

“ Amongst the hills of Auvergne and in the Department of the Puy de Dome, is situated the town of Thiers. It is celebrated for its picturesque position, being planted on the steep declivities of rocks and mountains, which are adorned with chestnut-trees, walnuts, oaks, and other striking ornaments of the forest. In front, and at no great distance, is the pyramidal Puy de Dome, with the whole chain of mountains of Mont d'Or and the Cantal; beneath them is the beautiful plain of Clermont, with the silver stream of the Dore winding its way through the midst, and all around the rugged peaks and deep dark mountain ravines stand in striking contrast with sloping hills clothed with vines and corn-fields. The population of this town, computed at 15,000, is almost entirely employed in the manufacture of cutlery. One universal sound, the hammer clinking on the anvil, and the file rasping on the vice, continually strikes the ear *in every street*, and no other noise has disturbed, from time immemorial, the dull uniformity of Thiers. During the terrible convulsions of the Revolution and the Empire, this place, indeed, as all others in France, had to deplore its youth sacrificed in foreign fields; and the monotony of human life was then arrested by the news of some falling by the lake of Mantua, others at the walls of Saragossa, and others on the plains of Germany.* But the regrets of such calamities have long since ceased to agitate the hearts of survivors, and nothing seems to occupy attention but to partake of food, to labour for its acquisition, and to die. About two years ago, however, the quiet of the scene was disturbed by a most novel occurrence. The report was circulated, ‘There are Protestants arrived at Thiers; they are selling Bibles; they are praying, reading, conversing at the Boulet.’ This intelligence acted like an electric shock on the somnolent population. Out rushed no less, it is asserted, than 2,000 persons towards the place, where one of the *colporteurs* of the Geneva Society was explaining in his simple manner the great truths of the Gospel. So furious was the mob, such their threats, their gesticulations, and their spirit, that the most serious consequences were apprehended. Not only had the colporteur to escape with the utmost haste by a way removed from the tumult, but even the *commissaire de police* and the *gens d'armes* had to interfere most promptly to prevent evil. The riot of this day will ever be a memorable fact in the history of Thiers!

“ It might have been supposed that truth, meeting with such opposition on its first arrival, would have retired in dismay from the whole region; but such an opinion would have been most erroneous.

* It is positively asserted, that no less than 150 young men, belonging to a single and small quarter of the town, perished in ten or fifteen years.