



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

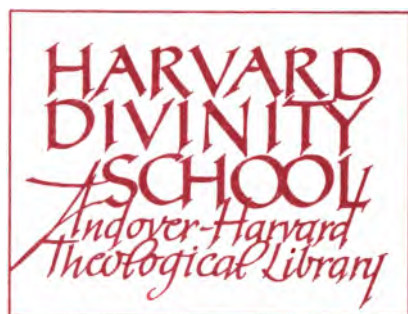
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



FEMALE CONVENTS.

SECRETS

OF

NUNNERIES DISCLOSED.

COMPILED FROM THE

AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPTS

OF

SCIPIO DE RICCI,

ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF FISTOLA AND PRATO.

BY MR. DE POTTER.

EDITED BY THOMAS ROSCOE.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY AND APPENDIX.

Δευρο, δειξω σοι την μητερα των κορων



NEW YORK:

D. APPLETON & CO, 900 BROADWAY.

1834.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1834 by
D. APPLETON & CO.,
In the clerk's office of the District Court for the Southern District of
New York.

WM. VAN NORDEN, PRINT.

944.5
RICCI

NOTICE.

THE ensuing disclosures respecting *Monachism* and *Pope-ry* are selected from the "Memoirs of Scipio de Ricci, late Bishop of Pistoia and Prato, Reformer of Catholicism in Tuscany, during the reign of Leopold. Compiled from the autograph manuscripts of that Prelate. Edited from the original of Mr. de Potter, by Thomas Roscoe." London, 1829.

Almost one half of the two original volumes are filled with the history of Italy during the period subsequent to the French revolution in 1789, and with incidental notices of Ricci's private life, and that of his numerous friends and correspondents. Nearly all those political and military details are omitted; because the sole objects designed by the present publication are these; to unfold *the genuine and unvarying practices of male and female convents*; and to demonstrate, that *the claims of the Papacy are totally incompatible with civil and religious liberty, and equally destructive of individual dignity, social decorum, and national intelligence and enjoyments.*

As the present work is reprinted from the "Memoirs of Scipio de Ricci," with those alterations only which were indispensable to preserve the continuity of the narrative; the English editor's preface imparts all requisite information concerning this most valuable and interesting development of the character of nunneries, the motives and arts of the Papal priesthood, and the immutable and universally mischievous and detestable policy of the Pontiffs and ecclesiastical Court of Rome.



PREFACE BY THOMAS ROSCOE.

SCIPIO DE RICCI deservedly ranks among the sincere and venerable defenders of religious truth and liberty : and Mr. de Potter, in collecting these materials, has performed a task very acceptable to the students of contemporary history.

During the agitating and fearful drama of the eighteenth century, when liberty herself was desecrated by being allied with Atheism, and made the enemy of outraged humanity, the Bishop of Prato and Pistoia planned a system of reform which would have established the freedom of his countrymen on true moral, intellectual, and religious improvement. The most zealous enemy of injustice in states and governments was not more opposed to oppression, nor more fervent in his desire of seeing mankind emancipated from every species of tyrannous thralldom ; but he was superior in his design to the spirit of the age. He desired reform civil and ecclesiastic ; and endeavored to pursue a line of action, which, if successful, would have led to the establishment of religious and moral improvement in the Italian States.

The narrative of the struggles, of the hardships and afflictions, which this prelate had to encounter in carrying on his reforms, is a most interesting biography. Emancipating himself from the trammels of falsehood and superstition, he appears to have been carried forward by the purity and moral correctness of his feelings, and by the exercise of an ingenuous mind in the defence of truth and right. But Ricci, though possessing all the virtues of humanity, and all the sincerity which should form the character of a reformer, was wanting in those sterner elements which are requisite to a man standing in the situation that he occupied. His good sense and his love of truth excited his hatred of the base and enslaving

P R E F A C E.

superstitions with which he saw religion corrupted. His humanity made him wish to see his fellow creatures freed from such degradation ; but his spirit, never bold enough to maintain such a situation, failed him. His ideas of the duty of submission, united with the natural mildness of his character, confounded the plain and obvious reasoning which a stronger mind would have employed ; and he fell a victim to his own want of determination, and to the artifices of the common enemies of himself, of liberty, and of religion.

Many papers of the immense mass of documents which the original Editor of Ricci's Life has printed, could only be valuable to those who require to be told, that where superstition and political profligacy reign in their most degraded forms, morality and decency must be entirely forgotten. As the vices of the monks and nuns are sufficiently exposed, we have, therefore, spared the reader the disgusting toil of perusing details which would add no additional proof to a truth already known.

The original work, of which all the valuable and important parts are here presented to the reader, was composed from the autograph manuscripts and private memorials of Ricci. They were furnished to the Editor by the nephew of the Prelate ; and no doubt exists respecting their authenticity.

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

AMONG "the signs of the times," no one is more replete with melancholy forebodings, than the rapid extension of the monastic system, both in these United States and in Britain. Three hundred years ago, the English Monasteries and Nunneries were demolished by act of parliament; the preamble of which alleged as the cause of their dissolution, the indescribable turpitude and innumerable atrocities, which were inseparable from their very existence. Throughout all the protestant countries, since the reformation of the sixteenth century, male and female Convents have been abhorred, not only by all Christians, but by every wise and good citizen. They have almost disappeared from France, and in Spain they are hastening to extinction; in Portugal they have been destroyed; and in no country on earth, except in this Federal Republic and the British dominions, are they viewed in any other aspect, than as objects of detestation, domicils of inordinate wickedness, or dungeons of unmitigable despair.

During the last five years, many ineffectual attempts have been made to arrest the attention of American Protestants to the true character and pernicious results of the monkish life. The conflagration of the Ursuline Nunnery at Charlestown, however, has elicited a regard to the subject, which it is proper should be improved; and to impress and enlighten the public mind, no mode seemed to be equally adapted, as a selection from the authentic materials of which the ensuing work is composed. The testimony is unexceptionable; being that of a Roman Catholic Prelate, who was commissioned by a Prince subject to the Papal jurisdiction, expressly to investigate the arcana of conventual life; and it was compiled by

a Civilian connected with the Roman hierarchy. The documents, therefore, cannot be objected to as of Protestant origin; because every fact is affirmed upon the authority of the Roman Prelate, and his Papal coadjutors, or of his deceitful and ferocious persecutors.

The succeeding narrative illustrates the two most impressive topics appertaining to popery, which American citizens can contemplate. Very little reference is made in this work to the theological portions of Romanism. Proselytes to Jesuitism are not collected in this country by the exhibition of the Popish idolatrous ritual, or the blasphemy of the Mass, or the absurdities of transubstantiation, or ludicrous delineations of purgatory, or the obscenities of auricular confession, or the usurped claim to govern conscience and to pardon sin, or even by the all absorbing assumption of infallibility. The primary allurements are, the fraudulent pretext of a superior education, to be obtained through their instrumentality, and the crafty adhesion to the strongest political party, which may temporarily gain the ascendancy. Thus it is demonstrated, that the community of Papists in every Protestant country, are a distinct and isolated body, having no common interests with the other part of society; and always prepared to seize every opportunity to grasp power, and extend their pestiferous influence.

Scipio de Ricci, from whose memoirs the subsequent description of Nunneries is compiled, has also unfolded the unchangeable turpitude and stupendous artifices which now characterize the infernal policy of the Roman Pontiffs and their court of Cardinals. This part of the volume is of equal importance to us, as his developments concerning Monks and Nuns. By the most undeniable historical details, and by other authentic documents, pontifical bulls, decretals, and canons, the fact is incontestable, that the Popes ever have claimed, as Gregory XVI. the reigning "Man of Sin," does now arrogate to wield the destinies of all mankind, upon penalty of the greater excommunication for rejection of his iniquitous authority, or disobedience to his accursed mandates. The discussions concerning the Bull "*In Cœna Domini*," and the *Decretals*, are invaluable expositions of the inflexible spirit which guides and determines all the measures that are adopted

by the Roman hierarchy. They testify beyond all cavil, that the dissemination of Popish principles, and the fearful increase of Romanists in this country, endanger the whole frame of civil society; and threaten, unless their progress be efficiently arrested, to subvert the whole fabric of the rights of conscience, and the government and constitution of the United States. European history, and the annals of Canada, Mexico, and South America, attest, that Popery in power, and true freedom as it is understood in this republic, cannot possibly exist together. The present volume renders that statement morally certain. Our grand design by this publication, however, was this; to unfold the principles, character, and doings of Female Convents. It may probably be objected, that some of the disclosures which the Roman Prelate has made, are so disgusting that they ought not to have been reprinted. In ordinary cases the plea would be admissible—but in reference to Popery it is invalid. A destructive incredulity exists respecting the horrible impurity and deadly practices of Nuns, who are cloaked under various bewitching appellatives, and decorated in meretricious garbs expressly to ensnare and seduce our citizens. That mischievous fascination, it is essential to the public welfare, as well as to the security of the Christian Churches, to unravel and expose in lucid display. Leopold, Prince of Tuscany, merits the gratitude of the whole civilized world, for his attempts to exterminate the Convents in his dominions; and Scipio de Ricci, the Roman Prelate who endeavored to cleanse those “holds of every foul spirit,” indescribably more filthy than even the fabulous Augean stable, “being dead, yet speaketh.” After due consultation with the most competent judges, and some of the prominent champions of evangelical truth, in the present “*war upon the Beast* ;” it was resolved, that the revolting discoveries which the Bishop of Pistoia and Prato made, should be presented to the public unmutilated; with anxious solicitude that the hideous pictures of Nuns and Nunneries which he has delineated, might tend to the exclusion of that part of “the mystery of iniquity,” from this nominally Christian republic.

What, therefore, are the principal instructions which we derive from the researches that Scipio de Ricci made into the secrets of the Italian Female Convents? and what arguments

can be adduced against the continuance and extension of the monastic system in the United States ?

It is irrelevant now to review the origin and progress of monachism ; nor is it of any importance to inquire into the supposititious benefits and certain injuries, which in former generations Monasteries and Nunneries are alleged to have produced. Our investigation applies to the present period, and to our own country ; and in this aspect, it may justly be propounded for consideration, whether it be not the incumbent duty of the legislatures of the different States to prohibit those institutions by law ?

The perusal of the ensuing pages fully sanctions four general propositions, either of which is amply sufficient to justify the utmost repugnance to Popery, which Christianity inculcates ; and all of which combined evidently demand, that every good citizen should strive by all legitimate methods, to stop this enemy which cometh in like a flood ; and that every sincere Christian should lift up the standard of the spirit of the Lord against him.

I. Nunneries and the conventual mode of life, are altogether contradictory to the Divine appointments respecting the order of nature, and the constitution of mankind and human society.

That declaration of Jehovah, which constitutes the foundation of all human existence, and especially of all our domestic ties and endearments, is coeval with the creation of mankind ; “It is not good that the man should be alone.” In his allwise benevolence, the Lord of life made “a help meet for him.” The law of Paradise is corroborated by the express mandate of Christianity ; 1 Corinthians, vii. 2. ; “let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.” This appointment of God, and this recommendation of the gospel, are both founded, we are assured, upon the same principle, and are proposed for the identical result ; “to avoid fornication.”

In all cases whatever, to violate these laws of creation and providence which are manifestly written upon man and his terrestrial existence, endangers our safety, either in its physical, mental, or moral relations. That the monastic system destroys life, entombs the intellect, and engenders inordinate

corruption of the most direful species, is a fact too notorious now to require proof.

“The monastic life is unnatural, for it is in direct opposition to an original principle of the human mind, by which our species are connected among themselves, the desire of society; and the professed and primary object of monastic institutions is preposterous, because their existence is one continuous crime against God, and against human society, increasing every hour in magnitude and atrocity.”

“Go, teach the drone of ghostly haunts,
That wastes in indolence his time,
Though superstitious hymns he chants,
His life is one continued crime.”

The monastic system, if universally adopted, would be general suicide. Not merely is the practice opposed because it is unnatural, but because it is unjust and ruinous. Respecting investigations that combine the very existence of mankind, we have no concern with individual exceptions, and especially in cases where no evidence can be proffered to sustain the alleged singularity; and in truth, where no proof can be valid against the original appointment of God, and the essential constitution of mankind. To all arguments which are based upon the exemplary purity of the voluntary celibate life of men, and the unavoidably coerced unmarried state of many lovely and refined women, there is the Divine retort, “it is not good that the man should be alone.” There is universal testimony arising from the constant experience of the human family, that a life of celibacy is a course of unceasing impurity; and there are historical records which verify that the system of monachism is directly at war with all the benevolent designs of God, and with all the essential interests of mankind.

The original constitution of human relations, as appointed by God, also determines that a life of celibacy is a course of injustice. No man either has a right to live unmarried, or can be justified for his palpable infringement of the Divine law; and consequently, there is a prior argument of Divine authority against the contrivance of Monks and Nuns which no negative evidence can possibly invalidate. The two chief

points upon which reliance is placed as exoneration of the Roman Priesthood, and their cloistered sisters, from the charge of sensuality, are most perversely alleged. One is, their seclusion from the world and its temptations ; and the other is, their abstinence, fasting and macerations. Although it could be evinced, that both those principles were fully carried out, and in their most extensive operation ; nevertheless, the fact would not be demonstrated, that the monastic system could control that attraction between the sexes, which like the other animal instincts, is indispensable to the preservation of human life. But the reverse is the fact. In all ordinary cases, no persons live more luxuriously than the Papal Ecclesiastics, both male and female : and their severance from the world and its fascinations is more nominal than real.

That the abodes of Monks and Nuns are perfectly unnatural ; and as the unavoidable tendency, that they are the prolific sources of the most horrid uncleanness, the ensuing pages awfully prove. Without a constant miracle, they could not be otherwise. The attachment of the sexes towards each other, is indispensable and universal ; without it the race of man in one generation would be extinct. The monastic system vitiates all the social affections, and incarcerates man in a cage of selfishness, and circumscribes all his affections within the restricted limit of his own personal gratifications. Were that unholy device to attain any extension and protracted supremacy, the moral hemisphere would speedily be subverted, and the Gospel of Christ, which is totally opposed to all the monkish infatuation, would again disappear in the more than Egyptian darkness that would overspread the world. The monastic system necessarily demands, that they who adopt it, should be persons deprived of every capacity for general usefulness, and also be men and women destitute of all the usual sensibilities of humanity. Whatever the inmates of convents may have been individually ; whether an occasional Friar may have been gifted with continency, or whether some Nun or novice, under almost unparalleled circumstances, may have resisted the evils of the confessor, and the seductive influence of the licentious examples continually around her, is of no importance in deciding this question. This result could not uniformly follow, without the immediate direct interposition

of the "Lord of all." A miraculous intervention of the most extraordinary character, and in comparison with which all the stupendous works of Jesus, the "Son of God," are profoundly eclipsed, must ever be directed in the choice, impulse, and restraint of a few individuals, contrary to the express universal and immutable appointments of God at creation, and the divinely constituted arrangements which he has made for the increase and preservation of mankind, and the blessing of the Church and the world.

II. The monastic system is opposed to personal piety, knowledge, purity, and usefulness, and invariably tends to debase its victims in ignorance, sensuality, crime and anguish. It would not be practicable to present a more lucid view of the character of Nunneries, than in the picture drawn of them by Mackray, in his Essay on the effect of the reformation upon civil society. Every feature of the hideous and appalling view is graphically correct, as proved by the more recent delineations of Scipio de Ricci. Appendix A.

It would be superfluous to attempt an elaborate proof of the proposition, that evangelical piety is incompatible with monastic life. What might be the effect of the system under any possible modifications, it is irrelevant to inquire. Unvarying testimony assures us that "pure religion and undefiled," has never yet been exemplified in claustral life. Gloomy superstitious forms, and sanctimonious mummery have been practised with apparent austerity; but communion with God, love of the brethren, practical piety, and Christian holiness, are profound strangers to the monastic system. In truth, the celibate life, which is its primary and cardinal ingredient, extirpates all that is pure and good. Of this fact, the two English Universitiés are a remarkable demonstration. In those splendid endowments, it is required that the "fellows," as they are called of the Colleges, shall be unmarried men. The consequence is this, that probably Oxford and Cambridge embody more notorious and inordinate dissoluteness, than any other towns in Britain. This is the legitimate result of retaining, as is still done in England, so large a portion of the antiquated usages and popish corruptions of the dark ages.

The boasts which are so often made of the learning of anterior generations under the papal supremacy; and the lamen-

tations that have been offered over the supposed literary losses to the world, by the demolition of the monasteries, are merely idle affectation. The author already quoted has supplied us with an illustration upon this topic not less instructive than convincing. Appendix B.

Of all the drones who ever infested the world, none surpass in perfect uselessness, and its inseparable attendants, vice and misery, the inhabitants of convents. Indolence is their best characteristic. Incarcerated in a gloomy mansion, with no duties to fulfil, no motives to activity, no sympathy or relationship for the exterior world, and no anxiety for its improvement, or feeling for its desolations, of what value are those excrescences upon society?

“In shirt of hair, and weeds of canvass dress’d,
Girt with a bell-ropé that the Pope has bless’d;
Wearing out life in his pernicious whim,
Till his mischievous whimsy wears out him.”

No man has a right to absolve himself from all the duties which he owes to the world. No woman can be justified for abandoning all the obligations which she owes to society. No Christian, therefore, possibly can be a Friar or a Nun.

III. Monachism directly counteracts the progress of intelligence, civil and religious freedom, commercial prosperity, and national improvement. It is the peculiar property of Romanism to defile and curse every thing with which it comes into contact: and if there be any part of that “working of Satan,” called Popery, which possesses more deleterious qualities than the rest of “the mystery of iniquity,” it is the monastic system. An irresistible argument might be framed from the spirit of monkish institutions, which would demonstrate that they must deteriorate the human character, and obstruct all the stable interests of the body politic. Every incentive to progress under its mischievous influence is extirpated. In former ages, when the edifices devoted to Friars and Nuns were found in every district of the European nations, what was their character, and what was the result of their establishment? Universal barbarism, penury, wretchedness, and crime. All the annals of the thousand years prior to the Reformation, bear the same decisive and unequivocal testimony

to the benighted, and impoverished, and degraded condition of the then existing people. Could it possibly be otherwise? All the impulses to enterprise and personal and social elevation, under the government of the Papacy, and especially within the cloistered battlements, are utterly unknown. Any other knowledge than that which can be made subservient to priestly aggrandizement, is pronounced accursed; and subjects the possessor of it to imprisonment, torture, and death. Probably the dark dungeons of Popery scarcely unfold a more demonstrative proof, that hostility to science was not the error of one age, but that it is the crime of the Papal system, than the history of Galileo. His experience is undeniable evidence that an inveterate and perpetual warfare is waged by the Pontifical Court, not against pure religion only, but also against true philosophy and the noblest science.

“Galileo had become a convert to the Copernican astronomy; and, by a succession of most splendid discoveries, had demonstrated the motion of the earth around the sun. The ignorant Pope and besotted Cardinals, and the ferocious Inquisitors, accused that dignified philosopher and the greatest scientific scholar of his age, of the crime of heresy; and Galileo was cast into a dungeon of the Inquisition. His sublime knowledge was condemned by priestly bigots, all whose intelligence was restricted to the most voluptuous mode of gratifying their inordinate sensual appetites, and who were too grovelling and carnal minded to comprehend his lofty speculations and ethereal soarings; and to that superlative astronomer was presented the alternative, either to deny self-evident mathematical propositions, or to be burnt as a heretic. At seventy years of age, on his knees, and with his hand on the Gospels, he condemned, abjured and cursed his own infallible opinions, and swore before the infamous Inquisitors, that he would never more hold or assert in word or writing the doctrines which he had demonstrated, that the sun is the center of the solar system, and that the earth moves. From that day he never afterwards either wrote or talked upon the subject of astronomy.”

