

Such was the gloomy outlook when Canisius entered upon the scene. There is no page in the history of the Church more thrilling with interest than that on which is recorded the deeds of the indefatigable apostle of Germany. He met heresy at every point, and at every point vanquished it. And when he was called to his eternal reward he left the Church in possession of whole kingdoms where previously she had scarcely a foothold. It is to this change that the great Protestant historian, already quoted, refers in the following passages :

“ The history of the two succeeding generations is the history of the struggle between Protestantism possessed of the North of Europe, and Catholicism possessed of the South, for the doubtful territory which lay between. All weapons of carnal and of spiritual warfare were employed . . . At first the chances seemed to be decidedly in favour of Protestantism ; but the victory remained with the Church of Rome. On every point she was successful. If we overleap another half century, we find her victorious and dominant in France, Belgium, Bavaria, Bohemia, Austria, Poland and Hungary. Nor has Protestantism, in the course of two hundred years been able to reconquer any portion of what was then lost.

“ It is, moreover, not to be dissembled that this triumph of the Papacy is to be chiefly attributed, not to the force of arms, but to a great reflux in public opinion. During the first half century after the commencement of the Reformation, the current of feeling in the countries on this side of the Alps and of the Pyrenees ran impetuously towards the new doctrines. Then the tide turned, and rushed as fiercely in the opposite direction. Neither during the one period, nor during the other, did much depend upon battles or sieges. The Protestant movement was hardly checked for an instant by the defeat at Muhlberg. The Catholic reaction went on at full speed in spite of the destruction of the Armada. It is difficult to say whether the violence of the