

am in universa terra."—"For this purpose have I raised thee up, that I may manifest my power in thee, and my name may be declared thro' the whole earth."

Read the following passage. Look at the enthusiasm with which the writer talks of the "Jesuits," behold his severe strictures upon "Protestants and other Heretics," who assail them; hear him calling the order "glorious" and its preservation a miracle; and then call to mind that he is a minister of the Church of England, and a "Leader in the Land."

THE DEGENERACY OF MONASTIC INSTITUTES.

To a pious person, surely, no matter what his opinions may be, the degeneracy of religious institutes and orders must be an humbling and distressing subject for reflection. Yet by literary men of later days, and especially by Protestants and other heretics, this degeneracy has been laid of with almost a desperate eagerness either for the purpose of sneering at religion altogether, or vilifying the holy Roman Church, or discountenancing the strictness of Catholic morals. Now let it be admitted fully that this degeneracy is a fact, and that it has taken place in many instances almost incredibly soon after the first fervor of a new institute, always excepting, as truth compels us, the most noble and glorious company of St. Ignatius, which, next to the visible Church, may perhaps be considered the greatest standing miracle in the world. History certainly bears witness to this decay; but it must not be stated in the exaggerated way usual to many. It was not till the end of the tenth century that the decline of monastic fervor began to lead to abuses and corruptions; and for at least six centuries what almost miraculous perfection, heavenly love, self-crucifying austerities, mystical union with God, and stout-hearted defence of the orthodox faith reigned among the quietly succeeding generation of the Egyptian cenobites and solitaries? In the thirteenth century again the Church interfered, and at her touch, as if with the rod of Moses, there sprung forth those copious streams which satisfied the extraordinary thirst of Christendom in those times. The revered names of St. Dominic and St. Francis may remind us of what that age did. And when was the Church of Rome ever so great, ever so obviously the mother of Saints, or when did she ever so wonderfully develope the hidden life within her, as in the sixteenth century? St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier, St. Francis Borgia, St. Francis of Sales, St. Philip Neri, St. Felix of Cantalice, and many others, sprung almost simultaneously from the bosom of a Church so utterly corrupt and anti-Christian that part of mankind

deemed it necessary to fall off from her lest their souls should not be saved! Stated then fairly and moderately, let the fact of monastic degeneracy be admitted, and what follows? Is it anything more than an illustration of the Catholic Doctrine of original sin? Is it a fit or decent subject of triumph to miserable sinners who share personally in the corruption of their fellows? When such boastings are introduced into historical panegyrics of constitutions, parliaments, monarchies, republics, federacies, and the like, what is it but a *fortiori* argument against such mere worldly institutions? If a company of men or women leave their homes, enter upon a joyless life of poverty, singleness and obedience, to work, to beg, to pray, to sing, to watch, to fast, to scourge themselves, and behold! in a century or so, they degenerate and abandon the strictness of their institute, and what must become of a corporation gathered together for gain and aggrandisement? Either it must grow corrupt in a still shorter time, or, as the other alternative, having been corrupt from the beginning, as being secular, it will proceed to such an extremity of wickedness that nations, or kings, or people, as the case may be, will rise and tread it out of the earth as something to be endured no longer.—Surely there is something stupid, as well as unmanly, in this fierce exultation over the degeneracy of monastic orders. Roman law, the feudal system, chivalry, the municipalities of the middle ages—what light must such a course of reasoning throw on these things, so often set forth and illustrated with all the splendors of historical eloquence? One would imagine that to be a really philosophically historian heart and feeling were required, a strong sense of fellowship with our kind, an humbling acknowledgment of what is evil, and above all, an assiduous detection of what is, through God's mercy, honorable, pure and good; and what a different object would the church of the dark ages be in a history written on principles like these?

"The Holy Roman Church!" "The Mother of Saints" evidently "develope the hidden life within her" by having given birth to the Founders of the Jesuits, St. Francis of Sales, &c.

But the following beautiful defence of monastic decline is so full of true philosophy as well as true material piety, that we cannot help quoting it:—We again recommend the Reader to remember that the language is that of a Protestant clergyman; and then ask himself are we not on the brink of some extraordinary change.

But readers as well as writers have often exhibited a strange delight in these laboured invectives against monastic degeneracy; and this is very natural. It would be very unpleasant for us to pray