What is the *Index Expurgatorius*, but a pontifical law, which dooms the whole dominions over which the Pope's jurisdiction extends to Egyptian darkness? All books, in every

department of literature, theological, scientific, historical, and upon the ornamental arts, unless they directly or indirectly aid the despotic claims of the Roman Court, are condemned to be burnt. The catalogue begins with *the Holy Bible*, and includes almost every *genuine* book which is truly worthy of perusal, either ancient or modern. That prohibition of books is most sedulously complied with in all convents; and the explorations of Scipio de Ricci among the monasteries and priesthood of Tuscany, convince us that the boasted literary lore of Jesuit seminaries, and Ursuline convents, must necessarily be an imposture; because all the means of their attaining knowledge are most sedulously and authoritatively, by the Pope and his prelates, and equally by the voluntary design of the monastics, totally excluded.

Popery decrees that "ignorance is the mother of devotion;" and, of course, of every good quality—but Protestantism proclaims, that "knowledge is power." The monastic system is destructive of illumination, and consequently of liberty. Despotism, of the most abhorrent attributes, is both the very main-spring and aliment of conventual life. It gilds the cross which surmounts the principal turret,—it is the steam-pump by which, at auricular confession, every secret of the heart is evolved, and it is the iron key which locks up in impenetrable darkness the doleful mysteries of those dungeons of despair. The tyranny of the convent extends to every spiritual emotion, as well as to the language, features, demeanor and conduct; and they must be moulded according to the imperious dictates of the superior and the chaplain.

All this is irreconcilable with freedom; and it is an indisputable fact, that girls and boys, in this country, who have been trained up in a convent or monastery, unless the grace of God very powerfully operates upon them, exemplify the prominent features of the monastic system. Many persons now well known in society, exhibit such extraordinary varieties, that their companions realize great difficulty in attempting to unravel their complex characters. They are blustering and servile—apparently candid, and yet profoundly deceitful—they mingle the fawning of a parasite with the stubbornness of a mule—and can assume so many forms, that no man can place any reliance scarcely upon their personal identity. It is

the natural effect of a monastic education. They were in the basest bondage, and cannot shake off its habits; they are in freedom, and know not how to improve it. That system which thus necessarily despoils citizens of their best qualities, ought to be execrated: for it is evident, that if extended so as to predominate throughout our country, all genuine freedom would be extinct.

The superiority of Protestantism to Popery, in reference to mercantile enterprise, is so palpable that it requires neither illustration nor proofs. The wisdom of divine Providence is remarkably illustrated in the close connection which, in point of time, exists between the three grand events which have been the instruments, in the dispensations of the merciful Jehovah, in some measure to renovate the world: and the order of their occurrence was not less admirably planned, than the stupendous results which have flowed from them. The art of printing rendered universal the principles of nautical science; the discovery of Columbus opened a way for adventurous spirits to realize the dignity of emancipation from the Pontifical shackles, by a removal where the thunders of the Vatican did not reverberate; and Luther, Zuingle, Calvin, Knox and Cranmer, broke to atoms the extinguishers which had so long concealed the true light, and liberated man soon commenced to traverse all latitudes and longitudes in search of knowledge and in quest of opulence. The contrast only between Protestant and Papal countries during the last 250 years, discloses a testimony against convents, which it is impossible to gainsay. Monks and Nuns in no form participate in the active duties which cultivate those products that are wafted into all lands, and from which, in return, the comforts and luxuries of life are obtained. Hence it follows, that the indolent life of Monks and Nuns is a barrier to all national improvement. The existing deplorable state of Tuscany, as portrayed in the ensuing pages, was, three hundred years ago, the state of all Europe. The swarms of Friars, and their cloistered paramours, consumed the vitals of every land. Their example encouraged sloth among all orders of the people. Poverty, wretchedness, debasement, and pillage characterized the whole community. It was either a gorgeous display of barbaric magnificence, by the feudal lord of the district, or the most appalling dependence

and necessity. The history of every country which has ever been cursed by the Papal predominance, and especially the present condition of those who have been emancipated from its thralldom, when contrasted with their anterior state, verifies, that, to indulge any expectation of general benefit from the monastic system and from the predominance of Popery, is just as wise as to attempt to "gather figs from thistles, and grapes from thorns."

IV. The monastic system nullifies all the requirements of the Christian religion. Its duties are prohibited, its consolations intercepted, and by the operation of monachism, the exertions of gospel philanthropy are abrogated, and the universal diffusion of the Kingdom of God, which is righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, is totally impeded.

It may probably be objected to this allegation, that the Monks of former ages were the persons by whom the Roman Court enlarged the pontifical sway. The fact is admitted, and it redounds still more to the disgrace of Popery and the Friars, that instead of propagating the glorious Gospel, they only substituted their own more refined idolatry and superstitions for the offensive abominations of Paganism. But transfer men and women to the cells of the convent, its sloth and secrecy, its constant mummeries and restless anxieties for freedom and enjoyment, its insatiable longings, and its constant identity of voluptuous and unsatisfying indulgence: and would you look for evangelical missionaries in those dens of ignorance, sloth, and corruption?

All the monasteries on earth could not produce a Brainerd, a Swartz, a Vanderkemp, or a Martyn, with the rest of the glorified servants of Christ, exclusive of the living laborers in the vineyard of the Lord. Neither idiotism nor lunacy would dream of going into a convent to procure the counterparts of Anne Chater, Harriet Newell, Anne Judson, and the other intrepid and devoted women, who will live in everlasting remembrance when the monastic system, with "the beast and the false prophet, shall be consumed in the lake of fire, burning with brimstone."

When the monkish system commenced, it was merely a flight into the desert, and a temporary abode in solitude, until the infernal storm of malignant persecution had dissipated its

fury. The crafty "Man of Sin" speedily perceived, that the monastic life and vows might easily be transformed into an irresistible machine to support his usurped despotism. Erroneous opinions respecting the superior sanctity of the celibate life, and infatuated whims concerning the refining spirituality of years devoted to contemplation, enlarged the number of Monks; until their independence of the Prelates permitted them to pass their time in one continuous scene of sensual indulgence. Notwithstanding all the indescribable corruption which characterized the Convents of Friars, and the Nunneries, they maintained their ascendancy over the benighted and superstitious multitude. When we remember the profound ignorance, even of all the residents in the monastic edifices, we cannot feel surprise, although we must abhor their delusions and iniquity, that persons who were given over to "strong delusion," and who commingled all that was good on earth with the Pope's passport to heaven, should have yielded themselves to the support of a pretended, imposing, gaudy ceremonial, which allows every vicious indulgence for money, and which guaranteed an admission into Paradise to all who can purchase the title, sealed by the Pontiff of Rome.

But the monastic system in modern times, and especially in the United States, in its essentially deceptive character, appears masked under the name and in the garb of literary institutions. In all those parts of Europe where the astounding wickedness of the male and female convents was divulged, it was impossible to protract their duration; their inexpressibly flagrant dissoluteness rendered it absolutely impracticable, either to extenuate their turpitude, or prolong their existence.

But as the number of persons devoted to celibacy, severed from the world, and in inalienable alliance with the Pope, is of vast solicitude to the Roman Court, the Pontiffs of the sixteenth century permitted the priests and their sisters, whose crimes were so odious that he dared not pardon them, and yet whose ungodly services were so valuable, that he could not dispense with them, to embody themselves under a new and unsuspecting title. Thus many of the unprincipled mendicant Friars became Jesuits, and the most wicked Nuns were embodied under the name of Saint Ursula. The two orders are brother and sister. They are governed by the same principles—

ostensibly pursue the same object—the education of youth. Always, however, professing great solicitude to teach Protestant children, but exhibiting no regard for the benighted and perishing souls of the Papists; and they have ever exemplified an artifice which certifies, that with “cunning craftiness they lie in wait to deceive.”

But the grand inquiry is this—Are the spirit, principles, and practices of the monastic orders changed in modern times? The answer may be found in the following portraiture of Tuscan convents. It is the perennial boast of all Romanists, both ecclesiastical and their disciples, that Popery is identical, and what it ever was, it is now, and always will be. This fact all history certifies; consequently, Popery in the United States, in the nineteenth century, is the same as it was in Britain three hundred years since. But the Monks and Nuns are the staff of the Roman Court; and therefore, under whatever vizors concealed, or by whatever name disguised, they are now the counterparts of their ancient atrocious predecessors.

The monastic system comprises a total paralysis of all Christian good, in devotion, zeal and morals; and substitutes childish superstitions, with the most debasing sloth and vice. But probably the worst effect of conventual institutions is the profoundly artificial character which they invariably produce and nurture. Jesuitical dissimulation is an inseparable associate of the monkish life. Deception fills the unholy edifice from the foundation to the capstone; it is the air which Monks and Nuns breathe, and the highly seasoned sauce which gives a relish to all their food, and by the operation of which their other privations are rendered tolerable. The ensuing details of the researches made by Scipio de Ricci demonstrate the truth of an inference, which in its application is most startling, that an inmate of a monastery or nunnery cannot retain the predominance of Christian principles and integrity. With the very few exceptions of those who have since become the subjects of redeeming grace, it is undeniable, that nearly all the young men in our country who have been trained up in the Jesuit Colleges, are either avowed or secret infidels, and not less licentious in practice than irreligious in principle. There is not an instance to be found, unless those in-

cluded in that exception, even among the women, which is not conformable to the above statement. Every girl who has been educated in an American nunnery has departed from it—either a determined sceptic, or a hardened opponent of all religion, or a disguised and dispensed Papist; and assuredly with every refined feminine sensibility destroyed, and most probably deeply versed in all those artifices that she has learned from the Jesuit confessor, by which she can deceive every person, and elude all discovery of her genuine character and secret dissipation.

The hypocrisy which is stamped upon all the Jesuit Convents, whether superintended by Roman Priests or their Ursuline sisters, is so undisguised, that it is astonishing our citizens do not indignantly repel the daring imposture. Those wily craftsmen, and their priestesses, proclaim that their sole object is to educate youth in a superior manner; and they boast of their extraordinary qualifications for that object. But the solemn inquiries may be propounded—why are those Priests and Nuns so anxious to teach Protestant children only? Why will they not receive them after they have passed the years of mere juvenility? Why do they maintain all the strictest regulations of the ancient orders, whose very crimes were produced and perpetuated by the operation of those rules and customs? To these questions should be added the consideration, that Protestants have erected a system of education in almost all parts of our republic; and although in many respects imperfect, yet the elementary principles of knowledge can every where be obtained; while in many of our colleges, a course of literature is studied co-extensive with the acquirements of any similar foreign institution, and as far superior to all that any Jesuit seminary imparts, as the difference between the oratory of George Whitefield, and the song of a Roman Priest, chanting a mass for a soul in purgatory. Protestant female institutions also are dispersed throughout our country, between which, for the purpose of literary tuition, and especially in point of Christian morals, and the nunneries established by the sister Jesuits, there is no more likeness than there is similitude between Hannah More, and the superior of the Ursuline community at Charlestown.

Now it is certain, that a very large and disproportionate

mass of ignorance, and its consequent immorality and debasement, is found among the Papists. Very few of them, comparatively, can read or write; and it is still more deplorable, although consistently mischievous, that the Roman Priests will not permit the popish youth to attend the schools of the "cursed heretics," as they denominate the Protestants. Why, therefore, if they are so extremely benevolent and philanthropic as they profess, do not the Jesuits and the Ursulines dedicate their labor to the melioration of the moral character, and the improvement of the mental condition of the hundred thousand children of their own society, who are growing up to maturity, groping in darkness, and untamed as a wild ass's colt?

The only answer to this question is this—that the sole object of all the monastic institutions in America, is merely to proselyte youth of the influential classes in society, and especially females; as the Roman Priests are conscious that by this means they shall silently but effectually attain the control of public affairs. No girl long attends auricular confession, either to the superior of the Nunnery or the Chaplain, before she is lost. Her will is subdued. She has surrendered herself to the control and implicit direction of two unspeakably artful profligates, who have her reputation entirely at their disposal—and the declaration of Flavia Peraccini, Prioress of the convent at Pistoia, page 92, of this volume, may be infallibly affirmed of every one of them. The confessors "*deceive the innocent, and even those that are most circumspect; and it would need a miracle to converse with them and not to fall!*"

With this knowledge of Monks and Nuns, and the official testimony of a prince and prelate, both subject to the Roman court, as narrated in this work, the appeal must solemnly be made to all Protestants—Can you justify before God and your country, your patronage of monastic institutions? Do you not endanger the virtue and usefulness of your children in this world, and also jeopard their everlasting welfare, by transferring your sons, and especially your daughters, to the management of Jesuit Priests and Ursuline Nuns? From their primary organization about three hundred years ago, when they embodied the very refuse of the ancient orders,

whose habitually nefarious course, the Papacy itself, which emphatically lieth in wickedness, would no longer tolerate; those Roman ecclesiastics, the Jesuits, and *their* Ursuline sisters, have been uniformly the most loathsome examples of unnatural licentiousness, whose vitiosity is recorded in the annals of mankind.

To all such blinded or deluded Protestant parents, may aptly be applied the pungent mandate and exhortation, 2 Corinthians, vi. 14—18. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?” Therefore, hear the voice from heaven, which says, “Come out of Babylon, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

The ensuing portraiture of Jesuit monasteries, and the Roman priesthood, and the pontifical hierarchy, and of female convents and nuns, is recommended to all those who are anxious to comprehend the genuine character and the uniform and universal practices of those institutions. Here are no high-wrought romantic fictions, no eloquent imaginative tales worked up foreffect, and naught “set down in malice,” by inimical Protestants. The ensuing pages comprise grave and undorned testimony, furnished by a Popish prelate and his brethren, acting officially by the authority of a prince, subordinate to the Roman court; and narratives prepared by the nuns themselves; consequently, as the evidence cannot be impugned, the description of ancient Judah and Jerusalem, by the prophet, may be correctly applied to the entire monastic system. Isaiah, i. 4, 5, 6. “Ah! people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters! From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores.”

From this pestilential curse, may the God of mercy deliver our republic, and the American Churches!

NEW YORK, 10TH OCTOBER, 1834.



S E C R E T S

O F

F E M A L E C O N V E N T S

D I S C L O S E D .

C H A P T E R I .

Scipio de Ricci studies among the Jesuits.—His Renunciation of the Principles of that Society.—His Ordination as Priest.—He inherits the Property of the last General of the Jesuits.—Suppression of the Order, and Confinement of the Ex-General at Rome.—Death of Pope Ganganelli.—Narrative proving that Pope to have been poisoned.

SCIPIO DE RICCI was born in Florence on the 9th of January, 1741. He was the third son of the senator president, Peter Francis de Ricci, and of Maria Louisa, daughter of Bettina Ricasoli, baron of La Trappola, and captain of the Swiss guard in the service of the Duke of Tuscany.

His family, one of the most ancient and distinguished in Tuscany, was not at that time in favor with the House of Lorraine, who had been but recently seated on the Grand Ducal throne. His grandfather had professed republican principles, and his uncle had taken the side of the Bourbons against the House of Austria. They were too proud to seek for court favor under these circumstances, and looked for preferment to other quarters. Young Ricci, who had lost his father, was therefore sent by his uncles to Rome, at the age of fifteen; and, in spite of the protestations of his mother, and of the priest who had hitherto directed his studies, a man in his principles of religion

and morality strongly opposed to Jesuitism, he was put under the care of the Jesuits.

Catholic Europe was at that time occupied with the quarrels of that too famous body. Its insatiable ambition, its immense riches, its terrifying power, the information diffused among its members, the great men of all kinds which it had produced and was every day producing, its doctrines subversive of the independence of governments and the morality of the people,—all these characteristics had divided the Roman communion into obstinate partisans of its system and its existence, already attacked on all sides, and into adversaries who thought only of its destruction. Scipio de Ricci had been bred in the very bosom of the order and by its members, and he had been initiated in their maxims, of which he knew the very smallest details; but he was surrounded on the other side by the many antagonists which it had raised even in the metropolis of Catholicism. It was not long before he ranged himself among the most zealous and enlightened of those who hastened, with all their efforts and all their wishes, to promote the dissolution of this formidable society; and who never ceased to pursue its remains, and mark out its spirit, as often as they thought there was any danger of a revival of the evil which it had caused to the great Christian community.

Ricci was superstitious. While he was among the Jesuits, a tumor, which resisted all the remedies of art, appeared upon his knee. An amputation was decided upon; when, as he informs us, he applied with fervor and constancy to the diseased part an image, representing the venerable Hyppolito Galantina, one of the brothers, called Bachettoni, and he was completely cured. Strange contradiction in the human mind! that such ideas should co-exist in the same head with the rational, true, and solid principles, which made Ricci afterwards, to a certain extent, a religious reformer, a wise citizen, a zealous patriot, and a friend of the arts, literature, and humanity.

In the house of the Canon Bottari, who was regard-

ed by the Jesuits as the chief of those who were accused of Jansenism, this miracle took place. The Canon made his own use of it; and his conversation and that of the persons who frequented his house, cured Ricci of the ideas he had formed concerning the sanctity and doctrine, which he confesses up to that time he had allowed in the highest degree, and almost exclusively to the Jesuits.

What he learned among these fathers did not tend less to prepare him for the aversion he was doomed to feel for them hereafter, than what he had heard from their adversaries. The Irish Jesuit who was charged with teaching him the precious art of reasoning, taught him nothing but a sophistical and captious logic—the sole end of which was “among a thousand useless questions and logomachies without number, to take for granted in all their extent, and in all the clearness of which they were susceptible, the fundamental principles of *molinism* and *congruism*, by means of the ideas of the *medial science*; that is, of the means by which God sees *conditional futures*.” It would be useless to explain this jargon. In the middle of his course he took a fancy to become a Jesuit, and consulted his family on the subject. He embraced the idea in order to prepare himself for a place in the other world, believing that this had been promised in a prophecy of Francis Borgia, to all members of the Society of Jesus. “A man,” says he, “desirous of his eternal welfare would not neglect a passport of this nature; and I had not the information necessary to perceive the vanity and nullity of such a pledge.”

The answer of his relatives was an order to return immediately to Florence. His mother had no partiality for the Jesuits; and his uncles, whose ambition it was that he should rise to the highest dignities of the church, neglected nothing to hinder him from burying himself, with such hopes, in the den of a cloister. Scarcely had Ricci returned into Tuscany, in 1758, before he forgot his vocation, and thought of nothing

but concluding his studies at the university of Pisa, to which he was sent.

He pursued a course of theology at Florence, under the Benedictines of Mount Cassino, among whom P. Buonamici was at that time lecturer. He then became a Jansenist, or rather Augustinian. The sectaries of that name frequently join to their speculative and indifferent dogmas, the active and very important quality of being what is called *regalists*—that is, they make of religion what it really is, a matter of conscience, and leave the care of government to those who are charged with it. Augustin did not preach this doctrine any more than the other Christian writers of his time, who could not even doubt the horrible abuses which must in the course of ages arise from the infernal confusion of the temporal with the spiritual power. But the Jesuits had made themselves *decretalists*, that is to say, they were the apostles of these abuses; and the Jansenists were obliged to combat these errors not only with the body which sustained them, but with the Popes, for whose particular advantage they were calculated. It was only gradually that these sectaries came to the degree of hardihood requisite openly to affront the prejudices so solidly established on the superstitious habits of the one party, and the interested ambition of the other. Ricci, who in the course of his life ran round the whole circle of Jansenism, complains of it in these terms: "In the course of theology, the doctrine of Augustin was maintained with the greatest vigor; but the respect which they still had for certain decretals, and the fear of offending the Court of Rome, did not permit the Benedictines to say all that perhaps they thought, but which circumstances compelled them to keep silent."

