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THE HISTORY OF THE COMPANY OF JESUS.

A LECTURE BY T. D. M'GEE.
(From the American Celt.)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—The respected Pastor and some of the congregation of this church, (St. Vincent,) anxious to promote the pious intentions of a young gentleman—whose character is excellent, though his circumstances are not so good—requested me to give a lecture for that purpose, and I choose accordingly, the History of the Jesuits, as a fit subject for the audience and the evening.

I choose it, Ladies and Gentlemen, because the Jesuits are the most visible Order in modern Catholic History—because nearly every English book and paper we read maligns their motives or their acts—because there is no true record of the society, to be had in our language, for those who desire to know the whole truth of the Order and its Founder.

Mr. Dallas's work on the Jesuits is out of print; "The Lettres Edifiantes," or selections from the letters of the Jesuits are fuller on natural history than the history of missions; Father Ravnari's sketch is too general and too summary to refute the elaborate tissues of calumny, and, except for those who can read Latin, Italian, Spanish, or at least French, it is very difficult to get at the details of the vast and diversified story of the children of St. Ignatius.

I propose to give an outline of it to-night, as I understand it. I do not pretend to defend the Jesuits. I do not admit that they stand in need of defence. I propose to review the true history of the Order, and let its slanderers then defend themselves, their errors, and their inventions. It will not avail them to string their selected scenes of Jesuit action upon a "Wandering Jew" theory—it will not do to lay the venue in Spain or Austria, and hear none but English or American evidence—it will not do to indict individuals, here or there, living or dead; a great Order is not to be assailed, on account of individuals—it outlives its most illustrious men; it cannot be extinguished in its most unworthy.

The Jesuit institution has existed now three centuries—it has seen ten modern generations. Its founder lived to see a hundred houses of his order—averaging a hundred professed or novices. From 10,000, in the year 1600, the order rose in half a century to nearly 100,000 members. For five generations, it averaged as many. Thus before the suppression, in 1773, there had lived and acted upon this earth, in two short centuries, half a million of men of this order.

Some of those who survived the suppression of '73, lived to enjoy the restoration of 1814. We have had since then, a new generation, who, especially in France and Italy, have tasted of the ancient, and, for them, unbroken and inexhaustible cup of bitter persecution. The prayer of St. Ignatius—that they might be persecuted by the world—has been heard. They themselves fear patronage, not persecution.—When the world smiles upon them they tremble—when the storm rises, they smile and grow more cheerful. In the presence of prosperity they are bewildered and distracted, but when national or personal danger surrounds them, the Jesuits know that the prophecy and prayer of their founder, are made visible. The soil of adversity, is to them what his mother earth was to Anteus, in the fable—they are refreshed by every fall, and reinvigorated by every oppression.

The history of the Jesuits might be written in four books—their rise—their spread—their struggles—their restoration.

As we may trace a forest of great trees to one patriarch, and this patriarch to a solitary seed, so we may trace this African, Asiatic, American, European Society, to a few men—to one man—to one man, who with a wound in his breast, and a book in his hand, lies sick and a prisoner, in a besieged town of Spain. It is the cavalier of Loyola, verging into a manly middle age, distinguished at the court for his courtesy, and in battle for the impetuous courage which caused him to be wounded, in the breach of Pampeluna. When his pulse returned, and his eye cleared, he called for books—for romances—to cheer the weary hours of confinement. In the house where he lay there was no romances—and the wounded soldier had either to read the Lives of Saints, or go without books. He read that marvellous volume, in which the Church records the humility and devotion—the courage and the penitence of her heroic confessors. He read and slept and woke, and resumed his reading, and before the book was done his mission had commenced.

