

## THE JESUITS.

### Their Apologists and Their Enemies.

A Lecture Delivered in St. Patrick's Church, Ottawa, Sunday Evening, February 24th, 1898.

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WHAT RELIGIOUS ORDERS ARE. Religious orders, or associations of men or women in the Catholic Church, were first established in the early part of the third century. The common bond of union among all the religious orders, which distinguishes them from other associations, is abandonment of purely secular pursuits, celibacy, and their organization by means of religious vows into communities of an entirely ecclesiastical character.

They are divided into two classes—the contemplative and the active. The contemplative orders, few in number, in modern times spend their whole lives in praying and fasting, in vigils and meditation, and continued efforts to attain to the highest Christian perfection. The active orders, which are far more numerous with a larger membership, are engaged in teaching and preaching, in nursing the sick, in taking care of the poor and infirm, or in spreading the Gospel in heathen lands. Yet they devote a considerable portion of the time to retirement, recollection, meditation, prayer and ascetic discipline, without which they would soon lose their robust virtue, neglect or slight their active duties, and be distinguished only by the habit they wear from people of the world. They are strengthened for their corporal works of mercy only by prayer and meditation. Let these duties be neglected, and discipline will be relaxed, the spirit of a religious order will depart, its usefulness cease, the manners of its members become dissolute, and grave scandals ensue. St. Augustine's words are both pointed and truthful: "I have not," says the apostle, "found better men than good monks; neither have I found worse than bad monks."

PROTESTANT TRIBES. Although the real worth and services rendered to religion and civilization by the monastic orders have not always been fairly or fully appreciated, they have elicited eloquent tributes of admiration from many distinguished Protestant historians and essayists.

"I confess," says Von Leibnitz (*Cyclopedia Theologica*), "that I have ardently admired the religious orders, and the pious associations, and the other similar admirable institutions; for they are a sort of celestial soldiery upon earth, provided they are governed according to the institutes of their founders, and regulated by the Supreme Pontiff for the use of the Universal Church. For what can be more glorious than to carry the light of truth to distant nations, through seas and fires, and swords—to traffic in the salvation of souls alone—to forego the allurements of pleasure, and even the enjoyment of conversation and of social intercourse, in order to pursue, undisturbed, the contemplation of abstract truths and divine meditation—to dedicate oneself to the education of youth in science and in virtue—to assist and console the wretched, the despairing, the lost, the captive, the condemned, the sick—in a word, in all, in distant, in unexplored, in the most dangerous, in the most pestilential exercise of the heavenly offices of charity. The man who knows not, or despises these things, has but a vulgar and plebeian conception of virtue; he foolishly measures the obligations of men toward their God by the perfunctory discharge of ordinary duties, and by that frozen habit of life, devoid of zeal, which prevails commonly among men."

Maitland, in his "Dark Ages," tells us that: "It is quite impossible to touch the subject of *Monasticism* without rubbing off some of the dirt which has been heaped upon it. It is impossible to get even a superficial knowledge of the medieval history of Europe without seeing how greatly the world of that period was indebted to the monastic orders; as a quiet and reliable refuge for helpless infancy and old age, a shelter of respect and sympathy for the orphan and the destitute widow—as central points whence agriculture was spread over bleak hills, and barren downs, and marshy plains, and dealt its bread to millions perishing with hunger and its pestilential train—as repositories of the learning which then was, and as well springs of the learning which has left to us a treasure of art and science, giving the stimulus, the means, and the reward to invention, and aggregating around them every head that could devise, and every hand that could execute—as the nucleus of the city which in after days of pride should crown its palaces and bulwarks with the towering cross of its cathedral. This, I think, no man can deny. I believe it is true, and I love to think of it. I hope that I see the good hand of God in it, and the visible trace of His mercy that is over all His works. But it is only a dream, however grateful, I shall be glad to be awakened from it; not indeed by the yelling of illiterate agitators, but by a quiet and sober proof that I have misunderstood the matter."