Ricci was ordained priest in 1766, and appointed almost immediately canon and auditor to the nunciature of Tuscany.

In 1772, he inherited the property of Corso de Ricci, canon-penitentiary of the cathedral at Florence, a

relative of his father ; and though the brother of the last General of the Jesuits, he was very much opposed to the morality which they taught.

This circumstance brought Ricci in contact with the General of the Jesuits. After the suppression of the society, the General begged from him an asylum in his hotel at Florence, or in one of his country houses in Tuscany, for himself and a lay-brother. Ricci went to Poggio-Imperiale, to communicate the request to the Grand Duke Leopold, who said at once, "Let him come; it is of no consequence to me whether he sojourns in my States or elsewhere; but," added he laughing, "I don't think they will let him go." This answer he communicated to his relation, but the General was not allowed to take advantage of it. He was at first confined in the English college, under the care of Cardinal Andrew Corsini, and of Signor Foggini; but the congregation of Cardinals transferred him to the Castle of Angelo, where he underwent many examinations, and where without leaving it, he died. The death of the Pope who had suppressed the order, had preceded his. Ricci adds his testimony, that he was poisoned. Among his papers was found the following curious and interesting document.

"Narrative describing the last illness and death of Pope Clement XIV., sent by the Spanish Minister to his Court.

"In 1770, a country girl of Valentino, whose name was Bernadine Beruzzi, first began to spread her predictions respecting the Jesuits. There were a great number of other prophecies afloat, by means of which that society endeavored to rouse the superstition of the multitude for the evident purpose of restraining Clement XIV. from issuing the fatal decree of suppression. This Bernadine became notorious by her impostures. She predicted that the Society would not be extinguished; that one of its most celebrated members would be raised to the purple by Clement XIV. him-

self; that the Jesuits would in a short time be restored to the states from which they had been expelled; that the Pope would undergo a total change of sentiments towards them; with a variety of other falsities. On the 24th of March this deluded prophetess announced the death of Clement XIV., and persisted in repeating the false intelligence, until after being convinced that he was still alive, she returned to her predictions respecting the honors and favors prepared for the Jesuits. After the suppression of the society in August 1773, the prophecies still went on, in an altered tone; that the society would be re-established; and that the Pope and all those who had assisted him would die. Various punishments were denounced against them. The real propagators of these predictions were some Jesuits who systematically employed themselves in that object: *applica ut fiat systema* is a phrase used in a letter by these fanatics.

“Notwithstanding these rumors, the Pope lived in health and quiet more than eight months after the society had been abolished, though he always suspected the intrigues of the Jesuits, and mentioned his apprehensions. He resigned himself to the care of the Almighty, to whom he willingly offered himself a sacrifice, since, in suppressing the Jesuits, he had done what appeared to him absolutely necessary and just, after numerous and fervent prayers addressed to Heaven.

“The Pope was of a robust habit; his voice was strong and sonorous; he walked with the agility of a young man; his disposition was gay, and he carried his affability so far, that some persons considered him too familiar. His penetration was so quick, that a single word was sufficient to make him perceive the object and the end of a discourse addressed to him; he enjoyed a good appetite, and slept regularly every night. One day in the Holy Week of the year 1774, at the conclusion of dinner, Clement XIV. felt a great uneasiness of the chest, stomach, and intestines, accompanied with a chill. The first evil symptom

which showed itself was a weakness of voice, indicating some extraordinary kind of catarrh; in consequence of which it was resolved, that during divine service on Easter Day, the Pope's seat should be guarded against the cold air. Every body present observed the change in his voice. An inflammation of the mouth and throat soon succeeded, and gave him a great deal of pain, obliging him to keep his mouth almost always open. Then followed vomitings at intervals, with excessive pains in the bowels, renal obstruction, and a gradual weakness in the body and legs; so that he lost his sleep, and with it his alacrity in walking. He concealed these indications, though there is no doubt that he had resorted to the use of antidotes to the poison which he was persuaded had been administered to him. The Pope continued in this state during the months of May, June, and July, concealing the decay of his strength and his other symptoms, whilst a rumor was gaining ground that he could not long survive. Some persons went so far as to appoint the 16th of July as the day of his death; and after that time had passed over, October was fixed upon, in conformity with letters from Germany and other parts.

"In July he began the use of medicinal waters, which it was his annual custom to drink. It was remarked that this year his usual eruption, an acrid humor, did not come to his relief, in sufficient abundance, till the beginning of August; and he continued the habit of holding his mouth open, suffering also from weakness and the sore throat, together with excessive perspirations. He gave audiences to the ministers towards the end of August, notwithstanding the pain and feebleness occasioned by his illness, which had deprived him of his natural cheerfulness and affability; so that it required the united force of a cultivated understanding and a pious temper, to moderate the pressure of his bodily infirmities, and to restore his habitual urbanity. At this juncture a letter was received by the Secretary for the "Affairs of Jesuits," from the Vicar-general of Padua, informing him that some ex-jesuits had

appeared before him, and had indulged in the most violent imprecations against the Pope, asserting that the month of September would terminate his existence.

“An engraving was also published in Germany, exhibiting, on the left hand the figure of Death, with the likeness of Christ on a flag: on the right side was a staff, supporting a sort of tabernacle, in which was represented an ex-jesuit, dressed in the habiliments of a secular priest. At the top were the letters IHS, and at the bottom, the inscription *Sic finis erit!* Behold the end! There were, besides, some German verses, declaring that although the Jesuits had been compelled to alter their dress, they never would change their opinions, and immediately afterwards, the following text from 1 Kings, xxxv. 18.—qVoD bonVM est, In oCVLIIs sVIIs faCIet. The letters printed in capitals, when joined together, give the number MDCCLV V V VIII, 1774, the year in which Clement died.

“A fever supervened to those symptoms. This happened on the evening of the 10th September. It was accompanied by a sort of fainting, and an excess of debility, which seemed to threaten the speedy extinction of life. Ten ounces of blood were taken from him the same night, without any sign of inflammation; nor did his breathing, his chest, nor his bowels, give any cause for alarm. The coagulation of the blood took place in a satisfactory manner, notwithstanding the declared opinion of his physician, that the complaint arose from a deficiency of serum, caused by the profuse perspirations he had undergone. He was free from fever on the morning of the 11th, and continued so during the whole day; he had so much recovered on the 12th, that he took his usual walk on the 14th and 15th, and even thought himself equal to the fatigue of going to the Castel Gandolfo, where he seemed to enjoy the prospect of spending his time in the country, according to his custom at that season.

“But on the 15th he relapsed into his former weak-

ness, to which was added a deep sleep, night and day, till the 18th, when he awoke for a few minutes. On the 19th it was perceived that he had fever, together with a swelling of the abdomen and retention of water. Some blood was taken from him, which, however, gave no sign of inflammation. Besides which, the bowels, when pressed, caused him no uneasiness, and his breathing and chest were perfectly unencumbered. An access of fever in the evening made it necessary to repeat the bleeding, and the same operation was renewed on the 20th, although the pulse had become softer, and the swelling had abated. But the inflammation returned in the evening, and the hope of his amendment had so far disappeared, as to make it appear proper to present him with the viaticum.

“He passed a night of great agitation. On the 21st he was bled again. The fever, the swelling, and the retention still continued. At length the extreme unction was administered to him that evening, and about half past seven o'clock, on the morning of the 22d September, 1774, he surrendered his soul into the hands of its Author.

“About the same hour on the succeeding day, they proceeded to open and embalm the body, when the countenance was livid, the lips and nails were black, and the back had assumed a dark complexion. The abdomen was swelled, and the whole body emaciated, with a sort of cedar color approaching to the appearance of ashes, but which, nevertheless, allowed here and there to be seen some livid spots beneath the skin about the arms, the sides, and the lower extremities.

“On dissection, it was discovered that inflammation and gangrene had commenced in the left lobe of the lungs, adhering to the pleura; the opposite lobe was also inflamed. They were both loaded with blood; and when the knife was put into them a sanguineous discharge took place. The pericardium was opened, and the heart was diminished in size by the total want of those humors which are found in that membrane. Beneath the diaphragm, the stomach and intestines

were in the last stage of mortification. The œsophagus was inflamed throughout its whole interior, as far as the pylorus and the small intestines, with an evident tendency to gangrene, as well as the upper and lower divisions of the stomach; and all these parts, as well as the intestines, were covered over with a fluid which the physicians call black bile. The liver was small, and in its upper portion contained some particles of serum; the gall-bag was unusually distended, and was observed to contain a great quantity of atrabillious fluid; a large deposit of lymph had also taken place in the cavity of the belly; the dura mater was swelled, but presented no remarkable appearance in itself, except that of flaccidity. The intestines and viscera were placed in a vase, which burst open about an hour after sunset, filling the chamber with an insufferable stench, notwithstanding the embalming had only been finished a few hours before. On the next morning, 24th September, it was considered necessary to call in a physician; he found the smell unabated, the countenance swelled and discolored, and the hands quite black. On the back of the hands bladders had risen as high as two fingers, running across each other, and filled with lixivial matter, as if blistered with some boiling or ardent fluid.

“Besides this, a great quantity of serous humor, mixed with clotted blood, trickled down the lower side of the bed, and spread profusely over the floor. This circumstance very much surprised the professional attendants, especially considering that life had not been extinct four-and-twenty hours, and that every precaution had been resorted to, by cleansing the body and removing the viscera, as well as by embalming. It was consequently proposed to enclose the body in a coffin, but the master of the house suggested that such a step was likely to have a bad effect upon the public mind, and prevailed upon them to be satisfied with such means as their art afforded. The pontifical habiliments, when removed, carried away with them a large portion of the *skin* and even of the *cutis*. The

thumb nail on the right hand was detached, and on trying the other, every person present was convinced that the slightest movement was sufficient to separate all the nails in succession.

“In the dorsal region all the muscles were disunited and decomposed to such a degree, that towards the middle of the back and by the side of the spine, for the size of three fingers, there was found a large lump formed of the supercostal and intercostal muscles—on making two incisions the embalming was seen entire in the chest.

“Except on the legs and thighs, a sort of breaking out was observed all over the body. Various additional precautions were employed, and the incisions that were made caused a discharge of fluid which had the appearance of bubbles.

“It was also remarked, that a great part of the hair of the head had adhered to the pillow; and, in short, notwithstanding the body was embalmed afresh, and every endeavor was made by the assistants, it was found absolutely necessary to enclose it, after its removal to St. Peter’s, in spite of the suspicious caution with which the medical examiners expressed themselves. Many of the circumstances here related were rumored throughout Rome; and the people were shocked to the last degree, by the full persuasion that the Pope had been poisoned by means of the Acquetta, which is made in Calabria and Perugia, and which has the property of destroying life in the gradual manner I have described.

“Intelligent persons compared together the various prophecies which had been set afloat. In addition to which, we must bear in mind the false reports, the engravings, the threats, the internal commotion that seized Clement XIV., the inflammation of his throat and mouth, the gradual decay of his strength, the chill, the swelling of the belly, the renal obstruction, the hoarseness, the vomitings, and, finally, the livid discoloration of the flesh and nails, the loss of their tenacity, and that of his hair, the dry state of the heart, and

the other symptoms. After all these facts, it seems hardly conceivable that an inflammatory disorder, as the physicians named it, without some violent cause, should leave the blood without any indication of fever during nine successive days. Those persons thought themselves authorized in applying to the case of Clement XIV. the distinguishing signs of poison, pointed out by Paul Zacchia, a celebrated Roman physician."

CHAPTER II.

Pius VI. elected Pope.—Ricci refuses to enter into the Prelacy.—Correspondence of Ricci with the last General of the Jesuits.—Trial of the ex-General, and his Protestations of Innocence.—Ricci appointed Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Florence.—Efforts of the Grand Duke Leopold for the diffusion of Knowledge, and the opposition of the See of Rome.

ANGELO BRASCHI ascended the pontifical throne upon the death of Ganganelli. He owed his fortune to the General of the Jesuits, who had obtained for him the situation of Treasurer of the Court of Rome, under the reign of Clement XIII.; but he could not do any thing for the society, or its imprisoned chief. It is supposed that the Bourbon princes, before the dissolution of the Conclave, obtained from him a promise to that effect. When it was discovered that he was on the eve of publishing a decree, by which he annulled all the acts and rescripts granted by the deceased Pontiff, on the ground that the weakness of his intellect afforded opportunities of abusing his signature, these courts took the precaution of having the *five* or *six* last months specified. By this means, they hindered the epoch of the Brief of Suppression from being comprised in this measure, as might have been the case, if an indeterminate or too long a period had been named.

Ricci went to Rome in 1775, to attend to the rejoicing

consequent on the exaltation of the new Pope. His relation to the ex-general, the friendship of the Tuscan cardinal, Torrigiani, who was devoted to the Jesuits, his reputation for moderation and impartiality, which he had attained by his prudence in not taking any part in a quarrel then so important, caused him to be requested to enter into the prelacy. He resisted the temptation, giving these reasons for his disinclination: "I saw the danger of such a career, and having well examined the intrigues and cabals of the Court of Rome, I perceived that no where so much as there, is the possibility of continuing to be an honest man incompatible with the idea of what is called making one's fortune, and rising to elevated situations. If any one has succeeded there in preserving his honor, and remaining a Christian, after having entered into the career of the prelacy, he is the *rara avis in terris*. I made a resolution not even to think of it. So great a horror had I conceived for the *tricks and dissimulation which I saw openly practised in the prelacy*, that I could not conceal from my friends the disgust which I felt, at seeing the vileness and the courtier-like adulations to which they were compelled to debase themselves." This is said by a zealous Roman Catholic, and a prelate.

Ricci, during his stay at Rome, applied for liberty to see his confined relative; but in vain. In the course of the interview which he obtained with the Pope, Pius VI. could not conceal his chagrin at the ecclesiastical reforms carrying on by the House of Austria, and by Leopold. He then referred the matter of his request to Cardinal Giraud, who refused the required permission. But, in spite of all their precautions, Ricci contrived to carry on a correspondence with the General, by means of a soldier named Serafini, who was his guard; and, through his agency, he received from his unfortunate relative a copy of his examination at the Castle of Angelo. These documents furnish authentic evidence of the pertinacity with which the last leader of that formidable body denied the crimes

imputed to himself and his society. His imprisonment only terminated with his life.

The death of the ex-General of the Jesuits took place at the Castle of Angelo, in November, 1775. His confidence in his relative Scipio de Ricci appears to have been unbounded, if we may judge from the duty which he imposed upon him by his dying wish, that Ricci would recommend him to the Almighty by as many masses as he could say, seeing that he was deprived of about 22,000, which would have been performed had he expired as General of the Society of Jesuits.

After his visit to Rome, in 1775, Ricci returned to Florence. He had scarcely arrived, when he was made Vicar-General, and Vicar *ad causas* to the Archbishop Incontri. This prelate had been formerly an enemy to the Jesuits; but of late years he was one of their party. About the time when Ricci was created Vicar-General, he had given the liberty to the suppressed Jesuits to preach and confess; but their seditious behavior awoke the attention of the Government, and the Prince, by a letter to the bishops, adopted the circular of Clement XIV., by which these duties had been forbidden to the Jesuits.

In his new situation, Ricci soon displayed his Jansenist principles. At that period Rome saw with great displeasure the Grand Duke applying himself entirely to encourage education, and to destroy the reign of ignorance, which she had consolidated under her false pretensions. She opposed his views as much as she could; endeavored to put down the obnoxious catechism of Colbert, to stop the printing of the Ecclesiastical History of Racine, under the auspices of the Government; and made efforts to check an edition of Machiavel.

Among the services rendered by the Jansenists to philosophy, one of the most important was their contending for liberty of thought and writing. The publication of those writings in Tuscany was a benefit, so far as it sapped the despotism of the priesthood, and was a victory over that redoubtable power, of which

it was above all necessary to destroy the reputation of being invincible. A daring publication of Machiavel, that inflexible historian of the Popes and their court, whom Rome has particularly prohibited, and the free reading of whose works proved the contempt entertained of the Pontifical index—this act alone was a benefit to the world.

CHAPTER III.

Elevation of Scipio de Ricci to the Bishopric of Pistoia and Prato.—Discontent of the Pope at the Ecclesiastical Reforms of the Grand Duke Leopold.—Differences between the Civil and Spiritual Government of Tuscany, previous to the accession of Leopold.—The Senator Rucellai labors to free Tuscany from the despotism of the Court of Rome.—His Memoir on the famous Bull *In Cena Domini*.

IN 1780, the destiny of Ricci was changed by the death of Ippolite, Bishop of Pistoia. Ricci had no desire to undertake the labors of the Episcopal office, but he was in a manner forced to do so by his friends. He was received very flatteringly by the Pope, who, however, could not avoid repeating frequently: "Your Grand Duke will have to render an account to God, for so many of his actions which are hurtful to the Church." Ricci replied, "that he hoped he should always enjoy from the Duke full protection in favor of religion, and that he did not believe him capable of doing any thing against the interests of the Catholic Church." But the Pope would not be persuaded, and added in a grave tone, "You are young, but in time you will see it!" and with these words he dismissed him.

Before we proceed to the very curious and interesting details of the ecclesiastical abuses which Ricci was the great instrument in detecting, and of the reforms which he labored to establish, in opposition to the Court of Rome, amongst a corrupt and depraved

priesthood, it may assist the reader to collect, into one view, the History of the Ecclesiastical Reforms in Tuscany, which preceded the election of Ricci to the Bishopric of Pistoia and Prato.

The Medici had always been very desirous of the friendship of the Court of Rome, and had made it the principal object of their ambition to possess influence with it. The election of the Popes, in their time, had, in consequence, almost always depended on the will of that family; and all the Catholic princes, who had any points of importance to carry with the See of Rome, regularly endeavored to secure its good-will. In return for that species of glory, the Medici permitted the Popes to exercise an extensive authority in Tuscany.

The Emperor Francis followed the same course in the beginning of his reign; but in a short time Count Richecourt was sent from Vienna, to put himself at the head of the Regency, and to govern Tuscany. Powerfully aided by Senator Rucellai, Secretary of the Jurisdiction, or Rights of the Crown, a species of minister for affairs connected with the Catholic worship—a man distinguished for his learning, his integrity, his firmness, and his zeal for the Government—Richecourt resisted every attempt at usurpation on the part of the Court of Rome, and opposed without intermission its iniquitous pretensions. From that moment the two courts were at open war.

The first rupture which took place between them arose from the acquisitions of property in mortmain, which had been strictly forbidden, without the express permission of Government, by a law published in 1751. The Counsellor of State, Pompée Neri, and Senator Rucellai, accompanied the publication of this law with *instructions* and *explanations*, in regard to the necessity of preventing an increase of the prosperity of *artificial families*, meaning corporations, collegiate bodies, convents, &c. at the expense of *natural families*, or individuals, and the accumulation of wealth on the part of the clergy.

These *instructions* and *explanations*, with the law alluded to, are in the archives of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal at Florence.

This important measure, by means of which the insatiable cupidity of the priests was checked, was followed by an edict relating to the censorship of printed works, which the Government alleged ought to be submitted to the inspection of the civil power, instead of the Inquisitor General of Religion, who, until this period, had possessed the exclusive management of that powerful engine for retaining the Tuscans in ignorance.

