

marks of quotation: "It is more proper," they say, "to leave penitents in that state in which they do not sin, than to give them the occasion of sinning, by making manifest to them the sins which they do not see, and in which they sin not (as these reasoners will have it) unless, indeed, it be materially" (vol. ii. page 6).

The term "materially" is the schoolman's antithesis to "formally:" for instance, if by accident I kill my child, "materially," the act is one of manslaughter; "formally," it is not blameworthy, provided there was no negligence. Now, then, we have seen that when a nobleman intended to take a false oath, a Probabilist Confessor held that whatever the deed might be "materially," it was in him no sin "formally," seeing that his non-perception and disbelief of its sinfulness robbed it of the malignity of sin. Thus he was consoled with absolution. We have also seen that the noblewoman who had two husbands, though self-convicted of sin, was also consoled and absolved, the authority of the Probabilist Confessor being, in her case, put forth to reduce what was "formally" an act of falsehood, fraud, hypocrisy, impurity, and breach of civil law, to the significance of an act which was only "materially" irregular, and one under the weight of which a noble lady might be tranquil and at ease. Both perjured nobleman and bigamous noblewoman were consoled by the "benevolent" morals of a Probabilist Confessor.

The personal relations and incidents of the La Quintinye episode, as revealed in these documents, are extremely interesting. Still more so are those of two other principal episodes, that of the long struggles and harassing trials of the Jesuit General Gonzalez, in his vain attempt to stem the tide of laxity; and that of Liguori, his teaching, combats, and strange rise to rank with Augustine, and two or three others of the greater lights who rule the day of the Romish Church. Into these episodes, as well as into the differing shades of Probabilism, I may in a second paper give some little insight.

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