ABOUT THE JESUITS SPECIALLY. And now, as an introductory to the particular religious order which is to engage our attention this evening, I should like to quote some words showing Sir James Macintosh's appreciation of the Jesuits. They are to be found in his "Review of the Causes of the Revolution" (1688), and are as follows:

"Having arisen in the age of the Reformation, they naturally became the champions of the Church against her enemies. They cultivated polite literature with splendid success; they were the earliest and perhaps the most extensive reformers of European education, which their schools made a larger stride than it had done at any succeeding moment; and by the just reputation of their learning, as well as by the weapons with which it armed them, they were enabled to carry on a vigorous contest against the most learned impugners of the authority of the

Church. . . . In India they suffered martyrdom with heroic constancy. They penetrated through the barriers which Chinese policy opposed to the entrance of strangers, cultivating the most difficult of languages with such success as to compose hundreds of volumes in it; and, by the public utility of their scientific acquisitions, obtained toleration, patronage, and personal honors from that jealous government. The natives of America, who generally felt the comparative superiority of the European race only in a more rapid or a more gradual destruction, and to whom even the Quakers dealt out little more than penurious justice, were, under the fraternal rule of the Jesuits, reclaimed from savage manners, and instructed in the arts and duties of civilized life. . . . No other association ever sent forth so many disciples who reached such eminence in departments so various and unlike. . . . The most famous constitution, the most skillful cautions, the ablest school masters, the most celebrated professors, the best teachers of the humblest mechanical arts, the missionaries who could most bravely encounter martyrdom, or who with the most patient skill could infuse the rudiments of religion into the minds of ignorant tribes or prejudiced nations, were the growth of their fertile schools."

#### THEIR INSTITUTION.

Catholic Church historians agree that the religious orders whose members were more numerous than the secular clergy, showed themselves utterly unequal to the task of grappling with the dangers that menaced the Church in the sixteenth century. A committee appointed by Pope Paul III., in 1537, to examine and report upon the condition of the monks, gave it as their opinion, that the communities of those religious houses, in which discipline had become relaxed and manners dissolute, should be allowed to die out, when others more zealous and honest might take their place. There arose at once, providentially, a new order, which apparently growing out of the circumstances of the age, was for this very reason peculiarly fitted to minister to the needs. Specially designed to repel the advances of Protestantism, this order has at all times filled the Protestant mind with vague and undefined terrors. From their origin the Jesuits have had numerous enemies; never have they been free from them, either in their prosperity and greatness, or in their fall, or even after it. Since their re-appearing they have been the constant object of bitter animosity, odious calumny, and virulent abuse. (See Balmes' "European Civilization.") This is the best demonstration that can be given of the eminent merit of the Jesuits. It must be the same with classes and corporations as with individuals—very extraordinary merit necessarily excites numerous enemies. The simple reason that such merit is always envied, and very often dreaded.

#### THE FOURTH VOW AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

To the three ordinary religious vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity—which are a protest against the three prominent and most dangerous vices of every age and country—the Jesuits added a fourth, that of strict obedience to the orders of the Holy Father. In the early ages of the Church, and especially in what are called the middle ages, there was no call for a vow of special obedience to the Pope. There was always, it is true, in those days enough of disobedience to the Holy Father on the part of professing Christians, sovereigns, princes, nobles, and even bishops, but there was at the same time the recognition in principle of the Papal Supremacy. The Reformation, on the other hand, was the attempt of the disobedient to erect their disobedience into a principle. As Brownson ("Religious Orders") clearly puts it, the Reformers had no intention of warring against the Church; educated under feudalism in the State, they imagined they could throw off the suzerainty of the Pope without injury, nay with positive benefit to the Church, as feudatories of the monarch might in some cases throw off the suzerainty of the Emperor or King, with positive advantages to that estate. The event has proved, what should have been foreseen, and is understood, that in casting off the Papacy, the Reformers cast off the Church herself, because the Pope is not merely suzerain, but under God the Sovereign of the Church. Our Lord built the Church on Peter, and Peter, the Rock, removed, it had no foundation. There was a divine inspiration, then, in the thought of St. Ignatius, and a special providence in joining on the members of the Company he organized this fourth vow, or vow of special obedience to the Pope. It was a solemn protest against the very principle of the Reformation, and made the Society of Jesus a standing assertion of the Papacy, and a living monument of devotion to the Holy See. The Council of Trent, which condemned the particular or special vows of the Reformation, but it did not explicitly condemn its principle, for its principle was not then fully disengaged, and rendered apparent to the whole world. It is only lately that even Protestants themselves have understood it, and were able to formulate it. Nobody saw from the first, that Protestantism was wholly concentrated in the rejection of the Papal constitution of the Church; hardly did anybody see it before the present century. Protestants have shown themselves willing to fraternize with the eastern churches separated from Rome, and which differ from the Catholic Church in no important points but in rejecting the Supremacy or Primacy of jurisdiction of the Pope, without asking any change of doctrine of worship on the part of those churches. We have seen and we see now multitudes of Protestants, like the Puseyites and Ritualists, who accept and defend all Catholic doctrine, except the Papal Supremacy and infallibility, and nearly the whole Protestant world would cease to oppose the Church, if she would only give up the Pope. They would accept willingly the play of Hamlet with the part of the Prince of Denmark left out. The fourth vow of the Jesuits pledged them to a direct and necessary warfare on the essential principle of the Reformation, and for the essential principle of the Constitution of the Church.