To the complaints of Rome, the Regency of Tuscany replied by other complaints; accusing the Florentine Inquisition of abusing its authority, and the Inquisitor at Pisa of having almost murdered a man, whom he had succeeded in passing off as a heretic, although he had only been guilty of preventing his daughter from yielding to the seductions of the Inquisitor.

This event, with others of similar atrocity, induced the Emperor to order the prisons of the Inquisition to be shut, and to demand the consent of Rome to the addition of two lay assessors; a measure which destroyed the inviolable secrecy hitherto maintained in regard to the proceedings of that dreadful tribunal, and deprived it of the means of continuing its iniquities.

The reluctant consent of Rome was also procured to the suppression of several convents of nuns by the Government. The Emperor, being desirous of diminishing the excessive number of cures at Florence, on account of their inutility, their poverty, the indecency with which they were managed, the small number of parishioners, the short distance intervening between one church and another, and the great facility which they afforded to criminals of escaping from the arm of the law, ceased to nominate curates, and the parishes remained vacant.

Such is the substance of a very luminous memoir, drawn up by Rucellai, on the differences with the

Court of Rome. Mention is also made in it of the Inquisition, of which the Government had a short time before recognised the legality, upon condition that it should be organized on the same footing as at Venice. That tribunal at Florence had established, without any privilege to that effect being conferred upon it, not only prisons but an armed police at the public expense ; and it succeeded easily, notwithstanding measures taken to prevent it, in eluding every restriction which was attempted to be put on its authority. This was accomplished by means of a tacit understanding on the subject between the Inquisitor and the Archbishop, who remitted to the nunciature those cases of an inquisitorial nature, of which they did not choose that the Government should take cognizance by means of its assessors.

Piccolomini, Bishop of Pienza, pretending that he was subject to the Pope only, and not to the Emperor, had carried his extravagance so far as to excommunicate several of the officers of Government in his diocese, and among others, a communal chancellor of Pienza, Rutilus Gini. He had declared him liable to the censures of the Bull "*In Cæna Domini*," and as he had at the same time expressly forbidden those priests who were under his authority, to administer to Gini any of the sacraments of the Church, so long as he should persist in, what the Bishop termed, "the public scandal of obeying the Government," he was, from his inability to obtain absolution, prevented also from marrying.

After twelve years' endurance of his conduct, the Emperor had this prelate conducted to the frontiers of the Grand Duchy, under a guard of soldiers. Piccolomini's turbulence caused him to be received with much distinction by the Pope, Clement XIII., who warmly embraced his cause, and permitted him, within his own states, to excommunicate the Emperor and all his ministers, and to post up the sentence in the usual places.

There were also some differences between Tuscany and the Court of Rome, which arose out of certain

places being considered as asylums to which criminals might repair for evading the punishment of the law. These asylums the Government had frequently been obliged to violate for the sake of public justice ; and the Court of Rome had promised to conclude a concordat in regard to them, upon condition that they should all be respected by the civil authorities during the time the negotiations were pending. The Government kept its promise ; but no progress was made in the negotiation, and the asylums were full of criminals.

Such was the posture of affairs at the accession of Leopold to the Grand Ducal crown. Both parties were dreadfully exasperated. Tuscany looked upon Cardinal Torrigiani, Secretary of State, as an artful and faithless priest ; while Rome considered Rucellai as her mortal enemy.

The measures adopted by Leopold, and the motives which induced him to become a reformer of the external worship and ecclesiastical discipline of his States, demonstrate that he laid down as the principle of all his operations, an invariable resolution to separate distinctly what was spiritual from what was temporal ; never to intermeddle with the former in any respect, and at the same time never to permit the clergy to interfere in the smallest degree with the latter.

He was always willing to yield to the clergy in things which were strictly spiritual ; but at the same time he fully determined not to succumb to them in those which were not within their province. He wished that his bishops should apply directly to him in all their difficulties ; and showed himself ready to assist them to the utmost of his power, whenever a proper and useful end was in view. But they lost all claims to his protection, and even to his esteem, whenever they sought to interfere in matters belonging to the State, with which, he said, they had no concern.

Senator Rucellai, who, previous to the accession of Leopold to the throne of Tuscany, appears to have been the most consistent and determined enemy to the abuses of the See of Rome, drew up for the information

and guidance of his sovereign, several very important and interesting memoirs, not only on minute points of ecclesiastical discipline, but on the right of the spiritual power to interfere in matters of civil government. The most remarkable of these documents is that bearing date the 14th of July, 1769, in which Rucellai combats the pretensions of the Pope to interfere with the civil obedience of the priests, by the celebrated Bull *In Cæna Domini*. This memoir presents many points of peculiar interest to the whole Christian community; particularly at this period, when attempts are making to revive that dominion of the Roman priesthood, which might have been expected to have been swept away in the great conflict of opinions which has marked the last forty years.

Secretary Rucellai insists particularly upon the spirit which dictated that eternal monument of priestly ambition, the Bull *In Cæna*, upon the consequences of its being put in execution in Tuscany, on the means of opposing it, and of resisting at the same time the attempts of the Court of Rome against the rights of the Crown.

“A sovereign,” says he, “owes it to his own dignity, and to justice, to defend both himself and his rights against the invasion of the Bull *In Cæna*, and his subjects against the evil consequences of the measures with which it threatens them.”

The foundation of the Romish authority is contained in the “Body of Canon Law,” and especially in that part of it entitled “Pontifical Authority.” It is composed of bulls, letters, and replies of the Popes, and of decrees of Assemblies of his Court, and is the instrument by means of which Rome is enabled to convert the priesthood into an engine for the attainment of its political views, even in the States of others.

The Bull, known by the name, *In Cæna Domini*, is a summary of all those ecclesiastical laws, which tend to establish the despotism of the Court of Rome; a despotism of many ages, which was watered with the blood of millions of human creatures, founded with

the spoils of debased sovereigns, and raised on the ruins of overturned thrones. The principles of that Bull pervade, and are interwoven with, every part of the canon law, which is publicly taught in Romish seminaries.

The Bull *In Cœna* was the origin of those scandalous differences between the priesthood and the Empire, which happened in the eleventh century; differences totally unknown until the Church began to speak a language invented by the Court of Rome, in order to abuse with impunity the power of the keys, by means of the factions of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, which she brought forth and fostered. It was the origin also of the Inquisition, which it supported in its greatest enormities, of the crusades, of its censorships, interdicts, &c. &c.; all these it employed, first to balance, and then to pull down the different powers of the Empire; to strip it of one part of its States in Italy, and out of them to erect itself into a species of new monarchy.

Sovereigns not unfrequently deposed by their subjects, or rather by the subjects of the priesthood, and being incessantly threatened by fanatics who were devoted to the Church, were compelled by necessity to trust their defence to the pens of civilians. Their rights were ably supported by Pierre Cugnère, Paris, Pierre des Vignes, Marsile of Padua, and Dante, of all of whom the Court of Rome found little difficulty in getting rid, by declaring them attainted and convicted of heresy—at that period, the most dreadful of all crimes.

This attempt, which ended so unfortunately for its first promoters, was the origin and beginning of that religious reformation, which was finally adopted, with the exception of France, by every nation which was not inclined to remain in a state of slavery. The kings of France, who dreaded a reform, succeeded in avoiding it, by allowing their subjects to be harrassed by those civil wars which Rome lighted up under the pretext of religion; by maintaining endless disputes

with her; and at length by accepting a system of rights, professedly granted to them alone, under the name of the "Privileges of the French Church," which the Court of Rome abhors at heart fully as much as reform and heresy.

Italy, where the love of political liberty had rendered the people almost vassals of the Court of Rome, which they defended against the Emperors, not because they thought its pretensions well founded, but because it defended them in its turn, with the only weapons which could be advantageously employed against those of the Empire,—excommunications and interdicts,—Italy was subjected to all the abuses arising out of the sacerdotal system. From the mercantile spirit which the Italians of those times considered as the main spring, both of political principles and events, they conceived themselves interested in supporting the Court of Rome in every measure and enterprise, however unjust, in order to secure to it that supreme authority over the Catholic world, which attracted to them the riches and wealth of all Europe.

Rome, considered in a political point of view, was at that period the bulwark of Italian liberty; in a mercantile point of view, the source and cause of Italian prosperity. To maintain this character, it was necessary she should preserve her power, and this she could only do by means of the gross delusion of pontifical authority.

Scarcely had the new Italian Governments been rid of all fear, in regard to their independence from abroad, than they began to dread encroachment on the part of the sacerdotal body, and changed immediately their system and their conduct. Without openly declaring their opposition to the intolerable pretensions of the Court of Rome, they endeavored to invalidate them by means of new laws, all passed about the same period, whose object was to restrain the papal authority, and the personal immunities of the clergy.

To speak only of Tuscany. About that period, the bishops and the tribunals of the Inquisition were de-

prived of their prisons and armed servants, and steps were taken to prevent the latter, as much as possible, from doing mischief. The power of the bishops was limited, and the court of Rome restrained from appointing them according to her caprice. The temporal portion of the benefices became dependent on the public authority; opposition was indirectly made to the too frequent transference of property into the hands of the clergy, and measures were taken to subject any new acquisitions, which they might be enabled to make, to the same changes as other property similarly situated.

This indirect method, however, of opposing the Court of Rome, was soon neutralized by men so well skilled in the art of invention. She brought forward what she termed "Ecclesiastical Privilege,"—an occult right, comprehending every pretension which Rome has put forth to the present time, or which she may wish to put forth in future. By means of this pretended right, it is impossible to imagine a single human action, over which she may not exert her influence and authority, if it is in any conceivable way connected with her interests.

Every thing that was in the least degree inconsistent with, or contrary to this ecclesiastical privilege, either directly or indirectly, was from that moment comprised in the Bull *In Cæna*, and anathematized.

In regard to the laws of which we have just spoken; the Court of Rome maintained that they were null and void, because they had not been passed by legitimate authority. The states in which they had been promulgated were excommunicated, laid under an interdict, and attacked by the temporal forces of the reigning pontiffs, or by the subjects of other States, whom the Court of Rome had armed against their sovereigns, because these sovereigns had ordered the laws passed in favor of their subjects to be put in force.

Rome extended in this way its despotic authority over all the States of Italy, and in a special manner

over the Republic of Florence, until it adopted the system pursued by the Spanish civilians. These authorities, taking the pretensions of the Court of Rome for what they were, without any examination of their merits, guarded the Government against any abuse which might result from them, by demanding that every order or prohibition, and, generally speaking, every writing or document emanating from that court, whether of a spiritual or temporal nature, should be subjected to a censorship. It was the duty of the censors to examine whether they were contrary to any existing law of the State, and to take care that they should not become binding until, with due consent from the sovereign, they had been lawfully published in his dominions.

The necessity of the *Exequatur*, or *legal publication*, is the basis of the jurisdiction and rights of the Crown, in every state where the Roman religion prevails; and if the law were strictly executed, and every infraction of it regularly punished, the power of Rome would cease to be a subject of alarm, as well as a source of mischief.

The Court of Rome was the first to perceive the consequences which would necessarily result from enforcing this law, and consequently to condemn it. It declared all those who ordered its execution, or who should execute it themselves, to be under the censures of the Bull *In Cæna*; but even this produced not the desired effect, and Rome was obliged to tolerate the existence of the *Exequatur*.

All its cunning is now employed in endeavoring to elude it, which it sometimes does, even in the case of the most enlightened Governments. The Government ought, consequently, to be always on its guard, in order to detect its attempts, and to restrain the clergy who abet them.

The difficulty lay in finding out in what way those who transgressed the law of the *Exequatur* should be punished. Extra-judicial and summary punishments would be unjust, because they savor so much of arbi-

trary authority, which forms no part of a sovereign's rights.

Besides summary judgments are forcible means, which the stronger party employs against the weaker, because he cannot proceed against him in a legal manner; or, because those against whom he puts them in practice, are not liable to the operation of the law. Rucellai consequently does not judge it prudent to allow, even tacitly, that the clergy are in either of these predicaments; as its only effect would be to render the clergy more interesting and venerable in the eyes of the people, and to augment its authority by a diminution of that of the sovereign.

Rucellai was desirous that the priests should be punished as transgressors of the national laws, and that their obedience to the Bull *In Cæna* should cease to operate as an excuse for them; not because it was not published with the *Exequatur*, for *it has been published every where, is still published, and its principles taught in the schools, and inculcated on penitents by their confessors*, but because it was demonstratively unjust, subversive of all the rights of sovereignty, of law, of good order, and of public tranquillity.

The priests who are the principal executors of the Bull *In Cæna* in the penitentiary chair, are only permitted to decide according to the orders of their Bishop. The Bishop, in his turn, is only an instrument of the Court of Rome, and the wretched slave of her caprice ever since she succeeded, by means of false decretals, in changing into an oath of fidelity and vassalage, that profession of faith which is made before being admitted a member of the Church.

That oath is, in fact, a solemn promise, not only to be unfaithful to one's lawful sovereign, but even to betray him, as often as the interests of the Court of Rome may render it necessary.

Governments, by allowing such an oath to be taken, thereby recognise it as obligatory.

The priests who observe it, by putting in force the

Bull *In Cæna*, and refusing absolution to those who violate it, or who do not repent of having violated it, *are rebels to the Government of their country*, which has proscribed it; those who do not observe it, are *necessarily perjured*.

If the priests who have to decide between such disagreeable alternatives are objects of pity, much more so are those people deserving of compassion, who consider it their duty to surrender their judgment into the hands of their pastor.

Rucellai proposes, as a remedy for all these contradictions, to consider the Bull *In Cæna* as an unjust civil law, enacted by the Pope, which he would willingly put in force in the dominions of other sovereigns, and to forbid its direct or indirect publication.

It appeared preferable to Rucellai, that, by a declaration on the part of the ecclesiastical power itself, both the priests and their hearers should be freed from the obligation, *in foro conscientiæ*, of observing the Bull; but such a declaration could only emanate from the Pope, who would never make it, unless he were compelled to it by an union of all the Catholic Governments; or, unless he saw clearly, that it was as much his interest to annul it, as it was formerly his interest to establish it, in despite of religion and every thing that was sacred.

In the mean time, it will be necessary, says Rucellai, to adhere to the proposed law, which may be communicated to the Court of Rome, in order that it may prevent its publication by the only means in its power, the abrogation of the Bull. In the event of adopting this plan, it will be necessary to convince the Court of Rome that Government has taken its determination, and that no negotiation or species of treaty can take place on the subject."

The order of the Grand Duke to suppress entirely the Bull *In Cæna Domini*, and the command never to mention it in future in Tuscany, became the law of the land. But this law, before it could be brought into full force, had to be frequently renewed. In a cir-

cular letter of the Secretary of Jurisdiction, addressed to the bishop of Pistoia, Ricci's predecessor, in 1772, it is asserted that the Government had been apprised of the Bull *In Cæna*, proscribed in every Catholic state, being still affixed to the sacristies and confessionals of some churches of the Grand Duchy, and of some persons having had the hardihood to publish it from the pulpit or the altar, during the holy week.

An anecdote relating to this Bull will illustrate the retrogression which every pretended restoration causes in the people under the dominion of arbitrary legitimacy.

"In 1815, Ruffo, Archbishop of Naples, a relation of Cardinal Ruffo, published a list of reserved cases, among which were infractions of the Bull *In Cæna Domini*. Ferdinand IV. having been informed of this violation of the laws of the kingdom, ordered his minister for ecclesiastical affairs to cause the list of reserved cases to be suppressed by the Cardinal whose name it bore, and to reprimand in severe terms the monk who had drawn the prelate by his perfidious counsels into such an act of disobedience, threatening him at the same time with banishment from the Neapolitan territory, if he attempted again to disturb the public tranquillity. The minister, in executing the orders of his sovereign, employed one of his principal assistants, Luc Cagnazzi, a priest and archdeacon, to write to Cardinal Ruffo.

After the fall of the Neapolitan constitutional Government, when Ferdinand had been restored a third time to the plenitude of his sovereign good pleasure, Luc Cagnazzi was stripped of his office, solely because agreeably to the instructions of the minister, who only obeyed his sovereign, he had composed the letter in question: his dismissal was demanded by the Cardinal.

We have given this abstract of Rucellai's memoir, because the Bull *In Cæna* is actually invoked by the Court of Rome; because it regards it as still existing in full force, and because it grants to its ministers,

even now, power to absolve those who might be weak enough to believe that they had incurred its penalties. Rucellai adds, that all that he has proposed is merely a precautionary measure ; and that the sole political purpose of every measure relating to religious jurisdiction ought to be to put the clergy on a level with the laity, in as far as relates to the duties of citizens, and to abolish all their immunities, both real and personal ; and while that end remains unaccomplished, there will always be "a State within the State," and an everlasting source of controversy and dispute.

In order to attain sooner and more certainly this end in Tuscany, all the inferior prelates possessing jurisdiction, such as abbots, priors, guardians of convents, &c., should be obliged to exhibit their election-patents, to obtain their confirmation by Government, which should keep them as much within its control as possible. They should be subjected, as well as the bishops, to an oath of fidelity which should bring both them and their jurisdiction within the immediate influence of the civil authority. By the adoption of these measures, there will be nothing to dread from those prisons, which can scarcely be refused to several religious orders, and which are tolerated by the State. The special point is to prevent them from possessing clandestine prisons, which would be infinitely worse than allowing them legal ones ; or permitting them to elude the prohibition to possess them, by any of those equally criminal means, which their immorality may suggest to them. In the present state of things, the superiors of certain orders, which hold a middle rank between cynicism and stoicism, make frequently a very bad use of their prisons, concerning which no regulation has been made by the civil authority, and which they nevertheless cannot do without, because reason alone is insufficient to secure to them a proper degree of respect. It is therefore an indispensable duty of the Government to keep a watchful eye on these prisons, in order to insure the safety of those individuals who are obliged to live under a despotism,

more uncontrolled and absolute than that of an African tyrant.

The oath which must be required of them is only the means of recalling to the minds of the priests who take it, their natural duties as citizens—duties which are born with them, and from which the ecclesiastical profession which they have since adopted, cannot emancipate them. The oath must be so clear as that those who conscientiously believe it their duty to observe the Bull *In Cæna*, may refuse to take it, and also to accept the bishopricks and preferments which can only be obtained by taking it.

The sacerdotal power will remain invulnerable as long as those who exercise it believe that they have a right to be distinguished by peculiar privileges and immunities from their fellow-citizens. Every thing which reduces them to a level with the laity, diminishes in the mind of the public the idea of their independence, and consequently destroys what is in reality the true basis of Romish grandeur. The oath by which they will be bound will certainly produce that effect, and will besides furnish a strong ground for proceeding against them in case of their infringing the law.

The Court of Rome will oppose the taking of the new oath; and perhaps go so far as to prohibit its being taken; allow the bishopricks to remain vacant, and by that means render the administration of the sacraments more unfrequent and more difficult; but she will in that case have to contend with the whole body of priests, whose preferment and increase of revenue, *the only thing really interesting to them*, it may have been the means of checking. If the Court of Rome can once be convinced that the Government is determined not to yield in the struggle, nor even not to enter upon any negotiation for the purpose of accommodating matters, from which, by means of her usual chicanery, she could hope to obtain any advantage; she will give up the point, lest she should lose the whole of her rights in endeavoring to preserve a part

of them. From the moment that she takes such a step, the promises which her clergy may make to her, will appear to them only obligatory in so far as they are not in opposition to the oath which they had taken to Government with the consent of Rome herself.