St. Ignatius was then in his 30th year. His order was sanctioned at Rome, nineteen years afterwards—that is, in 1540. The long interval he spent in a Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and in studies at Paris. At Pampeluna he felt he was not good enough, was not learned enough for his work. To purify and exalt

his spirit he visited Bethlehem and Calvary; to temper and perfect his judgment, he studied at Paris, and meditated in secret places for several years. He who prescribed to strict probation to his novices, went first, himself, through every stage of self-examination. The retreat (at Manreza,) the devotions and meditations (in Palestine,) the tests and trials in Paris, the preliminary vows (at Monnarre,) the approbation at Rome—his life contains all his doctrine contains. Of how few teachers can this be truly said! Of how few great founders can we say that their example is as perfect as their ideal—that they first try theory by practice, and only recommend their design after patiently testing all its details!

After nearly twenty years probation, the first Company of Jesus, was authorised by the Bull of Pope Paul, dated September 27, 1540. It consisted of ten members—Ignatius, Lefevre, Laynes, Lejay, Brouet, Xavier, Salmeron, Rodriguez, Cordure, and Bobadilla; five Spaniards, four Frenchmen, and one Swiss—all graduates of the University of Paris.

For this order, Ignatius had prepared a comprehensive constitution. This constitution declared the sole end of the Society to be, the advancement of religion; it laid down implicit obedience as its first principle; it prescribed a long probation; it erected six classes within the order—the Novice, the Lay-Brother, the Scholar, the Coadjutor, the Jesuits of the Third Vow, and Jesuits of the Fourth Vow. The Society so composed was to be administered by Superiors, Rectors, Provincials, Commissaries, Visitors, and a General. The General was elected by the entire congregation, with power to appoint and remove all his subordinates. His office was for life, and his residence at Rome—the centre of unity. An appeal lay from the General only to the Supreme Pontiff.

Such is the Constitution of the Company. In a lecture which I gave some time since, I spoke of the impropriety of judging the designs of St. Ignatius, by temporal rules and analogies. I may be pardoned if I repeat that argument here; it is this:

"The principle of absolute obedience has been the cause of much calumny to the Jesuits, and the cause also of their manifold escapes. From the Protestant point of view it can hardly be judged with fairness; from the worldly, or republican point of view, it is sure of being condemned. But let us take care in condemning clerical obedience, how we couple Church and State, by insisting that the Church conform to the State; and as one is founded on numbers and governed by election, so the other should be—this confusion of principles would be a fatal error and a great injustice. Religious Societies are totally different from temporal societies. The orders in the Church, the Church itself, does not obey an earthly but a heavenly gravitation; its roots are among the everlasting hills, its branches only trail the earth; it is fed by the living waters springing hard by the throne of God, and the homage of the human will is but an incense, grateful but not essential to its undying youth and beauty.

The great temporal societies—Monarchies and Democracies—are founded on the people by conquest or by election. They can be made and unmade by the popular will, when causes justify revolution—but the Church knows no revolution. The theocratic principle of obedience, hard of reception to own, to flesh and blood, places it beyond the reach of revolution. Censure it as men will, what religious system can stand on any other ground? Where is the system of Luther? Where is the system of the Puritans? Gone where all Hierarchies must go, which cannot enforce obedience and punish contumacy.

If then this is the only lasting principle of religious Government, why blame the Jesuits so bitterly? Is it because they put it strongly and practice it consistently? It must be so. But Moses and the Prophets, the Saviour and the Apostles have preached it before St. Ignatius—in this respect he stands with them, and those who oppose him in this, oppose also the law and the Gospel."

Of the exercises and by-laws of the order, I will not speak. They are to be had in cheap and common books, and will be found in most military harmony with the grand outline. Within that outline, we see, in 1540, a small group—only ten companions—but soon the circle widens like the heat and light of morning—dilates and brightens over Alps and Straits and seas—until in one life-time it embraces more than half the world.