#### ST. IGNATIUS AND HIS COMPANIONS.

On the dawn of the day, in the year 1534, on which the Church celebrated the Assumption of our Blessed Lady, the 15th August, a little band of men, clad with the clerical habit, ascended the hill called

Montmartre, in Paris, and entered the crypt of the chapel of St. Denis, which then marked the spot where the Apostle of France had won the crown of martyrdom. Their leader was Ignatius of Loyola, who, descended from a noble Spanish family, had in his youth been a courtier and a soldier, and was wounded at the siege of Pamplona in 1521, where he distinguished himself by his gallantry. Beside him, in the sanctuary, knelt Francis Xavier, by birth a grandee of Spain, James Laynez, Alphonse Salmeron and Nicholas Bobadilla, also Spaniards, and Alphonse Rodriguez, a Portuguese. At the altar ministered Peter Faber of Leiden, a scholar in the universities of Savoy, but now a priest in holy orders. By his hands—for he was the only priest as yet among them—the bread of life was distributed to his associates, and then were lifted up their united voices, uttering their vow, to renounce the world, and to labor for the conversion of souls in the Holy Land; or, if unable to execute this project, to offer themselves to the Pope, to be disposed of by him for the greater glory of God. Subsequently Ignatius found it necessary to visit his native country; so, having given his disciples a rule of life and special instructions regarding their practices of devotion, he left them in Paris under the care of Peter Faber, and directed that they should meet him in Venice, on the 25th January, 1537, nearly two years later. Meanwhile their mission to the Holy Land was rendered impossible by war, and so, on his return, Ignatius despatched them to preach in different towns of Italy. Before dispersing, he bade them, when they were questioned as to what congregation they belonged to, to reply that they were of "The Society of Jesus." In 1539 Ignatius, accompanied by Faber and Laynez, repaired to Rome, and submitted the Rule of the proposed new order to Pope Paul III. The three Cardinals were appointed to report upon it; and, although at first they were opposed, their opinions changed suddenly and remarkably, and by a process to reply that they were of "The Society of Jesus." In 1539 Ignatius, accompanied by Faber and Laynez, repaired to Rome, and submitted the Rule of the proposed new order to Pope Paul III. The three Cardinals were appointed to report upon it; and, although at first they were opposed, their opinions changed suddenly and remarkably, and by a process to reply that they were of "The Society of Jesus." In 1539 Ignatius, accompanied by Faber and Laynez, repaired to Rome, and submitted the Rule of the proposed new order to Pope Paul III. The three Cardinals were appointed to report upon it; and, although at first they were opposed, their opinions changed suddenly and remarkably, and by a process to reply that they were of "The Society of Jesus."

#### CONSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENT.

Ignatius of Loyola was a great legislator, and we find a proof of this fact in his Constitutions or Rules for the Society. The sanctification of the souls of his spiritual children, by the union of a contemplative and active life, is in the first instance laid down as absolutely necessary; then comes laboring for the salvation and perfection of our neighbor, by catechizing the ignorant, instructing youth in piety and learning, upon which the reformation of the world really depends. The direction of consciences, missions, and the general work of an evangelist form the great division of labor. No other holds than that generally used by the clergy was to be worn. Before anyone was to be admitted to the Order he was to employ an entire month in spiritual exercises and making a general confession. Then comes two years of novitiate, followed by simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience—the Order reserving to itself the right of dispensing the novitiate at any time. Subsequently, usually after all studies had been completed, second or solemn vows were made, binding both sides, so that a professed Jesuit cannot be discharged by the Order from the obligations incurred by him to it. On this occasion the fourth vow is pronounced, of undertaking any mission enjoined by the Pope. A class of Jesuits who do not take this vow are styled spiritual coadjutors and temporal coadjutors. Several conditions are requisite for those who aspire to enter the Society: one is that they should not have been longed, even for a day, to any other religious order. The Rule also excludes apostates, public sinners, great criminals, and men of weak intellect or subject to mental derangement. Ignatius, usually after all studies had been completed, second or solemn vows were made, binding both sides, so that a professed Jesuit cannot be discharged by the Order from the obligations incurred by him to it. 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