During the five centuries that Romanists have been governed by pontifical authority, the Court of Rome has employed all the means in her power to fix as an irrevocable principle, that "the clergy are *not under the authority of the State* in which they reside," and that they are the *subjects of Rome alone*, in as far as relates to their persons and property. She never will dare to avow such a principle openly; all that she requires is, that the clergy on whom she inculcates that belief should be fully persuaded of its truth. They, on their part, pride themselves upon avowing themselves in public the subjects of Government, whenever it suits their interest to profess it—that is, whenever they are desirous either of bread or of honors. Rome, on her part, cannot condemn the oath which is proposed, on the score of novelty; for it has been taken in France and in other countries: nor can she condemn it on the score of its being imposed upon individuals who are not subject to the general laws of the kingdom; for such a proposition would be odious in the extreme, and rouse the attention, even of the most careless Governments, to such unheard-of impudence and audacity, especially at a time which is by no means favorable to any usurpation on the part of Rome.

CHAPTER IV.

Anxiety of the Grand-duke to procure information on the abuses of the Church.—Letter from Villensi, pointing out some necessary changes.—Letter from a Nun, complaining of the irregularities of her Convent.—Memoir of Rucellai, on the scandalous conduct of a Confessor.—Mendicant Priests.—Abolition of the privileges of Sanctuaries.—Letter of Rucellai on the abuses of the Religious Orders.

THE vigilant attention of Leopold to ecclesiastical abuses in his dominions, was kept alive by the communications which he invited and received from private persons.

Villensi, Friar of Santo Vito, addressed to the Grand-duke, in 1768, a letter, in which he suggests the best means of diminishing the abuses which disgraced the religious system.

He requests his Royal Highness to keep his name secret unless he wishes him to run the risk of being stoned to death. He proposes the extirpation of mendicity amongst the priesthood, which would render the people more active and industrious. The most vigorous and robust of the mendicants, says the Prior, might be sent to work in the *marshes*, and the lame and infirm deposited in houses of seclusion, for the maintenance of which, the convents ought to pay what they formerly disbursed, if we may believe them, in the way of charities.

He complains of the insults offered to the Councils of the Church by the numerous bulls and briefs which are constantly manufactured in the Datary's office at Rome, in favor of all who pay for them; and quotes, among other examples, the permission, contrary to the regulations passed by the Council of Trent, of saying mass before the age of twenty-five; that of contracting marriages within the prohibited degrees, &c. &c.

With regard to the Convents, it was his wish that their excessive wealth should be employed for the benefit of the State, and the support of the indigent; that the 300 crowns per annum which the carriage of the

Abbot cost, with the money expended on his domestics and furniture, should be appropriated to the use of the hospitals; that the monks should no longer go out, except in company with some one of their order, under pain of banishment; and that they should be prohibited from transacting the business of their establishments, and be released from the necessity of holding any intercourse with the laity, either male or female, in buying or selling; and that a secular person attached to the convents ought to be intrusted with the management of these matters, so as to allow the monks to devote their attention to the rules of their order. For the same reason, the monks should be released from the spiritual care of souls, which continually distracts their attention from the duties of their profession. They must also be prohibited from either demanding or accepting, from the Court of Rome, brevets or privileges which drain their purses, and authorize them to violate their by-laws. Superfluity of every kind ought to be banished from the churches and sacristies, the simplicity of religion only demanding what is absolutely necessary for the proper performance of its rites. The importunate and scandalous crowds of begging friars ought to be suppressed; the visits of generals, vicar-generals, provincials and inspectors, which have always been a great source of expense, and have never given rise to the least reform, prohibited; and no one allowed to make profession in any order, except at a very advanced age.

It would also be highly proper to suppress six or eight convents of nuns, there are more than sixty in Tuscany, and apply the funds arising from them to the maintenance of the poor. Those which remain ought to be governed by a layman, that their revenues, which are constantly augmenting by additional portions, may not decrease. It would be even more useful to dispose of the property of the female convents, and to form it into a bank; which, after paying twenty per cent. to government, would afford

them the two per cent. which they were in the habit of drawing from it.

The Prior complains bitterly of the great number of priests resident in Florence, who *neither knew, nor could do any thing beyond saying a mass!* Want, says he, compels them to employ themselves as intendants and preceptors in large families, to buy, to sell, to manage the domestic affairs of their masters; to conduct their children to the promenade, and even to take charge of a stable at so much per month, as if they were grooms; all in the hope of obtaining a benefice from the family by which they are employed. The proper method of remedying such disgraceful practices, is to refuse benefices to all those who had descended to such degrading services. The poorer priests might be allowed to confess the nuns, after the monks had been deprived of the office, and they would gain by that means what the latter *were in the habit of receiving for it!* Those ecclesiastics who are constantly in pursuit of honors and dignities; who busy themselves in intrigues to obtain them, and then recruit themselves from the fatigues of their despicable intrigues in places of public amusement; might undertake, *gratis*, the administration of hospitals, visit them for the purpose of seeing that the duties were properly discharged, &c. This would be a great saving to these useful establishments, and a subject of noble emulation for the young priests, who would thereby be led to consider the practice of virtue and zeal in the cause of beneficence, as the only way of accomplishing their desires.

The scandal which arises from those priests, denominated *coachmen*, and *postilions*, &c., from their *saying mass as if they were running post*, and who are constantly in a hurry to go from one church to another, in order to do as much business as possible, ought to be ended. The sacristies might also be served by laymen, which would diminish the useless and frightful number of clerks of the lower classes; who, like the two hundred clerks of the Metropolitan

Church, waste their time till the age of twenty-five, without learning any thing, and then get themselves consecrated as a reward for their pretended services. People would not then make it a subject of remark, that Florence, out of a population of 80,000 inhabitants, maintained 3000 priests, whilst out of a population of 400,000 at Vienna, there are only 300. The theatres, coffee-houses, and other places frequented by monks, would also be less encumbered with their presence.

He is also anxious that the Archbishop of Florence should keep a watchful eye on *the tax-office for bulls and benefices*, in order to put an end to every thing in the shape of arbitrary impositions, by means of an invariable rate for each act of grace.

He demands a reform of the festivals. By transferring the observance of the festivals to the Sunday following the day on which they are held, twenty-five days more labor could be performed in the course of the year ; and the twenty vigils, which occasion such an enormous expense, would be suppressed ; while the festivals would be more decently observed.

The other letter to the Grand Duke exhibits, in a singular manner, the enormities committed in the female convents through Tuscany. It was addressed to Leopold by a nun of Castiglion Fiorentino ; and led the way to those investigations of the scandalous abuses, by which Ricci subsequently rendered his ecclesiastical career so remarkable.

“ Our convent,” she says, “ is under the direction of the Minor Observatines, and is consequently in a state of the greatest irregularity and disorder. The superior and the old nuns confine themselves entirely to their cells, and occupy themselves in various employments, without paying the least attention to what goes on between the other nuns and those persons who have the privilege of admission within the walls of the cloister. I had for a long time observed that the factor of the convent carried on intrigues with the young nuns, and that his intercourse

with one of them was indecent in the extreme. In order, however, not to form too hasty and unjust a judgment of them, I concealed myself in a neighboring apartment, and discovered that they were in the habit of committing the most indecent actions. Since that time, whenever the factor makes his appearance, I always remain, under pretence of age, being nearly fifty, below with my work, and walk backwards and forwards, in order not to allow him an opportunity of being alone with the nuns. The Abbess was the means of engaging that factor, which she did almost by force, against the opinion of others who thought him too young. She is very angry with me, and will certainly not fail to punish me in some way or other.

“I cannot complain to the Provincial; for the monks will not listen to any complaints of the kind. Their answer uniformly is, when any are made, that they proceed from malignity and calumny; while those who speak to them concerning them, are declared to be foolish, scandalous, and turbulent persons, who spy the actions of others, who do not behave like true nuns, and who ought to be imprisoned, &c. The nuns are therefore obliged either to allow such enormous irregularities to go unchecked, or to run the risk of imprisonment for life, under some false pretext. No one cares whether a nun remains alone with the factor. If any amusement is going forward, the factor is invited to the convent, where he shuts himself up in a room with one of them, and sometimes with two, if they are intimate with him.

“The monks, to insure themselves against dislike on the part of the nuns, overlook the whole; for our confessor, who is always selected from that body, is supported by the nuns, who must supply him with every thing which he desires, during the time that he is obliged to occupy a dwelling in the neighborhood of the convent. Finding themselves well provided with every thing which they want, these monks do not give themselves the least trouble about the abuses which prevail in the convents. There are even some of them

who make love to the nuns, and render them much more impudent than the lay members who are guilty of the same practices. Some years ago, a monk was found in the convent during the night, and expelled from it by the bailiffs. The affair, in consequence, became universally known."

The nun is of opinion, that the case of the factor was much more blameable, inasmuch as his duties provided him with constant opportunities of sinning. She therefore supplicates the Grand Duke to order a nobleman, on whom the factor was dependent, to recall him to Florence, without allowing it to appear that he was at all acquainted with the irregularity of his conduct: "For," says she, "if what I now write to you were known, it would be sufficient to cause me to be poisoned by my companions, who are totally given up to vice." She requests the prince to speak to the provincial, and to tell him, that "if she is punished under any pretext whatever, he will take from him the direction of the convent, and transfer it to the bishop."

The above letter is dated May, 1770, from the convent of Jerome, at Castiglion Fiorentino, and signed *Lucrece Leonide Beroardi*.

Leopold dismissed the factor.

The scandalous wickedness of some members of the priesthood, under the cloak of religion, and by a perversion of its authority, was known to the grand duke in 1766. Senator Rucellai then addressed to his Prince a memoir relating to the intrigues of the Tuscan Inquisitors, of the higher orders of the clergy of the Grand Duchy, of the Nunciature at Florence, and of the Court of Rome; all of whom labored in concert to elude the wise laws of the late Emperor.

A lady of the name of *Maria Catherine Barni*, of *Santa Croce*, declared on her death-bed that she had been seduced through the medium of confession, and that she had, during twelve years, maintained a criminal intercourse with a priest, *Pierre Pacchiani*, Prior of *St. Martin* at *Castel-Franco-di-Sotto*, who was her

confessor. She denounced him to the Bishop of Miniato, May, 1764.

He had assured her that, by means of the supernatural light which he had received from Jesus and the Holy Virgin, he was perfectly certain that neither of them were guilty of sin in carrying on that correspondence.

Maria Magdalen Sicini, of Santa Croce, whom she had pointed out as being in the same predicament with herself, deposed; that generally about an hour after the confession was over, Pacchiani had a criminal intercourse with her in the vestry; that she knew well enough that she was committing sin, and that she made confession of it afterwards to Pacchiani himself, who excused her because it had been done with good intentions.

This lady named another, Victoire Benedetti, who, at her examination, made a declaration to the same effect; only adding, that she had not had the least scruple in regard to her connexion with Pacchiani.

The trial of that priest for heretical propositions belonged properly to the Inquisition; but, after much intrigue and manœuvring, the affair got into the hands of the Archbishop; next into those of the Nuncio; then into those of the Court of Rome; and Pacchiani, who had been dismissed, finally returned to his parish.

The Government was made perfectly acquainted with the whole transaction; but in such a way as to be unable to take any notice of it. It was also aware that Pacchiani had been guilty of several disgraceful tricks; that he was in the habit of compelling the dying to make wills in his favor, by threats of refusing to administer the sacraments; that he had used his endeavors to prevent Barni from making any confession on her death-bed; that his Bishop had been obliged to imprison him, in order to remove him from a convent of nuns; and that he had delivered from the pulpit a discourse full of sedition. The Grand Duke caused him to be dismissed.

The scandal brought on the doctrines and professors

of religion, by the wretchedness and demoralization of the mendicant priests, was brought before the Grand Duke by Rucellai, in 1766. He replied to the inquiries of his sovereign, by detailing various considerations, as to the best means of diminishing the excessive number of those wandering drones, who, without either nomination or benefice, swarmed in Tuscany, and especially at Florence, on account of the college or seminary of the cathedral. That seminary was composed of a hundred and thirty young men, who were employed in the service of the church, and of whom no fewer than sixty-six were annually consecrated, as a reward for their services. Rucellai was of opinion that a diminution of the number of young men in the seminary, would give rise to a great outcry, and would fail in accomplishing the end in view. It is the patrimony of the Church which we must diminish, says he, if we wish to diminish the number of those who live by it; and who would become disciples of Mohamed, if the revenues which they enjoy were appropriated to Mussulmans. A diminution of the wealth of the clergy, under existing circumstances, was altogether impossible, without a complete overthrow of the political system. To fix it definitively in such a way as to prevent its increase, appeared to him extremely difficult, on account of the tendency of every body of men towards prosperity, and more especially of every sacerdotal body; it being but too true, that superstition and wealth go hand in hand together.

The only part of this measure which could have been easily executed, was prohibiting the priests from accepting additional foundations for perpetual masses, which they increased in number by every pious fraud which they could devise. These foundations infected Florence, more than any other place, with the refuse of the clergy, who were attracted from the neighboring dioceses by the profits arising from the masses.

There was also another method of accomplishing the object in view; to unite all the simple benefices and obligations, &c., upon which the useless part of

the clergy lived, and who, in this way, would soon have disappeared; but the consent of Rome was necessary to the adoption of that measure; and it would, undoubtedly, have refused to co-operate in the execution of a plan contrary to its policy, prejudicial to its finances, and destructive of its authority.

The Senator concludes by giving it as his opinion, that it would be much better to make use of the means already at the disposal of Government,—which, though they might be slow in accomplishing the end in view, would attain it much more certainly and quietly;—considering always the increasing wealth of the clergy as an evil necessarily connected with the present system—as a malady inseparable from the political body. For this purpose it will be necessary, says he, to oppose, both constantly and vigorously, that maxim of the Church, so contrary to the Gospel, to the Councils, and to the writings of the Fathers, “that the Church forms a State within the State;” to treat the persons and property of ecclesiastics in the same way as the persons and property of other citizens; to return to those Christian times, during which the property of the Church was considered as public property, belonging to the State, and entirely at the disposal of the civil authority. The clergy and their property were not more dangerous to the State, than other wealthy persons and their property; because they were then undistinguished by any prerogatives, privileges, or immunities. Rucellai counselled Leopold to put his authority in force; to exercise a real jurisdiction over his clergy, by exercising it over their property; to prevent the augmentation of their territorial wealth, by applying the law of the late Emperor, concerning the acquisition of property in mortmain, which had already restored much land to commerce and circulation; to keep the clergy in check by the dread of extra-judicial and summary sentences of banishment and sequestration against their persons and revenues; and to avoid endless and fatal quarrels with the Court of Rome.

One of the greatest abuses of the power of the Church in Tuscany, and the most shameful obstacle to the progress of civil justice, was the number of asylums reputed sacred, whose privileges had filled the churches of Tuscany with vagabonds and disturbances. The Grand Duke was perfectly aware of his right and authority to abolish this abuse, without the consent or intervention of any one ; but he was willing to concede, and proposed a concordat, which should confer upon him the same privileges which had been bestowed on the other Catholic powers, or the adoption of some provisional measure. He was determined not to suffer any longer, in his dominions, disorders which Rome herself, notwithstanding her desire to protect them in those of others, would not tolerate in her own ; and which, being beneficial to criminals only, were a disgrace both to religion and to the Government. A memoir of Rucellai, of 1764, shows that Tuscany was completely filled with churches. Florence alone reckoned 320, of which the farthest from one another were not above 300 paces ; they occupied one half of the ground which had been built upon in the town, and had enjoyed for more than 163 years all the privileges granted by the Bulls of the different Popes.

Leopold caused the reflections which Rucellai had made on the concordats concluded by Rome, relative to asylums, with Naples in 1741, with Sardinia and Piedmont in 1742, and with Austria for the states of Lombardy in 1757, to be submitted to his consideration. The inconveniences of those concordats, and of every concordat whatsoever, by means of which the Court of Rome succeeded in procuring from sovereigns a recognition of the legality of the pretended rights which are the object of the treaty, are clearly pointed out in that document. Rucellai preferred to these different concordats, the scheme of a provisional regulation presented by the Abbé Neri.

That scheme, which received Leopold's consent did not admit of the inviolability of the asylums in any

case whatever ; but provided for the remission of capital and mutilating punishments, in the case of those who might be taken from the asylums ; and also, for the remission of a third part of every other punishment of a lesser degree. By this means the objection was removed which existed in regard to the exceptions and explanations admitted in the concordats ; exceptions of which the tortuous policy of the Court of Rome, which decided upon them, enabled her always to take advantage, and of which she never permitted any one to foresee the intention.

The abolition of capital punishments would certainly, says Rucellai, have displeased those who work upon punishment as the basis of all government, and the main spring of every political system. Neri observes that capital punishments had been dispensed with in several States, without the least inconvenience ; and that it is the certainty of punishment and not the measure of it, which restrains mankind within the line of their duty, and checks the commission of crime.

The Grand Duke, in consequence, gave orders to Baron Odile, his minister at Rome, to commence negotiations on this subject with zeal and promptitude, and not to rest satisfied either with the words, or the dilatory and uncertain promises, with which that court always colors its refusals. The reiterated orders and numerous couriers of Leopold could not, however, get any thing satisfactory from the Cardinal Secretary of State, to whom he caused it to be announced, that if he would not condescend upon a clear and categorical answer, he was determined to proceed with it.

The court of Rome in spite of the continued remonstrances of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, evaded for several years any settlement of the question of asylums. Leopold at last determined to act for himself ; and the year 1769 was remarkable for the great reform introduced by him, which at length restored to Justice both the strength and the liberty which she required for the prevention of crime, by the salutary terrors of unavoidable punishment, and re-established order and security

in his States, under the protection of impartial laws, which allowed neither privilege nor exemption.

The Grand Duke who had communicated to the Court of Austria the documents which related to the differences existing between him and the Pope in regard to asylums, and the plan which he had formed for repairing the mischief which the inviolability of these refuges had engendered, received the approbation of the Empress; and consequently, he informed the Court of Rome, that he had caused the malefactors in his dominions to be taken from the asylums and immured in prisons.

On the same day his plan was put in execution at Florence, at Sienna, and at Grosseto, and the next day in the rest of the Grand Duchy.

Leopold, surrounded with the most learned and enlightened persons in Tuscany, and well skilled himself in ecclesiastical history, was perfectly aware that during the first nine centuries of the Church, the clergy took no part in civil matters beyond the intercession of the bishops and priests with the Supreme Authority, for some diminution of the punishment incurred by criminals.

The decree of Gratian was the first which claimed for the ecclesiastical body the power of judging persons who were accused of crimes; but it was not till 1591, that Gregory XIV. originated the abuse and scandal of asylums, by pointing out eight crimes to which that privilege could not be accorded, and by ordaining that the ecclesiastical tribunals should thenceforth finally decide whether those who had taken refuge were or were not within the excepted cases.

The privilege of asylums was every where diminished: in France, even in the time of Leopold, the Church did not interfere in behalf of criminals; and in Germany very seldom. In the Low Countries, as well as in Italy, very vigorous measures had been taken to do away with the abuse, which nevertheless has always been more slow in these cases than other

Catholic countries, on account of its propinquity to Rome. Venice had, however, given the example, and it had been followed by Lombardy, Turin, Parma, Naples, and even by the Pontifical States.

