

Second: The canon of the Council of Constance, which places the authority of an ecumenical council above that of the Pope in ecclesiastical matters, remains firm and immutable.

Third: The Pope is obliged to observe the canon law.

Fourth: In matters of faith the Pope has a vote of superiority, but his judgment is not irrevocable until he has obtained the sanction of the Church.

These propositions they declared they would observe even in spite of the opposition of their general. "That if, God forbid," said the act, "It might happen that our general should command something contrary to the present declaration, persuaded that we should not agree without sin, we shall regard these orders illegal, null and void." This act was signed by the Provincial of Paris, Stefano de la Croix, December 19, 1761.

There is no record that the general of the Jesuits protested against this semi-rebellion of his French Jesuits. Perhaps it was all a scheme contrived between them to avert the approaching tempest.

But this time, the greatest astuteness was not that shown on the part of the Jesuits. The royal council proposed that there should be given to the order a vicar general, who was to be a Frenchman, selected by the general of the order, to reside in France, and exercise over the Jesuits of the kingdom the same power enjoyed by the general over the entire order. As was to be expected, the general and his council rejected this proposition, and the Pope ratified their refusal, saying that it was incompatible with the spirit and existence of the order. Then throughout France there was an explosion of wrath against the corporation. The Parliament of Paris, which already had made an *auto-da-fe* of the works of the principal Jesuits canonists and moralists, which works has been declared by a commission of theologians to be crammed full of errors and false doctrines, now compiled a memorial entitled "Extracts of dangerous and pernicious assertions of every kind, which the so-called Jesuits have always and perseveringly sustained, taught and published." They sent it to all the bishops and magistrates of the kingdom. After that nothing more remained but to suppress the order, which Parliament did with the decree of August 6, 1762. The king seconded the policy of the Parliament and accomplished the work, first by confiscating in behalf of the state the property of the Jesuits, June 14, 1763, and then by suppressing the institution in all its states, November, 1764.

The Jesuits did not admit that they were

vanquished. To the authority of the King of France they opposed that of the Pope—and profiting by his weakness of character, dictated to him a constitution, which proclaimed, January 7, 1765, in the presence of Christendom, the sanctity and innocence of the order.

Contrary to the usual custom, this constitution was issued without the knowledge of the Sacred College.

The Secretary of State, Torregiani, who was the most intimate friend of the Pope, first heard of it on the day on which it was signed and went to press—therefore Clement XIV. was right in saying that this apostolic letter had been extorted rather than demanded from his predecessor.

And thus the Catholic world regarded it. So this, instead of benefiting the order, aggravated its condition, arousing against it those states which had remained until now passive spectators of the war waged against it in Portugal and in France. The papal constitution was interdicted in all the Catholic countries, and the powers took occasion from this act, which they justly regarded as a provocation, to fortify themselves by energetic measures against any assault which it was the purpose of the Holy See to make upon their independence and absolute sovereignty.

All the deliberations of the Roman court, including indulgences and marriage licenses, were subjected to the royal *placet*, and the free communication of the bishops and of the faithful with Rome was likewise surrounded with a thousand difficulties, and subjected to a severe surveillance of the police.

The papacy had constituted itself the paladin of the Jesuits at the time when the universal conscience of Christendom was aroused against the order, and it now reaped the well-merited fruit of the odious compact.

In the meantime the tide rose. King Charles III. of Spain issued on the 2nd of April, 1767, a pragmatic sanction as follows: "The Pope defended them, let him have them." With this he suppressed the Company of Jesus, and ordered the expulsion of its members from his dominion, arranging that they should be sent into the Papal States.

Clement XIII. tried to remove from his mouth the bitter cup, declaring to the Catholic king that he would never allow the exiled Jesuits to enter his states.

But Charles III. was ready to frustrate the design, answering to the nuncio that if His Holiness really persisted in his refusal he would know where to send the exiles, after making a public protest in all the ports of the Pontifical States.