

to celebrate the feast of Mary's Conception by granting indulgences; he likewise threatened with censure any one who would mention as heretical the doctrine which teaches that *Mary was never defiled with the original stain*. Such high and unquestioned approbation was a crushing blow to the opponents of this pious belief, and though the theological battle began immediately to hang fire, it was by no means finished, and at a later period, the Council of Trent found the controversy still alive. Readers of ecclesiastical history are always interested in looking at the rival combatants in any controversy that has occupied the attention of the Church. In this controversy regarding the Immaculate Conception the contestants were called respectively Thomists and Scotists from St. Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus, and were, for the most part, members of the two great Religious Orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis. In the mediæval schools they were opposed on many questions, such as the philosophical question of *universals*, the theological questions regarding *sin* and *grace*, the *merits* of Christ's sufferings and the *Real Presence*. The Thomists denied and the Scotists defended the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, and each school thought that its teaching was better calculated than the teaching of the other school to promote the honor of the Mother of God. This rivalry, though carried on with much bitterness at times, had a wonderful effect on theological study, and it redounded after all to the advantage of the Church.

St. Thomas Aquinas, who lived in the thirteenth century, has often been quoted as holding the opinion that the Blessed Virgin had incurred the stain of original sin, but while this is as-

serted in the boldest language by writers who found their opinion on what the Angelic Doctor says in his *Summa* (Part Third, q. XXVII, art. 2): "The Blessed Virgin was not sanctified before the infusion of the rational soul," yet that St. Thomas taught positively the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception may be proved from many passages of his writings. He states in several places that Mary was free from original sin. The Dominican Bromiardo thus construes the teaching of the Angelic Doctor, and Cardinal Gaudé insists that it was such. Cardinal Lambruschini in his *Polemical Treatise* exonerates St. Thomas from the charge of denying the Immaculate Conception, and quotes several passages from his works favorable to the doctrine. In reply to its adversaries who bring forth fifteen passages in proof that St. Thomas was opposed to the doctrine, he says that to reconcile St. Thomas with St. Thomas, and to explain the two wholly divergent opinions which the saint is alleged to hold, we must admit that his works have been altered or interpolated in some places. Bishop Wielmo (*Pro Defensione Sancti Thomae*) denounces those who falsely quote St. Thomas to uphold their opinion which was the subject of controversy. Giles, of Rome, a devoted disciple of St. Thomas, (*Castigatorium in Corruptorem Librorum Thomae Aquinatis*) also inveighs against the corruptors of the Angelic Doctor's text. Many Dominican writers have also used strong language against those who had altered the original sense of St. Thomas. John Nicolai, in his Preface to the edition of the works of the holy Doctor, published in Paris in 1663, attests and declares: "that he had purged the text of the *Summa* of St. Thomas not only of typographical errors, but