Tuscany, therefore, was the only country in which the most atrocious crimes, as well as the most trifling offences, remained not only unpunished, but even encouraged and protected by the privilege of the churches. Assassins, fratricides, poisoners, incendiaries, deserters, robbers, sons of the nobility who wished to withdraw themselves from paternal authority; monks who had subjected themselves to punishment from their superiors, or soldiers from their officers; those who had contracted debts, &c. &c.—all took refuge in the same asylum, were all equally well received, and lived in a state of the greatest disorder.

They frequently disturbed the performance of divine service, and often maltreated the clergy; committed crime after crime, insulted and even wounded those who attended the church, where they had been received without shame, and were supported and openly defended. There they kept a school for the instruction of the young in robbery and swindling, sold contraband goods and stolen wares. They had prostitutes among them, slept *pêle-mêle* under the porticoes, and not unfrequently had children born to them during the time that they remained in the asylum. They ate, drank, worked at their trades, and kept open shop in the churches. They wore concealed arms, arrested the passengers in order to ransom them, and fired at the agents of the police if they happened to pass by. They sallied out secretly to commit fresh robberies and assassinations, and returned within the sanctuary of the church, in order to enjoy, without fear, the protection which the temple and its ministers granted them.

The convents were, however, the greatest receptacles of criminals, whom the monks treated remarkably well, on account of the benefit which they derived from their domestic labors, and because they could use them

as instruments for the commission of those frauds which they were desirous of executing, and as apologies for those of which *they were themselves guilty*, and which they failed not to place to the credit of their guests. They employed them particularly in contraband trade for the use of the convent.

A short time previous to the reform of the asylum, the monks of the convent of Spirito, at Florence, carried their impudence so far, as to allot a chamber among the novices to a robber who had attempted to kill his own brother.

Such was the deplorable state of that beautiful part of Italy. There were, on the suppression of the asylums, eighty refugees, of whom a third had been guilty of wilful murder, and the rest, either for cutting or maiming the inhabitants, or of committing extensive robberies. Several of them had made their escape from the galleys.

It was determined, in consequence, not to allow them any longer the privilege of asylum, and a law was passed, which enjoined the public authority to seize, for the future, every refugee, in whatever asylum he might be found—civil debtors, not fraudulent bankrupts, only excepted—and to carry him before the ordinary tribunals, for the purpose of being sentenced, if sufficient cause was shown, to ten years' confinement in irons, in case of his crime deserving capital punishment; to five, if it deserved ten; and so on, always mitigating the punishment, out of regard to the spot on which he had been apprehended. This was the only method of managing the affair, so as to preserve the rights of the sovereign entire, to show respect for the privileges of the churches, and to put an end to irregularities and crimes, which the honor, the dignity, and even the conscience of the prince, forbade him to tolerate any longer.

Another document illustrative of the ecclesiastical condition of Tuscany, before the administration of Ricci, contains some curious details of abuses, both as it regards the number and discipline of the religious

orders. It is a letter of Rucellai, December, 1770, written in reply to some questions which the Grand Duke had addressed to him.

Leopold had requested him to make out plans, 1, for diminishing as quickly as possible the number of convents in Tuscany, and of the individuals inhabiting them, and also for preventing foreigners from becoming inmates of them; 2, for the prevention of religious vows, at an earlier age than twenty-four years; 3, for prohibiting mendicants of religious orders from receiving novices before the age of sixteen or eighteen; 4, for suppressing all convents of mendicant orders containing fewer than twelve persons; 5, for enabling the secular priests only, and especially the cufates, to preach in the country, and for preventing the monks from exercising that function; 6, for excluding the monks from the direction of female convents, which ought to be regulated in spiritual matters by the ordinaries only.

Rucellai says in reply:—"The support and duration of religious orders depend partly on the success of the monks in procuring recruits, and partly on the interest which families have in supplying them with them. This could not possibly be the case if perpetual vows were not taken at so early an age as sixteen; at an age which has no safeguard either against seduction or violence. The monks accordingly showed themselves particularly anxious, at the Council of Trent, to retain this privilege, in order, as they said, to prevent the destruction of the monastic establishments.

This avowal, on their part, points out the line of conduct which ought to be adopted by Government: for as the vows which the individual takes upon him, deprive him of various rights which he formerly possessed, and free him, much to the prejudice of his fellow-citizens and of his country, according to the tenor of the Canon law, from the performance of various duties which he was bound to discharge to society, the temporal or civil power ought to regulate every thing relating to solemn vows and professions, in the same

manner that it regulates all other civil acts, and to limit and modify them agreeably to what its existence and its interests appear to require.

It is absolutely necessary that the sovereign should have it in his power to prohibit the putting on of the religious habit without his express permission. Rome, however, has always opposed such an exercise of authority, to the utmost of her power. She saw clearly that the establishment of such a regulation would, in the end, destroy, or at least greatly weaken, her religious communities, "which she justly regards as so many collective bodies of her subjects; as armed legions, which she maintains abroad at the expense of the countries in which they so blindly execute her orders. These orders she veils with the mantle of religion, and has the art of getting them as well executed by those to whom she intrusts them, as if they had a personal interest in doing what not unfrequently exposes them to all the vengeance of their Governments."

Rome will be just as clamorous against the adoption of any measures for regulating the time and mode of taking vows, as if these measures were offensive to the Almighty himself.

Rucellai would not fix any age, as the lawful one, for the solemn profession of vows, unless Rome consented to it; this he does not believe that she would do, even though she were compelled, for the purpose of giving a refusal, to recognise the superior authority of the Council of Trent, to which she would probably have recourse under such circumstances, although she has violated its decisions in so many others. The ulterior obligation of vows, taken canonically at the age of sixteen, would therefore still remain; while the sovereign would only have succeeded in obliging his subjects to deceive him.

He proposes to prohibit the adoption of the ecclesiastical and religious habit, under any pretext whatever, before the age of twenty-one.

Children who submit to the tonsure at the age of

seven, and young people who enter the convent at fifteen, although not bound by any particular obligation, do not afterwards leave off their religious profession. "That profession, in the present state of things, is one which is expressly made for those whom circumstances had designed for a life of industry; namely, for the great mass of mankind. From the age of seven or ten, till twenty-four, young people, destined for profession, are only taught the service of the church, a little Latin, and some theological definitions—a kind of knowledge which cannot be exchanged to much pecuniary advantage, except by the clergy." They must embrace this profession, therefore, either voluntarily or by force; and even when they are totally incapable, and their conduct has been such as to render them utterly unworthy of being admitted into it, the bishops, through compassion for them and their family, make no scruple in letting them pass.

One might almost say, that they had become monks or priests, from the very moment they put on the livery of the Church, which, by depriving them of all other means of making a livelihood, necessarily condemns them to the exercise of the ecclesiastical profession. Thus they have bound themselves to become priests when they should be of age to embrace the profession, in the same way as an apprenticed mason, by exercising his trade in his early years, binds himself to it for the rest of his life. Rucellai shows that his scheme, so fit for rooting out, at a single blow, the whole of the inferior clergy—the greatest part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy—would give great offence to the Court of Rome, terrify the people, and be productive of embarrassment to the Government.

In regard to diminishing the number of nuns, he is of opinion, that nothing can be done in that way without previously facilitating marriages, or having procured for women some middle resource between marriage and religious profession—a resource which did not exist in Tuscany. The Government will therefore be obliged to rest contented, with prohibiting the

superiors from receiving more novices than they have the means of supporting, the number of which ought to be fixed; as well as from receiving any portion along with them at the time of taking the vows.

If the sole question relate to diminishing the number of monks, great care ought to be taken in endeavoring to accomplish that object, lest the means employed should have any tendency to fill the Tuscan convents with foreign monks; to incite the Tuscans to adopt the profession elsewhere; or, finally, to prevent young students from other countries from repairing for their education to the Tuscan monasteries.

The step which ought to be adopted, is to cause an exact account to be given of the temporal wealth of the monks; and when that has been procured, to fix the precise number of individuals whom they are able to maintain, and, consequently, to receive in each establishment. This ought to be accompanied by an order to observe strictly the injunctions of the Bulls, the rules, and institutes of the different orders; by which means those small convents in the country, which are prohibited by the Bulls, and which, besides being totally useless to religion, are a source of scandal to the people, and of impoverishment to a very valuable class of the community, the villagers, will be at length abolished. The funds arising from this source ought, whatever may be the clamors of the Court of Rome, to be appropriated to beneficent institutions, as is the case at Venice and other places.

There are various religious orders who live solely by begging alms; such as the Capuchins, the Observantines, the Barefooted Carmelites, the Augustinians, and others, who, though originally mendicants, scarcely retain any trace of their profession, beyond the mere name and the pontifical privilege attached to it. Francis intended his disciples to live by the labor of their hands, and only to implore the aids of charity when they found themselves unable to earn what was necessary for their subsistence. The Pope and the theologians declared, that the only labor which had been ordained

for them was entirely spiritual; while the Council of Trent, departing from the strictness of their rule, gave them power, like the rest of the mendicant orders, the Capuchins and Observantines only excepted, to acquire and possess property. The income of those monks must be exactly ascertained, by calculating the product arising from their masses, the charities which they receive, and the profit accruing from the direction of the convents. When that has been done, their numbers must be restrained, and every species of begging, especially in the country, forbidden, as well as all the pious frauds which they employ in the churches for making money; such as enrolment in the third order, devotion to the name of Jesus, to Anthony, &c.

Wherever the existing revenues are found insufficient to maintain such a number of those parasitical plants as it may have been deemed necessary to support, notwithstanding the progress of civilization, Rucellai advised the Government to make up the deficiency by means of pensions. Society will thus purchase, says he, by the sacrifice of a small sum of money, a deliverance from the dangerous influence, both in a moral and political point of view, to which the scandalous beggary of the clergy subjects it. Besides, by giving them a pension, the Government will acquire an authority over them, which it never could have obtained in any other way, and will have the power to diminish their numbers as it may deem proper, by diminishing their salaries."

CHAPTER V.

Examination of Ricci before Pius VI.—Ricci in his Diocess.—Disorders of the Dominicans.—Disputes of Ricci with the Dominicans on the subject of their Convents.—Contests with the Ex-Jesuits.—Superstition of the Sacred Heart.—Different attempts at Reform.

RICCI underwent the customary examination of a bishop before Pius VI. The ceremony appears to have been very disagreeable to him, for he afterwards repeatedly complained of its humiliating nature, and of the conduct of the Court of Rome in insisting on this and similar things, to bring the bishops more completely under its authority. In this examination the candidates for episcopal orders are obliged to be on their knees, in the midst of a numerous assembly, presided over by the Pope, while the examining prelates, chosen from the regular priests, question them. Ricci says: "Whoever knows the formalities, knows that the examiners communicate the questions beforehand, and even tell them from what author they wish the answers to be taken; because they have no less fear of being themselves embarrassed, and making a sorry appearance before the assembly, than the examined can have; who, if he blunder a little, is always sure of being excused." The ceremony of his consecration, as Bishop of Pistoia and Prato, took place on the 24th of June, 1780.

Prato had formerly been divided from Pistoia. "At the commencement of the seventeenth century," says Ricci, "during the discussions on the dismemberment of the diocese of Pistoia, the city of Prato was scarcely recovered from the frightful pillage which it had suffered, when it was taken by the soldiers led by the Cardinal John dé Medici, afterwards Leo X., against his country, the Republic of Florence. This Cardinal, who was as bad a citizen as he was a cruel instrument of the projects of Julius II. whom he served as legate, placed himself, it is said, at a short distance from the city, whilst the soldiers assaulted it. He

there ran great risk of being killed by a shot from a culverin, which struck the window, from which, like another Nero, he enjoyed the frightful spectacle. Even in my time they exhibited to the curious, in the convent of Anne, near Prato, both the window and a part of the wall broken by the shot. They show also, in the middle of the court of the ancient house of the Provosts, which I afterwards used as my episcopal residence, a large well, now filled up, which is recorded to have swallowed up about six hundred innocent victims to the fury of the soldiers, as well women as children and old men, which the sanctity of the church, in which they had taken refuge, could not save from the massacre. Their bodies, dragged away from the precincts of the temple, had been heaped together, like the flesh of the shambles, and were thrown into this horrible grave, till it became necessary hastily to clear the place of so many carcasses, when the victor Cardinal was about to make his triumphant entry. That prince of the church, by a rare act of generosity, granted his pardon to a small number of unhappy wretches, who remained alive after that fearful catastrophe."

Ricci had not yet gone to Pistoia, when he learned that a canon of that city had been imprisoned for robbery; and before leaving Florence, he obtained an order from the Grand Duke, that the culprit should be shut up in his convent to do penance there. By this means he avoided a proceeding which would have been scandalous to the clergy.

His first care, on arriving at Pistoia, was to employ all the means in his power to reform the Dominican nuns of the convent of Lucia. Before his time, the Bishop Alamanni had been obliged, in 1764, to take the spiritual management of the convents of Catherine and Lucia at Pistoia into his own hands, on account of the disorders reigning in them. He had received the express order of his Government to do so, and had obtained the consent of the College of Cardinals, the See of Rome being at that time vacant. He

deemed it necessary, at the same time, to remove from the convent the Dominican monks, who had been their former directors. The nuns of Lucia were so much affected by this unexpected attack, that he never could succeed in reducing them to obedience. After his death, the Bishop Ippoliti, for four entire years labored in vain for the accomplishment of the same object. These unhappy victims of monachal seduction obstinately refused to listen to the authority of their pastor; and some of them preferred giving up the sacraments altogether, to receiving them from the hands of the secular or regular clergy, whom the Bishop had marked out to administer, after the Prince had prohibited the Dominicans from approaching them. There was among them a novice who never would make her vows before the Bishop, because she would not promise obedience to any one but the General of the Dominicans.

When Ricci complained at Rome of these disorders to the Pope, and avowed his suspicions that the monks alone were the cause of so much obstinacy on the part of the nuns: "Can you doubt it?" said Pius VI.; and immediately afterwards he uttered a violent sally against the General of the Dominicans, whom he painted as a troublesome and obstinate man. He charged Ricci to assure the nuns, that it was his formal intention to leave them, for the future, subject to their bishop, and not to the friars; and that they should have no scruple, on account of the obedience which they had promised to their General.

Fortified by this pontifical authority, the new Bishop gradually brought the Dominican nuns under his jurisdiction; made them accept a new confessor, and even prevailed upon the novice to make her vows. He confesses, however, that there was need of constant vigilance to guard against the underhand intriguing of the Dominican friars.

In Prato, he abridged their power, and made them submit to his episcopal jurisdiction; but the affront which wounded them to the quick, was an order

which he issued, that no friar should go into a convent of nuns, unless solely in case of necessity, and always with surplice and stole, to administer the sacraments. They used every effort to obtain the repeal of that order.

The Jesuits, though abolished as a body, still kept up their intrigues. With that zealous and pertinacious sect Ricci had a violent dispute, on a superstitious observance, called, the *Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus* ! That order had always been very zealous in the cause of *candidates*. Pope Clement XIII. had supported them ; but Clement XIV. utterly destroyed their plans. The Jesuits at Pistoia had sounded Ricci on his inclinations with respect to this, their favorite devotion, while he was at Rome. A man at Prato had wished to establish an annual festival, to found a perpetual mass, and to obtain indulgences in honor of the Sacred Heart. Cardinal Rezzonico granted the request, and sent a brief to that effect to Prato, whence it was returned by the Pro-vicar to Ricci, who kept it in his hands, without giving it currency.

The first abortive attempt was followed by a second, after he had taken possession of his bishopric. In April, 1781, he was at Prato on occasion of the *solemn benediction of several bells* destined for the cathedral of that city. When he came into the church, and at the very moment of commencing the office prescribed for that superstitious ceremony, he was warned that it was intended to deceive him ; but there was no time to inform him in what the snare laid against him consisted. Accustomed to the intrigues of priests, he promised that he would not let himself be surprised ; and suspecting that some fraud lurked under the request that he should baptize the largest of the bells in honor of Jesus Christ, he refused to do it. The pretext he alleged was, that as all bells were dedicated to God, there was no need of a particular ceremony for that, and he gave the bell the name of Stephen, the patron of the town. When the office was concluded, he went to admire the workmanship of the new bells,

in order to have time to examine them; and he discovered under the garland of flowers with which the principal bell was rather covered, than ornamented, the inscription *In honorem SS. Cordis Jesu*. At the sight of this he could not contain his indignation; he caused the inscription to be effaced, and complained of it to the Grand Duke. For this recourse to the civil power, Ricci was bitterly blamed by his enemies, and those of *social order*.

That devotion to the Sacred Heart caused Ricci still farther trouble. Salvi, a man deeply imbued with the spirit of the suppressed order, exposed throughout Prato, his native place, where he was Prior of the church of Notre Dame, pictures of the Sacred Heart, which he surrounded with rich ornaments, calculated to keep up the superstition of the people. He added indulgences, obtained from Pius VI. in favor of this new devotion, although it had not been previously verified and recognised for authentic by the Bishop, as the Council of Trent requires. Finally, he openly supported a fraternity illegally formed and introduced into Tuscany, in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

"Every body knows," says Ricci, "and fatal experience has too fully proved it during the troubles which still agitate Europe, how many machinations the Jesuits set on foot, under the protection of Pius VI. to re-establish their society. They imagined that this doctrine of the Sacred Heart would be the most proper centre and point of union for all who should labor to that end; with this view, they neglected no means, no artifice, to promote and establish this worship. The Popes before Clement XIII. had generally opposed it on religious grounds. After the suppression of the Jesuits, this superstition made little progress, on account of the vigilance and firmness of Clement XIV.; and in all probability, had that pontiff lived longer,* it would have been buried with the suppressed order. "But God,"

* The historian of the Life of Ricci here inserts a note which has for its object to prove the authenticity of the letters of Ganganelli. The

says Ricci, "wished to try his church, in order to purify it, and has permitted that this devotion of the Sacred Heart should revive in all its force under Pius VI. who scattered indulgences in handfuls on the *Cordicoles*; the worshippers of the Sacred Heart."

Salvi was their apostle at Prato. He was cited to Florence by the Senator Bartolini, to answer for his conduct, but that cunning Jesuit seduced this magistrate from his duty, and Leopold had to reprimand him, and order him to apologise to Ricci for his conduct. The Bishop treated him on this occasion with the greatest attention, but could not win the obstinate heart of the Jesuit.

The city of Prato was entirely under the influence of the monks. The Jesuits and the Dominicans exercised there the most absolute power, the former directing the education of the youth of all the principal families of the neighborhood, and the latter managing the female convents. The Bishop was considered as little more than the chief personage of the place; his spiritual authority was nothing. In this situation of things, Ricci, jealous of his power, and especially so when religion and morality demanded its rigorous exertion, could hardly remain long without a dispute with the monks. Their first difference originated in the nomination of a Dominican confessor and preacher, in which dispute Ricci saw himself overcome by the want

Abbé de Belgarde thus expresses himself on this curious point of literary history, in two letters to Ricci, written in 1776:

"Have you seen the letters of Ganganelli? there are a good number of them addressed to the late Messieurs Lauri and Cerati. You and M. Martini ought to have read them. You are, of course, aware that there are some persons who throw doubt upon the authenticity of these letters; some through passion and interest, as the ex-Jesuits and infidels; and others through a fastidious spirit of criticism. For myself, I have not the slightest doubt on the subject. Independent of the evidence derived from the work itself, I have seen in the original, the letters of many persons of authority in Rome, of which transcripts had been furnished, which, in other points too, prove the truth of this publication." In another letter, the Abbé de Belgarde adds, "I have the satisfaction of knowing, that persons who have the best means of judging, particularly the Cardinal de Berni, regard the letters of Clement XIV. as authentic."

of discretion in the Vicar-general, who took part with his opponents.

