

## THE JESUITS.

## HISTORICAL NOTICES.

[A friend has suggested the desirableness of re-printing in the *Colonial Protestant* the celebrated "Provincial Letters" of PASCAL, in order that the true character of Jesuitism, as delineated by a Roman Catholic, may be placed before our readers. On re-examining that work we have come to the conclusion that it will be preferable to prepare from it a series of articles, illustrating the reasonings and morals of the Jesuits. They will be commenced in the next number. The "Historical Notices" which follow, will form a suitable introduction.—EDITORS.]

The Order of the Jesuits was founded by Ignatius Loyola, and received the Papal sanction in 1540. The progress of the Reformation had diffused general alarm among the adherents of the papacy, who justly apprehended the most disastrous consequences from the continued success of the new opinions, but were constantly foiled in encountering them. Popery was every where losing ground, and its friends were bewildered with dismay, when Loyola conceived the plan of Jesuitical order, and succeeded, though not without some difficulty, in obtaining its establishment.

"The sixteenth century," a good writer observes, "saw Luther and Loyola arise almost at the same moment; the one in the north, the other in the south of Europe; the latter, a Spaniard, appeared to be a natural product of the soil and spirit of the country where he was reared. A century earlier, he would probably have only founded an order, like so many others, a fraternity of worshippers of the Virgin, to whom his devotion was particularly addressed: the religious innovations, however, which then threatened the existence of the Romish church, gave to the

enthusiasm of the pious and warlike Ignatius another direction. He conceived the idea of a sort of spiritual crusade against heresy. His scheme was eagerly adopted at Rome, after some hesitation; and the design was seriously formed of converting the new society into a formidable phalanx which might be employed against the boldest champions of the Reformation.

"To the reaction, therefore, excited by that event, may be ascribed the origin of the society of Jesus. It will probably be satisfactory to read the words of Damianus, one of the first historians of the order, who thus expresses himself in his *Synopsis Historiæ Soc. Jesu*, printed in 1640:—

"In the same year, 1521, Luther, with consummate wickedness, openly declared war against the church:—wounded in the fortress of Pampe-luna, renovated and strengthened by his accident, Ignatius raised the standard in defence of religion.

"Luther attacks the chair of St. Peter with abuse and blasphemy:—Ignatius is miraculously cured by St. Peter, in order to become his defender.

"Luther, tempted by rage, ambition, and lust, abandons the religious life:—Ignatius, eagerly obeying the call of God, quits the profane for the religious life.

"Luther, with the guilt of sacrilege, contracts an incestuous marriage with a virgin of the Lord:—Ignatius binds himself in the vow of perpetual continence.

"Luther despises all authority of superiors:—the first precepts of Ignatius, full of Christian humility, are to submit and obey.

"Luther, like a madman, declares against the apostolic see:—Ignatius everywhere undertakes its defence.

"Luther withdraws from it as many as he can:—as many as he can, Ignatius reconciles, and restores to it.