latter promoted personal recognition by the sovereign by sending detailed analyses of the need to the queen mother. Both these officers had brothers who were prominent bishops, of Valence and of Dax respectively. The ability to grant many ecclesiastical offices lay in the hands of the king and formed a small part of the patronage by which he was able to maintain his faithful officers. The most powerful tool for the maintenance of royal

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<sup>1</sup> Archives historique du departement de la Gironde, Vol. III, No. LXXX (1861), 200-203.

authority lay in personal contact, personal appointment and personal reward by the king for those in a position to further his will.

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