For a century and half previous to this, the total corruption of the Dominican order had been a matter of scandal throughout Tuscany. The spiritual direction which those monks had of the female convents had degenerated into the basest profligacy. A petition, dated 1642, still exists, in which the Gonfalonier of that period, and other representatives of the people of Pistoia, address the reigning Duke, praying for a reformation in the convents of the Dominicans of Lucia and Catherine. Ferdinand, however, did nothing, and the honor was reserved for Leopold.

Two nuns of the convent of Catherine of Pistoia, who had exposed the execrable principles and doctrines of the Dominican monks, their directors, gave rise to his wise reforms. They proved how much the profit which the monks, and above all, the Provincial and the Confessor drew from their convent, as well as from others; hurt the temporal interests of those religious houses, and were gradually ruining them. They gave equally strong proofs of the spiritual ruin produced by the familiarity of the monks with the nuns, and the easy communication which they had with them. They ate and drank with their favorite sisters, remained alone with them in their cells whenever they chose, and whenever they could find a pretext, slept during the night in the cloister. Long habit had in fact so accustomed them to the greatest license, that scarcely any respect for public decency remained. We here insert the declaration of the nuns of Catherine of Pistoia, which was presented to the Grand Duke Leopold in the year 1775.

“ Instead of allowing us to remain in our simplicity, and protecting our innocence, they teach us, both by word and action, all kinds of indecencies. They frequently come to the vestry, of which they have almost all the keys; and as there is a grate there, they commit a thousand indecorous acts.

“ If they get an opportunity of coming into the con-

vent under any feigned pretext, they go and stay alone in the chambers of those who are devoted to them. They are all of the same stamp; and they are not ashamed to take advantage of the circumstance of the visitation for those purposes. They utter the worst expressions, saying that we should look upon it as a great happiness that we have the power of satisfying our appetites without being exposed to the annoyance of children. They say that when this life is ended, all is ended; and they add that even Paul, who wrought with his own hands, should teach us; and that we should not hesitate to take our pleasures.

“They allow every kind of indecency to go on in the parlour. Though often warned by us, they do not break off the dangerous intimacies that are formed; and hence it has often occurred, that men who have contrived to get the keys have come into the convent during the night, which they have spent in the most dissipated manner. They also suffer the nuns to neglect the sacraments: they never think of introducing the practice of mental prayer, and they preach nothing but the pleasures of this life. The sisters who live according to their maxims are extolled by them and indulged in every extravagance; and the others must either go with the stream, heedless of conscience, or live in a state of perpetual warfare, as is actually the case with us now.

“This is the real truth. We the undersigned attest it, without passion, and on our conscience.

“Anna Teresa Merlini, Madre di Consiglio.

“Rosa Peraccini, Madre di Consiglio.

“Flavia Peraccini, Madre di Consiglio.

“Gaetana Poggiali.

“Candida, Gioconda Botti.

“Maria, Clotilda Bambi.”

The intercourse of the monks and nuns, according to Ricci, was arrived to such a pitch of infamous licentiousness, that topics of the most disgusting nature formed the usual subject of their conversation; while the greater part of the sisters deprived themselves of

their money and every thing else to satisfy the rapacity of their lovers, performed for them the most servile offices, and even sometimes went by the name of their wives. A person who had been in the service of the Dominicans, told the Bishop many other things of a still worse kind, and that his principal employment had been that of a confidential messenger in their love-intrigues. Leopold, already well informed of this condition of the convents, to obtain still farther information; had the *fabriciens* of the establishment examined, and found every thing he had before heard confirmed. He next had all the nuns themselves examined by the Lieutenant of Police; and seeing the necessity of some prompt and vigorous measure, appointed Bishop Alamanni to take without delay the spiritual superintendence of all the Dominican convents of Pistoia, and prohibited the Dominican monks, on pain of imprisonment, from approaching them. While Ricci was Vicar of the Archbishop of Florence, it was reported to him that in a convent of that diocese where the nuns all slept in a common dormitory, the two last beds were for the father confessor and his lay brother, that they might have them in case of being called to assist any sick sister during the night.

Alamanni resided at Florence, but, though at a distance from his diocese and eighty years old, he rendered an exact account of every thing which occurred, and gave minute directions on every occasion of difficulty or doubt. Neither his gentleness, however, nor his kind feelings for the nuns, could overcome their pride and obstinacy. They constantly refused to regard him as their superior, or to show the least confidence in the confessors he appointed. They asserted that, by acting in a contrary manner, they should have incurred the excommunication of Pius V.; and the dread of this was so strong with many, that one who was dangerously ill at Lucia, never requested the sacraments. With some, this was the effect of ignorance; but in many, it arose from vicious passions and the desire of their safe indulgence. The monks, the

nuns, and even the Cardinal-protector of the order, omitted no opportunity of assuring them, either by letters or secret emissaries, that if they continued firm, the tempest which menaced them would in a little time gradually be dispersed. By this means the nuns were confirmed in their obstinate resistance, in which they persevered.

A short time after the death of Clement XIV. in 1774, Alamanni addressed the Court of Rome to obtain the power and means for reducing the Dominicans of Pistoia under his authority. The Cardinals, assembled in conclave, granted his request, and confided to him a commission for governing the convents of Lucia and Catherine, and requested him to communicate such farther information as might be useful to the future Pope. He satisfied their demand, and added to the details already given, a lively picture of the abuse of authority of which both the priors and confessors in the convent of Pistoia were guilty.

The nuns, says Alamanni, nearly all declare the same thing respecting the dissoluteness and libertinism of their directors, of their materialism in doctrine, and the brutality of their sentiments; and that he had in a great degree a personal experience of the truth of these assertions, as he had been charged with their spiritual administration.

In the mean time the disorders increased at Lucia. The nuns uniformly united in opposing the Bishop, in refusing the sacraments, and remaining without a superior; since, after the death of the one who had governed them according to the direction of the Dominicans, they were determined to elect no other without their co-operation. They believed, or pretended to believe, that the provisional power given by the Cardinals to their Bishop to replace the monks, was either supposititious or insufficient. At Catherine, the demon of discord reigned without restraint. Those who had been reclaimed were regarded as guilty of apostacy, as schismatics, and excommunicated. The party opposed to them was, although less numerous, the most turbu-

lent and determined. The threats of poisoning or strangling the complainants were nearly every day renewed, and no authority availed to subdue the pride of those miserably depraved nuns. The actual condition of those persons appears from the report which the three churchwardens signed and presented to Leopold, and from a letter of one of the nuns to the Rector Camporini.

“The Prior and the Confessor take the liberty of going, whenever they please, into the vestry to converse with their favorites; whereas, according to the tenor of the Bull, they should not even communicate with them *ad loquendum bonum*: they have parties of pleasure there, and eat with the nuns. One time, on Easter-day, the other nuns going in a body to divert themselves there, surprised two other monks along with them, each passing his time with his favorite nun.

“The said Prior and Confessor, when they come into the convent to visit the sick, do not go to them *recto tramite*, as the Bulls direct, but wherever they please, and even alone with the nuns into their cells, and they walk together in the garden.

“If they are attending on any nuns that are dying, they eat and sleep in the monastery, which is prohibited, and they eat with whom they please, even with the sextonesses.

These irregularities are imputed not only to the Prior and Confessor, but to all those destined from time to time for these employments, who are guilty of constant ill conduct.

In a letter of Flavia Peraccini to Comparini, written August, 1775, she thus expresses herself:

“I learned yesterday morning that the *fratesses*, monksesses, had a letter last Friday from the Cardinal Protector of the order, in which he desires them to beseech the Lord to give them patience; that he would do all in his power for them, but that they should not be in a hurry, for the affair would be tedious. At all events, both they and the monks keep up their hopes, and make every effort to prevent any

change. No one can have any idea of the extent of the intrigues of the monks ; and the devices to which they have recourse to secure themselves, are astonishing.

“ Every time I think of the plan of the Provincial to make us all communicate, and then to make us all sign a declaration that we attended the sacraments, and that every thing was done in good order, and thus make *liars* of us, I am perfectly unable to restrain my astonishment.”

The reader is now well acquainted with the Dominican nuns and the monks their seducers. It would be useless to make any observation on the interest which one of the princes of the church testified so openly for them, as well as the high protection which he promised them to aid them in resuming, as soon as possible, their claustral amours, and returning to their libertine habits, against the will of their Prince and their Bishop ; of those who were charged, as they say, *by divine right*, to oblige them to live in a way the most *useless or most innocuous to society*.

Some letters of the nuns of Catherine of Pistoia, prove how far the immodesty of the refractory nuns, and of the monks their paramours, went. The former openly threatened the lives of such of the sisters as had ventured to reveal that tissue of debauchery, and to call on the Government to re-establish order and good morals.

In May, 1775, Marianna Santini, Prioress of Catherine, wrote to her diocesan, Alamanni, to say that she and her sisters submitted themselves to him unconditionally, and promised every thing that he required of them, “ except a change of sentiment, as we are determined to die rather than live out of our holy order. The greater part of my nuns are determined to go into some other monastery of the order, and there is no other course to adopt.—Ours is a single will, most free and resolute, which will always make us adhere immutably to what we freely choose in the act of our solemn profession.”

The complainants presented a petition to the Vicar

of Bishop Alamanni, praying that he would deliver them from their turbulent companions.

“The poor nuns of Catherine of Pistoia salute the Vicar, and entreat him, by the bowels of Jesus Christ, to remove five nuns and two converses, lay sisters, who oppose the resolutions formed by his Royal Highness; otherwise there will result great mischief. They never cease to ill-treat the complainants by words, and they threaten to come to acts. We conceal ourselves through fear. Complainants know not what to do, whether they should quit the convent to save their lives. They pray you to adopt some measures before evening, or, as they have said, they will go out, &c.—Anna Teresa Merlini—Rosa Peraccini—Maria Caterina Rossi—Candida Botti—Anna Luisa Saccardi—Gætana Poggiali.”

June, 1775, they wrote to the Bishop Alamanni himself:

“You must be already acquainted with the treatment that we experienced yesterday from Mother Ganucci, that is, her calling one of us a fool, because a sigh escaped her at dinner, in so loud a voice as to be heard at a great distance. She then, after dinner, called us jades and audacious wretches, and threatened to have us put to death. La Biagiola and La Campioni are always planning to do us mischief, and to poison us. We who know the sort of persons they are, and their little fear of God, live in terror all day and night.—They laughed at the communications made by you; and said quite loud in the garden—pardon us, and do not impute it to want of respect—that you were a knave and a dolt, that wanted to play the braggadocio, because ye’u knew your power would soon be at an end, &c. Yesterday morning they read a book at the table, in which it is said, that the Emperor Charles IV. exempted the monks from the power of princes, and that they are only subject to the Empire, and in spirituals immediately to the Pope.”

Maria Caterina Rossi, when calling for a new prior-

ess for the convent of Catherine, thus expressed herself on the subject of the refractory nuns :

“ Suffice it to say, that even in places requiring silence, they presume to bawl out at the bottom of the doors, even during the hours of repose ; and say that we put ourselves in the hands of the Devil, when we put ourselves in those of the priests ; and, finally, threaten to strangle us.”

Anna Merlini wrote to the Bishop :

“ The monks, as well as the nuns, have obtained what they desired ; they wished for the ruin of the monastery, and they will see it. As soon as possession was taken by the Vicar, the Provincial went to Florence, and the Prior to Rome ; for if they could do nothing else, they would succeed in having us displaced, and that the Confessor himself said to more than one of us. They commenced a suit at Florence, and at Rome. The lay-brother belonging to the last Provincial remained here to give all the news to the nuns, and to extract from them every thing they knew, to communicate it to his superiors.”

Alamanni in vain addressed the Court of Rome ; in vain did he call for aid, and paint in the liveliest colors his affliction at finding his power altogether insufficient for the difficulties of the times. He obtained not even an answer.

In June, 1775, he wrote to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars ; and in July, to Cardinal Caffa ; but the same silence continued. In the meanwhile, the nuns laughed at the menaces, as well as the exhortations of their pastor. Alamanni wrote again, in September, to Cardinal Torrigiani, his old friend. He told him all the anxiety of his mind, and how much he suffered in seeing himself so deserted ; but the only consolation he received from Torrigiani was an assurance, that he pitied his situation, and that he would do all in his power to bring the subject again into consideration. “ It is not,” says Ricci, “ that Alamanni knew not in what manner, or to what extent he might use his authority ; but he was not willing to hurt the

prejudices either of his flock, which was favorable to Rome, or of the nobles of Pistoia, the daughters of whom peopled the two refractory convents. Nor was he willing to embroil himself in a quarrel with the See of Rome. He communicated to the Grand Duke the motives for this restraint; and the latter, who loved him ardently, assured him that he had no personal reason to fear either the intrigues of the monks, or the snares of the Nuncio. Finding that the Cardinal Torrigiani obtained nothing from the Congregation of Bishops, Alamanni prayed him to address Pius VI. himself. Torrigiani did so, and the month following he returned Alamanni an account of the Pope's reply. "The Holy Father," he said, "was not willing, in any way, to approve of the innovations illegally introduced into the two convents; and especially the design of the Tuscan Government to take away the direction of the convents from all the regular orders, the abuse of which the Pope declared he believed to be dictated by calumny." The Bishop of Pistoia died in the same month.

Ippoliti, his successor, the compatriot of the refractory nuns, and the relation even of many of them, hoped to overcome them by patience and kindness; but he was no more successful than Alamanni. He succeeded also as little in obtaining any assistance from the Congregation of Bishops; till at length the disorders increased to such a height, that Leopold himself interposed his authority. Intending to pursue more general measures, in the hope that they would be more efficacious, he addressed a circular to the Tuscan bishops, desiring them to demand of the See of Rome the removal of the convents from the direction of the monks, and their submission to the spiritual government of the ordinaries. This measure had been constantly desired from the time of Cosmo I., and the Grand Duke conceived the project of effecting it. The circulars were sent in 1776. The bishops who received them, were not ignorant of the excesses which the Prince wished to extirpate. They knew also that the direction of the convents by the monks, was in direct

opposition to all the reforms which he intended to introduce for the good of religion throughout the States ; and they had, consequently, no excuse for resisting his orders. But the Avocat Fei, the chargé-d'affaires for Tuscany, was not a fit negotiator in such a business. Of narrow views, blindly attached to the Court of Rome, and the devoted friend and admirer of P. Mamachi, he permitted himself to be blinded by the pontifical government. Although, therefore, he pretended to assist the reform, he rendered his concessions of no avail, by the conditions with which it was burdened, namely, that every Tuscan bishop should give an account of the convents, the spiritual direction of which was in his hands, in order that a proof might thus be afforded of the necessity of the transfer. This was the true method to carry on the disputes without end. The Bishop Ippoliti imagined that nothing should prevent the renewal of his complaints, or his demands to have all the convents committed to his power. But he soon discovered his mistake : the Court of Rome grants every thing to submission, and by favor ; nothing to justice, to right and demand. Ippoliti received, in January, 1777, a letter from the Pope, in which he not only refused what the prelate had requested, but heaped reproaches upon him for having recalled an affair to the recollection of his Holiness, which he hoped had been forgotten since the death of Alamanni. The Bishop is, moreover, especially rebuked with having contributed to the execution of the plan of the Grand Duke to take the direction of the convents from the hands of the regulars, a plan, it is said, opposed to the canons, and hurtful to religion and the monastic orders. The only attempt at softening the refusal of this, and Leopold's request, was the putting of a few neglected and altogether vicious convents into the hands of some Tuscan bishops.

Ippoliti had another ray of hope ; but he had too much good sense to be a favorite with the See of Rome, and the only concessions he could obtain, was a permission to transfer the refractory nuns of Catherine to

the convent of Clement of Prato, which was under the direction of the Dominicans, and where they were received in triumph.

Still greater disorders than those which had been supposed to exist at Pistoia, were soon discovered at Prato. Ricci had his attention directed towards the latter by the disgraceful incontinency of two of the nuns. All the evil which existed was attributable to the Dominican monks. For many years, says the Bishop, those women lived plunged in the most infamous debauchery. The name of the one was Catherine Irene Buonamici, sprung from a noble family in Prato, aged fifty years; the other, Clodésin de Spighi, of equally noble descent, aged thirty-eight years. Every means had been employed by the Dominicans to prevent any of the circumstances from transpiring. When Ricci, however, received the government of the diocese, and Vincent Majocchi was appointed confessor to the convent of Catherine, the dreadful situation of its members became exposed to public notice. At the feast of Pentecost, Majocchi, more scrupulous than his predecessors, refused those two nuns absolution. In an instant the affair became known abroad. The Vicar of Prato, Lorenzo Palli, was informed of it, and Ricci himself hearing it reported, sent to obtain the details from the Vicar. The latter answered, that the nuns believed neither the sacraments of the church, nor the eternity of another life; that they denied certain criminal actions to be sins, and especially those of the flesh. Not content with what he had done, Majocchi went himself to Pistoia, to give the Bishop, and the *Penitencier* of the cathedral, who was the uncle of Spighi, an account of what had passed; but so oppressed was he with the difficulties which presented themselves to a reform, that, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Ricci, he resigned his office.

Ricci wished to do nothing in this affair without the concurrence of the Dominicans themselves; but the rudeness and obstinacy with which they replied to his overture, are almost past belief. The Bishop, however,

had to congratulate himself afterwards that no compromise took place, and that he was left to pursue his reformation to the utmost. The Grand Duke, having been informed by him of what had occurred, began by giving the most severe orders that no communication should take place between the convent of Catherine and the Dominican monks. He also collected whatever documents might tend to prove the complicated baseness of the Dominicans, and that also of the Dominicans at Pistoia in 1774, and which might enable him to examine the affair in all its ramifications. He submitted the measures which had been taken, two years after, 1776, to the Court of Rome, to obtain for the bishops the direction of the convents, but which measures the intrigues of the Dominicans at Rome totally destroyed.

The monks perceived the danger of their situation, and could discover no other method of lessening it, than that of exciting the people in their favor against the Government. For this purpose they prepared a nun of the convent of Vincent, at Pistoia, and obliged her to feign an ecstasy before the shrine which contains the body of St. Catherine. When this was done, a report was spread that the city was menaced, by this celestial sign, with some dreadful scourge. Instantly the church of the *Recollets* was filled with women, thinking the world was at an end, and demanding confession; nor was the tumult appeased till it was said that the misfortune only threatened the children of Saint Dominic.

The disorders discovered at Prato were only the sequel of those which the Government had rooted out of the convents of Pistoia. In two letters of Flavia Peraccini, Prioress of Catherine of Pistoia, to Compagni, rector of the episcopal seminary in the same city; the nun relates what passed before her eyes in her own convent, what had passed there before she wrote, and what still continued to take place in other convents, particularly at Prato.

“ It would require both time and memory to recollect

what has occurred during the twenty-four years that I have had to do with monks, and all that I have heard tell of them. Of those who are gone to the other world I shall say nothing; of those who are still alive, and have little decency of conduct, there are very many, among whom there is an ex-provincial named Ballendi; then Donati, Pacini, Buzzaccherini, Calvi, Zoratti, Bigliacci, Guidi, Miglietti, Verde, Bianchi, Ducci, Serafini, Bolla, Nera di Lucca, Quaretti. With the exception of three or four, all that I ever knew, alive or dead, are of the same character; they have all the same maxims and the same conduct. They are on more intimate terms with the nuns than if they were married to them.