The spread of the Society was indeed marvellous. You have seen the Empire of Napoleon, in some few years, rearing itself on both sides of the Alps. It is supposed history has no other such sight to show. But the empire of Ignatius grew faster than the empire of Napoleon—fought a fiercer opposition—and it still remains. In the very first year of the order, its members are found at Lisbon, Venice and Worms; in Ischia, Poland, and Ireland. Before the last of the ten had closed his eyes upon the earth, the order had its missions in India, China, Japan, Mozambique, and Malacca; in Congo, Calbarria, Egypt and Abyssinia; all through Europe, from Sicily to Sweden; in America from Labrador to Paraguay, and from the Antilles to the Gulf of California. They

had refused the chief sees of Christendom—they had courted danger and death, in every quarter of the world. Their influence conducted to a happy issue the last General Council—that held at Trent. There, a man of intellect, Father Paul Sarpi, first discovered their intense vitality. "Rome cannot be ruined until the Jesuits are ruined!" was his profound reflection—a reflection which explains more modern history, than any other, I can remember. At this very hour there is still great meaning in the phrase, ruin the Jesuits—ruin Rome. Many a bad book, many a bitter article, many an untrue sermon, of our own time, is but the application of Father Sarpi's discovery.

In the first century under the Generals St. Ignatius, Laynes, Borgin, Mercurian, Aquaviva, and Vitelleschi, the course of the society was one continued victory. Their Colleges in Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Poland, and England, poured forth Doctors, Martyrs, and Missionaries, in incessant streams. In the capitals of Protestantism, in the kingdoms of Paganism; in the valley of the Nile, in the valley of the Mississippi; debating with Brahmins, or converting the family of Gustavus Adolphus; reasoning with Descartes, or discoursing with Iroquois chiefs—the Jesuits were, wherever human beings were to be sought and saved. In the crowded colleges of France or Italy, the finger of the Superior pointed out to the eagle-eyed disciple some far remote regions of the earth. Without fear and without sorrow, the scholar turned to the east or the west, leaving behind friends, home, teachers, and intellectual society, to brave the sea, and grow old among savage tribes, whose very names were unknown to European ears.

Their missions in Asia would require a course of lectures to themselves. It will suffice to say, that after the lapse of two hundred years, nearly all we know of the interior of China and Japan, is derived from Jesuit sources. Something modern commerce has added—but it has chiefly been in proof of the authenticity of the earlier Jesuit accounts.

Their missions in Africa were vast and well sustained. In Egypt, in Ethiopia, and in Congo, the good works of the Jesuits are not entirely extinct.

But that division of their great memoir most interesting to us, is, their early missions on this continent. The Jesuits are the Christian antiquities of America. They intrude in the first chapter of our History. No one can write so much as one paragraph on American colonization, without letting the ubiquitous Order into it.

St. Ignatius was born the year before Columbus sailed west into the undiscovered sea. His Order was founded about the time when the extent of the discovery was made manifest. From the first voyage till the first white settlement a hundred years elapsed. Like timid swimmers, the first pioneers felt the Atlantic cold, and drew murmuring back. Commerce slept for a century, but the Jesuits did not sleep. The men of faith adventured before the men of trade. The trapper found the Jesuits track, far beyond the head of navigation. The huntsman who saw a rude cross in the woods, knew that the black-robbed had been there armed with other weapons on quite another chase.

In the North, Rasles, and Chasles, made their homes with the Iroquois, Algonquins, and Abnakis—compiled catechisms for them, gathered the grammar of their rude dialects, taught them the use of fire and salt, of raiment and civil order.

In the north west, Bræbuef, Joliet, Marquette, and La Salle, explored the great Lakes, penetrated the Alleghenies, descended the Ohio and the Mississippi, ascended to the Falls of St. Anthony, and reared their gigantic crosses on the peaks of the Ozark chain.

In Mexico, Alvaro and his successors, taught human and divine science, to the intelligent tribes, conquered by Hernando Cortez.

Name me a district from the Isthmus to Labrador, where the Jesuits have not lived and labored! Name me a lake or river they have not navigated under summer's sun, and through drifting ice, in the great chase of men—in search of souls—in the warfare against the spirit of darkness—in the holy commerce of civilisation! And yet this is the Order, so illustrious for its universality, its courage, its science, and its results, which every dabbler in printer's ink, every reader of a few modern books, considers himself able to estimate at a glance, and despatch in a sentence. What a purblind thing this human vanity is, after all that has been done to enlighten it!

I do not speak of the Jesuits in Brazil, in Paraguay, or on the Pacific side of America—though there is no part of their history more honorable to them, or more painful to their detractors. I refer you to any book on South America for their honorable transactions in those regions.

