

he had repeatedly written to former Popes, but knew not whether his letters had ever reached their hands. So to the Pontiff did this troubled priest send his elaborate statement thirteen years after he had written it for his General. He signs himself *Sanctitatis Vestrae Humillissimus et obsequissimus in Christo servus P. La Quintinye Sacerdos S. J.* He dates from Pau in 1679, and his whole story is in the days of Louis XIV.

What then are his complaints? In the first place, one of false doctrine as to morals. "I know," says La Quintinye, "what doctrine St. Ignatius, what Congregations in Rome, what our Generals in Epistles have commended, but all these injunctions, notwithstanding, the evil seems to grow in proportion as it is prohibited. An axiom prevails in this province, which if it be, as I believe it is, perverse, will eventually corrupt and dissolve all moral doctrine if it do not abolish it. By implication it contains all of laxity and corruption that is found in the most notorious authors on moral doctrine. Already out of it have sprung innumerable errors, laws human and divine are struck down (*profligantur*), countless sins are excused; in fine, everything is disordered, and because chiefly of this axiom, if I do not err, some of our Society, as fame has it, have in these matters offended, and now almost everywhere, as was indeed noted by our latest General Congregation, the Society is evil-spoken of and traduced." The axiom in question he names as that touching *bona fides*. It runs thus—*bona fides in one who doeth anything evil always excuseth him from sin*; or more briefly, never is anything sin which is done with *bona fides*.¹

They argue, he states, that as St. Paul declares that whatsoever is not of faith is sin, so whatsoever is of faith (*ex fide*) is not sin. Thus he shows they mean by *bona fides*, that the conscience of the doer pronounces the deed to be not sinful. Wherever the doer judges himself in performing a certain act not to commit sin, there never can be sin, whatever evil he may do. This is the dogma, he cries, for which our men fight as for hearth and altar. This, they proclaim, is a doctrine akin (*germana*) to the Society, the doctrine which every Jesuit

¹ "Bona fides operantis aliquid mali semper eum excusat a peccato vel quod idem est quidquid fit bona fide nunquam est peccatum" (vol. ii. p. 2).