

## THE JESUIT OF FICTION.

## IV.

CHARLES III. of Spain, to which country, returning to the close of the eighteenth century, we must in turn cast a glance, was a Christian king, and so far from being a systematic enemy of the Jesuits, had ordered the first pamphlets of Pombal against the Society to be burnt. The Count d'Aranda, however, chief of the cabinet, and his colleague, the Duke of Alba, directly encouraged by Choiseul, and equally unscrupulous, were bent upon effecting their expulsion from the kingdom. To do this, and to excite the king against the order, an intrigue was resorted to, in connection with which the historical facts are of such a colouring, that they can only be explained with the guarantee of impartiality by Protestant pens.

Three years after the action of France in respect to the order, a riot took place in Madrid. The royal authority was for a time overthrown, and Charles was obliged to flee. This disturbance, which the military could not quell, was appeased by the Jesuits, whose popularity was so great that the crowd insisted, unfortunately, upon attending them to the doors of their houses, crying, "Vivent les Peres." At the height of his indignation the king received advices from Paris stating that "it was not difficult for the Jesuits to quell a riot *which they themselves had excited.*" Beginning with Pombal, all the persecutors of the society were of an equal moral standard, wholly destitute either of principle or of faith. According to the Protestant de Murr, the repentant Duke of Alba later made Charles III. a written avowal of the wrong committed by him in the affair of the Jesuits, and furthermore declared before the Archbishop of Salamanca, "that he had fomented the riot of the *Sombreros* (by which it was known) for the express purpose of attributing it to the Jesuits." But other means were also had recourse to, to destroy the sympathy which existed between the king and the Society. Forged letters over the names of the general, provincial, and superiors of the order were circulated, containing most odious calumnies against individual members of the society, the king, and his mother, letters the falsity of which we do not suppose to have been denied by a single historian, whether friendly towards the society or not. The only difference we know of is that one Protestant attributes the work to the Duke of Alba, another to the French minister. A second Protestant, the English historian Coxe, speaking of one of the forged letters of the Father-General, says, "They forged a letter supposed to have been written from Rome to the Spanish provincial."

This letter ordered him to excite an insurrection, was intended to be intercepted, and dwelt upon the immense riches of the order. A third Protestant, Ranke, adds: "They persuaded Charles III. that the Jesuits wished to put his brother, Don Luiz, in his place"; and a fourth Protestant, Sismondi, "The plots and counter-plots, slanderous accusations, forged letters, *intended to be intercepted, and which were,* determined the resolution of the King." Finally, a fifth writer, the Englishman, Adam, although manifestly respecting the prejudices of the English, believes himself justified in questioning the truth of the guilt and bad intentions attributed to the Jesuits, declaring it "more natural to believe that a faction hostile, not only to their Institute, but to Christian religion in general, wrought a ruin to which the government lent themselves the more readily, as they thereby better served their own interests."

The Pope, Clement XIII, defended the Jesuits in Spain as he had done in France and in Portugal, but with equally ill-success. As a result of these intrigues, Charles, but lately their protector, became their enemy, and resolved on their expulsion from the Spanish dominions. In a single day, six thousand priests were thrown into the holds of ships, and left there, either to perish or abjure their vows. With but few insignificant exceptions they preferred to perish. Then the authors of their common misfortunes, Choiseul, D'Aranda, Alba, in complicity with Pombal, pointed the knife at the breast of the Pope.

The Society of Jesuits was suppressed. It never was condemned. It fell without a murmur, dying as it had lived, in perfect obedience. But the blow which struck the Jesuits, struck also at social order and morality; their suppression left an immense void in religious instruction and education. With them was destroyed in a moment the wisdom of ages, and there arose at their death a cry of sorrow, which was re-echoed throughout the earth and age. "In the destruction of the Jesuits," says the great Chateaubriand, "learned Europe has sustained an irreparable loss." La Lande, not satisfied with reproaching their enemies, adds, "I have been a near observer of them. They were a people of heroes in the cause of religion and humanity." "There are among them," said Voltaire, "writers of rare merit, men of great learning, of vast eloquence, of genius;" and it was of their persecutors he said, "The absurdity of these fanatics was joined to fury; they were at once the most foolish and most terrible of men." "The Jesuits," adds D'Alembert, "are successful in all paths of learning, in eloquence, history, antiquities, geometry, light and profound literature; there is hardly any class of writing in which they do not number men of great merit." And there is the testimony of Macaulay, "The order had been a century in existence and already it had filled the world with monuments of its sufferings and its grand struggle for the faith." And Schœll, "They held in their hands the future generations. Nothing hostile to the Holy See, and consequently religion could prosper so long as the Jesuits were there. . . . The Jesuits were immovable in their faith. . . . They conspired against them, and declared them guilty, since they refused to be associated in the plots which menaced the Holy See and the monarchies." Rousseau, Lamartine, Talleyrand, Fontaine, Laménais, Frederick II. of Prussia, Bacon, Leibnitz, and Ranke, all are united in their favourable testimony, and with this line from Kern, the professor of Gottingen, "the grandest minds and noblest hearts have ever been in favour of the Jesuits," may be closed the mention of Protestant judgments.

Of the first Jesuit Fathers, Xavier, Laynez, Ricci, Brebeuf, it is not necessary to speak. They were Christians of that quality of whom it has been said that, indefatigable and invulnerable, "still on earth, they yet walked already in heaven." In the delirious atmosphere of the hospitals and plague houses, they became infected only with the fever of charity; fastened to the stake by savages, they intoned with gladness the canticle of death; in them was reflected the likeness of Christ.

And what shall be said of their contributions to the learning of the world? Will anyone deny that they were the prodigies of the age, that they ranked first in all branches of science, that they composed grammars and lexicons of nearly one hundred languages and idioms, and that their astronomers, mathematicians, mineralogists, and naturalists, are well nigh innumerable? They may be numbered by the hundred fold, these great Jesuits; history is replete with their names. Is it possible that Pascal, who furnished those inventions of insult, spiced even to indecency, to which he attached the humble name of some obscure religious, did not know those great names which resounded throughout Europe—Suarez, Canesius, Solet, Bellarmine, and Bourdaloue? Certain it is he never turned his weapon on such men as these, nor indeed on any one, for the Jesuit whom he fabricates to scoff and deride at, neither lives nor has at any time existed.

Are they then not dead, these Jesuits, since they were so utterly exterminated by the axe and wheel, by famine, exile, and the union of all known barbarities? *Non mortui sunt.* The Jesuits are not immortal, but they are not dead. They have a few more colleges, and in their colleges a few more pupils. Preaching the Gospel to the nations, toiling among the teeming millions of Hindustan and China, keeping watch like vigilant sentinels over the preservation of the Faith, they continue to evangelize, educate, and civilize in our own day. They will cease to do so only when they cease to exist. History is their vindication, but if in the retrospect the story of their sufferings shock us, if across one's admiration as a Christian a sentiment altogether human passes, and we are tempted