You may well suppose, ladies and gentlemen, that

a new power, so impetuous and so vast, did not spread over the earth without encountering much resistance. In Asia, it encountered all the modes of resistance which old, artful systems of idolatry could invent; in Africa and America, it encountered the resistance of savage ignorance, and cannibalism—but it distinctly triumphed over all these. In Europe, it encountered a more deadly intellectual resistance, from diverse quarters:—

1st. Luther lived at the time of St. Ignatius—hence one element of European opposition.

2d. The Universities of the middle ages disliked the new Colleges to which all men flocked—hence another element of opposition—hence we find the University of Paris heading one column of the grand army of attack.

3d. The statesmen of Europe, in the 17th century, all tended to absolutism, and the Jesuit Doctors stood up for the definition of St. Thomas, as to the origin and locality of temporal power,—that its origin was in God, and its locality in the multitude—hence another element of the European opposition.

4th. The revolutionists sought liberty apart from law—hence a fourth opposition to the Jesuits, in whose system lawful obedience was set down as a primary virtue.

Add to these general causes, a variety of minor, local, and personal motives, the ingredients of the boiling caldron of hatred, through which this Order has been tried in modern christendom.

When I say modern, do I not explain it all? What is modern christendom? A house divided against itself, it is no longer terrible to idolatry. Between schismatic Russia, and the heretical west, as between the rock and the whirlpool of old, the bark of Peter steers in safety. But the glory of its aggressive crusades is dimmed, and the sphere of its splendor is narrowed by the miserable revolt, miscalled "the Reformation." Nothing great can live in modern christendom, except the Church, or some vast conspiracy, fed from the central fires of human discontent. That, in so divided, tumultuous and partizan a period, the Jesuits, or any other virtuous association, should be assailed was natural, was inevitable. That French Socialism, German Rationalism, English egotism, and Italian conspiracy, should unite in opposing "the body-guard of Rome," was natural, was inevitable. That the second-rate students should mingle in the crowd, and echo the cry, was natural, was inevitable. That the Jesuits should outlive all their enemies, was something supernatural, but this, also, seems inevitable.

(To be Continued.)

LECTURE BY MR. H. W. WILBERFORCE ON THE CONVERSION OF ENGLAND.

(Abridged from the Munster News.)

On Monday the 24th Nov., was witnessed in the Catholic Church of Kilrush, one of the most interesting and edifying spectacles. On the previous day it was published from the altar that the Rev. Mr. Wilberforce, the distinguished convert, would deliver a lecture on Monday, and though the morning set in with showers of hail, and piercing cold, yet masses of the people, of every grade and condition, flocked in from all parts of the town and distant country. At half-past eight o'clock, a. m., the Very Rev. Dr. Kelly began Mass, and after the celebration of the Divine Mysteries, introduced the Rev. Mr. Wilberforce to the congregation. The learned gentleman addressed his audience nearly as follows:—

"My Catholic brethren—I feel deep awe in coming forward to address you in so sacred a place. I do so in the hope that some little good may be done by giving you an idea of the great work of conversion which has been going on in England for the past few years. You may, perhaps, think that the teaching of Catholic Priests and intercourse with Catholic laymen has caused this great change; well, it was not—for I can tell you, as regards myself, that before I was received into the Holy Catholic Church there was not one Catholic in my district that I could speak to; and I am aware that Dr. Newman, and many other distinguished converts were similarly circumstanced, and when they did conform to the Catholic Faith they had to learn all its observances just as little children. I point out this to show that it must have been a work of grace, and not the result of conversation or religious instruction. Let me give you an instance; in the whole county of Bedford you have not a single Catholic Priest or a Catholic place of worship, consequently, conversions in such places cannot be the result of human agency, but the work of God himself.

"It is not so in other parts of England, where, with Divine assistance, zealous Catholic Priests and laymen are strengthening the fold of Christ. You have all heard of that great man, Dr. Newman. I have known him as a brother for the last twenty-five years. Now, Protestants say—that it is because