“It is the custom now, that, when they come to visit any sick sister, they sup with the nuns, they sing, dance, play, and sleep in the convent. It is a maxim of theirs, that God has forbidden hatred, but not love; and that the man is made for the woman, and the woman for the man. They teach us to amuse ourselves, saying, that Paul said the same, who wrought with his own hands. They deceive the innocent, and even those that are most circumspect; and it would need a miracle to converse with them and not to fall.

“The priests are the husbands of the nuns, and the lay-brothers of the lay-sisters. In the chamber of one of those I have mentioned, a man was one day found; he fled, but very soon after they gave him to us as confessor extraordinary. How many bishops are there in the Papal States who have come to the knowledge of some disorder, have held examinations and visitations, and yet could never remedy it; because the monks tell us that those are excommunicated who reveal what passes in the order! ‘Poor creatures! said I to an English provincial, they think they are leaving the world to escape danger, and they only meet with greater. Our fathers and mothers have given us a good education, and here we learn the Ave Maria backwards.’ He knew not what reply to make to me. God is my witness, I speak without passion. The

monks have never done any thing to me personally to make me dislike them; but I will say that so iniquitous a race as the monks no where exists. Bad as the seculars are, they do not at all come up to them; and the art of the monks with the world and their superiors baffled description.

“When they notify the death of a nun, they make a panegyric on her in the circular letter, to show that they know how to direct these poor graceless creatures! God only knows if they are not utterly lost. How ill they are attended when on the bed of death! That, indeed, is carnival-time.

“When they gave us the holy-water every year, they threw every thing, even the beds, into disorder. What a racket they used to make! One time they washed Father Manni’s face, and dressed him like a nun. In short, it was a perpetual scene of amusement:—comedies and conversation for ever. Every monk who passed by on his way to the chapter they found some means of showing into the convent, and intreated a sick sister to confess herself. Everlasting scandal about husbands,—of those who had stolen the mistress of such a one; how others had avenged themselves in the chapter; and how they would not have forgiven even in death.

“Do not suppose that this is the case in our convent alone. It is just the same at Lucia, at Prato, at Pisa, at Perugia; and I have heard things that would astonish you. Every where it is the same, every where the same disorders, every where the same abuses prevail. Let the superiors suspect as they may, they do not know even the smallest part of the enormous wickedness that goes on between the monks and the nuns.”

The next day the Nun Peraccini, who had been interrogated respecting Friar Buzzaccherini of Lucia, replied by the following letter. These details had been required of her because it was known that that monk had been sent as confessor to the nuns of Vincent of Pistoia, where it had been ascertained, the confes-

sors were in the habit of staying every day till midnight, to the knowledge of the whole town.

“With respect to Buzzaccherini, he acted just like the rest, sitting up late, diverting himself, and letting the usual disorders go on. There were several nuns who had love affairs. His own mistress was Odaldi of Lucia, who used to send him continual treats; and he was in love with the daughter of our factor, of whom they were very jealous here. He too, like the other monks, used to send us his dirty linen. He ruined poor Cancellieri, who was sextoness, for he was always asking something from her, and almost every morning she had to dress him some nice dish. They are all alike.”

Some years ago the nuns of Vincent, in consequence of the extraordinary passion they had for Father Lupi and Father Borghigiani, were divided into two parties, one calling themselves *Le Lupe*, the other *Le Borghigiani*.

He who made the greatest noise in Lucia was Donati, but I believe he is now at Rome. Brandi too was also in great vogue. He is now prior at Gemignano.

“It is true, that the temporal is not oppressive, but the nun who is always giving to the friar, how does she observe her vow of poverty?—At Vincent, which passes for a sanctuary, they also have their lovers.”

The direction of the female convents by the regulars, usually produced corruption of morals. In a letter written from Rome, October, 1781, by the Advocate Zanobetti to Bishop Ricci, he hopes that it will end with the general adoption of withdrawing the nuns from the spiritual direction of the monks; “especially in the states, where, some years ago, it was necessary to raze from the foundations one of men belonging to the barefooted Carmelites, the other of women of the same order, which were joined, and in which, by means of subterranean passages, they led the ordinary life of men and women.” Zanobetti had been five years employed in the office of assessor of the Inquisition, and knew much more about monks and nuns than the Bishop of Pistoia.

CHAPTER VI.

Examination of the Nuns of Prato.—Obstinacy of the Pope.—Ricci's visit to La Montagne.—Improvements in that district.—Reform of ecclesiastical studies.

THE nuns of Lucia, in Pistoia, had voluntarily submitted themselves to their new pastor. Weariness, *ennui*, and principally their being deprived of the support of the convent of Catherine, had induced them to believe that no efforts they could make, would bring back the monks. This was not the case at Prato. The pride and madness of the Dominicans, opposed to the firmness of the Prince and the Bishop, drove things every day to greater extremity. The resorts of cunning remained, and a monk attempted to employ them. At the period when he was least expected, Calvi, a Dominican, arrived at Prato, authorized by an order from the Grand Duke to co-operate with Ricci in the examination of the existing abuses. He had been warmly recommended to the Prince by Seratti, his secretary; who hoped, by this measure, to moderate the zeal of Ricci. But Calvi spoiled all, by acting his part improperly; and Ricci, informed of his conduct, immediately made Leopold acquainted with his character, and had him recalled.

A Servite, named P. Baldi, had been commissioned by Ricci to examine the nuns and boarders of the convent of Catherine. During this affair, every one connected in any way with the Dominicans, was in the greatest agitation. "It is more easy to imagine, than to describe the fury of the monks and their adherents, at Prato. Tumults and secret machinations were formed, to free the accused nuns, and destroy every proof of their guilt. These turbulent monks had also a powerful assistant in the Papal Nuncio for Tuscany. He afforded them aid and protection, because

he knew that their dishonor would fall on the Court of Rome. He defended and prohibited the ex-Jesuits, whom his court also supported, because it saw that if it would continue to be a court, it must not allow these vigorous satellites of its despotism to be crushed.

June, 1781, Ricci wrote to the minister Seratti :

“The Dominicans are in motion ; the Nuncio does not relax in his efforts to save them. It is not at all unlikely that he will endeavor to have the cause brought before himself, under the pretext of having received a special commission from his court, and in the hope, that the affair going on tediously, according to the usual policy of the Holy See, people will at last get tired, and the matters remain in *statu quo*.

“They say at Rome, to defend the monks, that the two nuns are mad ; but, up to the present hour, no one has ever taken them for such. Besides, Buonamici was prioress of her society ten or twelve years ago. She and Spighi were, in 1775 or 1776, the one mistress, the other second mistress of the novices. Finally, they have been always admitted to partake of the sacraments, and that alone is enough to condemn the monks.”

As protector of the licentiousness of the monks, the Nuncio thought he might at least partake of their less scandalous pleasures. In a letter of the Abbé de Bellegarde, one of the heads of the Jansenists at Utrecht, to the Bishop of Pistoia, March, 1782, he complained of this unclerical conduct : “What a scandal,” replied the zealous Abbé, “to see monks at Florence giving in their convents, comedies, masqued balls, &c. ; and to see the Nuncio of his Holiness present at them !”

But nothing could damp the courage or zeal of Ricci. The examination was continued, and the report of it was sent to Leopold, who commissioned his chargé d'affaires at the Court of Rome to bring the subject before the Pope with all diligence.

The Grand Duke testified his impatience for a reply to his demands, by sending a courier extraordinary, who was not to quit Rome without an answer. The

result was expected as anxiously by many of the nuns, as by Leopold; and the examination into the abuses of the convent of Cleinent was stopped, till it should be known. In the mean time, fresh proofs were every day sent to Ricci of the licentiousness of the monks and nuns. The public places and the shops of Prato resounded with reports of their excesses; and there was not a female who had been on an errand to the convent, who had not some anecdote to tell of their conduct. The boarders bore the same testimony to the barefaced vices of the nuns; and one mentioned that she had seen a play of Goldoni's, "La Vedova Scaltra," performed much better by the nuns of Catherine than at the theatre. The Confessor was the most conspicuous of the spectators, and the performance was followed by conduct not fit to be related.

Ricci had taken every precaution in his power to stop the evil of this public scandal, but in vain; and he was obliged at last to have recourse to sending the two accused nuns to Florence. This was the more necessary, as the sisters had been seized with the spirit of proselytism, and, having lost the opportunity of spreading their opinions through the convent, they made an effort to corrupt the persons appointed to attend them in their confinement. Before their departure from his diocese, Ricci had them again examined, together with their companions, and made them sign their confessions in a formal manner before the proper legal authorities. What was most remarkable, was this, that Buonamici, in making her deposition, kept adding explanations of the most indelicate nature, to develop the system of impiety and mysticism which had led her into error. She and Spighi were sent to Florence by night in separate carriages, attended by a priest, a layman, and an aged female: they were put into the Hospital *des Insensés* at Florence, where their behavior was tranquil and settled.

Ricci has given a full account of the wretched mental condition of the unfortunate sisters. Buonamici was endowed with great natural ability, and had com-

posed several pieces of poetry of considerable merit. She had read Voltaire and Rousseau, and had stored her mind with their opinions. But her understanding had been chiefly perverted by the corruption of her manners. Imbued with both the impurities and the errors of the Gnostics, she began to make converts of her companions to her own ideas, but was contented with their becoming accomplices in her licentious conduct without penetrating farther into the mysteries of her system. Spighi, on the contrary, she believed to be more capable of comprehending her whole scheme of doctrine; but the latter was of an inferior mind to her teacher, and was not equally able, when examined, to elude the questions which were intended to lay open their conduct and opinions. Buonamici had sufficient subtlety and knowledge of the scriptures to torment her examiner, Longinelli, who afterwards acknowledged that there were many of her sophisms put so ingeniously, that at the time he was unable properly to combat them. Ricci said, "it is impossible to consider the frightful errors into which these deluded women had fallen, without horror." The holiest rites of religion had been subjected by them to the most disgusting obscenities; every doctrine of scripture was interpreted by them so as to authorize some shameful indulgence; and they pretended that for whatever they did or believed, they had the special illumination of the Holy Spirit.

The Bishop of Pistoia remitted to Rome whatever information he obtained on this important affair. At first this attention seemed to be well received, but it soon became different. Cardinal Pallavicini, the only one who had induced the Court of Rome to act at all reasonably, was obliged, on account of his health, to retire into the country, and leave the office of Secretary of State to Cardinal Rezzonico. The first indication which the latter gave of his disposition, was in his reply to Cardinal Corsini, who had asked him to confer upon Ricci, without delay, authority over the Dominican convents in his diocese. His answer was only virulent

abuse of the Bishop, and of his conduct respecting the devotion of the *Sacred Heart*.

Cardinal Rezzonico was at the head of the Jesuit faction ; the Dominican party joined it, and the league was strengthened by the common dangers and interests of both. A powerful party was thus formed against Ricci ; but his resolution remained unshaken. He continued to write to Rome, and to every one whom he thought able to assist him in obtaining the consent of the Pope to his reformation of the convent of Catherine. His letter to Cardinal Corsini, dated July, 1781, is as follows :

“ What I have ascertained by means of the examination held by the Inquisitor-extraordinary, fills me with horror ; and the two unfortunate wretches have not only confirmed what was said by the nuns and the boarders, but have even, with unspeakable impudence, said still more, confessing even a most horrible abuse of the sacrament of the eucharist. With the exception of a Portuguese ex-jesuit, Bottillo, who conversed with them every day for an entire summer, after they had been already infected, I have not been able to discover with certainty any others guilty of teaching them such wicked principles ; and even on him nothing can be positively fixed, except indecent acts and language. Ricci adds, that the two nuns only sought in their replies to exculpate the Dominicans from the charge of being their accomplices ; which is also apparent from their original examinations. We have the testimony of Flavia Peraccini to fill up that void in their confessions. Taken with the information given by Buonamici and Spighi themselves, it serves to establish irrefutably the truth of what was indeed most probable, that the confessors and priors whom they name, were the sole teachers of the Spinozism, materialism, quietism, and licentiousness, with which these nuns were infected.”

A letter of Ricci to the same Cardinal, July, 1781, says :

“ The conduct pursued by so many provincials,

priors, and confessors, in this and in other convents, would make one apprehend that the evil was in the body, and that they systematically held opinions contrary to the law of Jesus Christ.....With what confidence can bishops admit these men to the office of confessors, among whom we know that such evil prevails?"

The Bishop of Pistoia also wrote to the Pope, and sent him a detailed report of the principles which formed the doctrine maintained by the two nuns of Catherine of Prato. These principles were all deduced from the answers made by the two nuns themselves in their examinations already given.

In another letter, Ricci informs the Pope that the two nuns, who had been removed to Florence, as well as those who remained at Prato, refused to accuse any monk of their order, and that they even complained bitterly of the suspicions entertained against their confessors. They maintained that they had no need either of books, or of instructions, written or verbal, to form into a system the doctrines they professed, and which, they asserted, arose spontaneously in their mind. The Bishop of Pistoia added to his letter the depositions of the nuns of Catherine of that city, made in 1775, when that convent was taken from under the direction of the Dominicans,—depositions of which the subjects display the same errors as were afterwards found among the nuns of Prato, and which were ascribed to the instructions and insinuations of the monks. He relates this circumstance as a new proof of what it was so important to demonstrate fully, that these monks were alone guilty of all the disorders in the convent of Prato, whither they had gone to take the spiritual direction of the nuns of their order, after having perverted those of Pistoia.

In 1781, Ricci also wrote to Vasquez, General of the order of the Augustinians, to beg of him to have Buonamici's brother, who was under him, examined, and whom the depositions showed to have been in a very intimate relation with the convent of Prato.

Vasquez replied, that this monk was very simple, and even scrupulous ; so much so, that he thought one time he ought to denounce his sister, for having spoken in his presence some suspicious words on the subject of religion.

In the above-mentioned letter to Vasquez, Ricci says: "The two unfortunate wretches, and especially Buonamici, have deposed, at Florence, several additional circumstances, and have mentioned the Dominicans as being their teachers and encouragers in that school of iniquity."

The suspicions of the Bishop of Pistoia were thus completely confirmed, and there remained not the least doubt of the moral and religious depravity of the entire order of Dominic,—a depravity which the monks had incessantly labored to propagate, by initiating in the system of the most impious materialism, the nuns who were afterwards to minister to their sensual pleasures. This order was not the only one which had thus organized licentiousness by means of false opinions. In a letter from Signor Foggini to the Bishop of Pistoia, Rome, July, 1781, are these words :

"I was told yesterday, that the first seducer of this convent was a Jesuit. I know a monastery in which a Jesuit used to make the nuns lift up their clothes, assuring them that they thereby performed an act of virtue, because they overcome a natural repugnance."

It had been falsely reported at Rome, that neither the General of the Dominicans, nor the Pope, who were the natural superiors of the nuns, had been informed of any thing with which they should have been made acquainted. This, it was said, was a sufficient proof that unlawful means had been taken to assist the usurpation of the rights and authority of the Holy See. Ricci, who saw all the importance of such an accusation, lost no time in proving that the Dominican nuns had made frequent appeals to Rome and to their superiors, without obtaining a reply. They had especially addressed Pius VI., and the General Bonadois, but in vain.

One of the most important circumstances in this singular affair, is the manner in which the Pope and the General of the Dominicans were implicated in a matter of heresy, profanation, sacrilege, impiety, and licentiousness,—a matter of which they knew all the details, but which they seem to have regarded as calling for concealment rather than punishment. This circumstance will make every truly religious mind shudder. Besides the wrath of the head of a monastic order of shameful celebrity, and of the head of all Catholics, against those who could not extirpate errors and put an end to turpitude, except by making them public, the following pieces will serve to demonstrate completely what we have advanced—the authority of the pious Bishop of Pistoia.

Pius VI. in his insolent brief to Ricci, dated May, asserted that he himself would not have dared to conceive suspicions against the *most holy order of the Dominicans*. Abbé Mengoni had but little trouble in turning this childish fear into ridicule. He proves that the Pope might easily have satisfied himself of the exact truth of all that the Bishop of Pistoia and Prato had written to him relative to the Dominican monks and nuns. He had only to direct his Nuncio at Florence to search the archives of Pistoia, and he would have found all the disorders in the convents of Tuscany spiritually directed by the monks of Dominic, disorders that had been known to prevail during one hundred and forty years. Moreover, should not the Pope have recollected the reasons which induced him to take from under the government of the Dominicans five convents of Siena, Pisa, and Pistoia, a little after the denunciations of the year 1774, of which he had a perfect knowledge?

It is clear from a letter of Foggini to Ricci, written at Rome, July, 1781, that there had been seen a sort of confession made to the Pope by a nun of Catherine of Prato, before Ricci was informed of what was passing in that convent, and which had undoubtedly been put into the hands of the pontifical Secretary of state.

Teresa di Gesù, a nun of Sepolcro, wrote, that she had made Sister Spighi write a similar confession to the General of the Dominicans; that she had herself addressed the General relative to that affair, and had concealed from him nothing of all that had come to her knowledge. This did not prevent Pius VI. from asserting in his brief; "That, in the Secretary's office, there was nothing of the disorders now discovered."

In a letter from Ricci to Seratti, secretary of the Grand Duke, written August, 1781, he says, there had just been found the letters of a Capuchine nun of Borgo, or Sepolcro, and of a lay sister of Spighi. It is plain from them, "That the facts were known to many; that they had recourse to abjurations with the greatest facility; that Monsignor Ippoliti, who was almost immediately assured that they had laid down their errors, had found out something wrong," &c.

Other letters of the Capuchine, prove that Spighi had endeavored to seduce her; that she had other companions besides Buonamici; that these were also friends of the Capuchine, and ceased to write to her when she spoke plainly to Spighi, and dropped the correspondence. These letters, moreover, prove that information was given at Rome; and that the General, who says that he finds nothing in his archives, must have known it from that time.

The Advocate Zanobetti, in a letter to the Bishop of Pistoia, written from Rome, October, 1781, says: "Every week this haughty General, F. Quinones, of the Dominicans, is at a dinner-party of infidels and libertines." Zanobetti pitied the Pope, who seemed ignorant "of what human wickedness is under the veil of hypocrisy, and with the certainty of impunity."

"It was his wish to praise the Dominicans, in his famous brief of reproach to Ricci;" adds the Bishop's correspondent, "that made the Pope engage so warmly, and with so much discredit to himself, in a matter that makes him an object of pity."

In a letter from Paul Delmare to Ricci, Genoa, August, 1781, he says: "In Rome itself, whither the

regular orders send their youths to study, there is a college where infidelity is systematically inculcated."

Cardinal Corsini, M. Foggini, the Avocat Fei, and the Abbé Martini, who was at Rome to be consecrated Archbishop of Florence, and who feared the same disorders in his diocese, determined on obtaining from the Pope a remedy for the convents of Pistoia, and such a remedy as might be applied to any, where a similar evil should be discovered. But they were diverted by Fei, who was himself devoted to Mamachi and the Minervites; their conduct was, in consequence, so uncertain, that the Pope thought he should be able to take advantage of their feebleness; and he signed a brief addressed to Ricci, entirely drawn up by Zaccaria, an ancient Jesuit, and by Mamachi, the most violent of the Dominicans, devoted to the Roman Court.

We have spoken of the singular propositions contained in this brief of the Pope, and particularly of the misplaced and unseasonable eulogy which he there passes on the order of Dominic. This eulogy is followed by one on the Inquisition, still more absurd than the first. "These may appear paradoxes," says Abbé Mengoni, "but it is certain that the Pontiff has commended a tribunal that is a dishonor to our holy religion." Pius VI. wished to withdraw the two nuns of Catherine from the inexorable public justice of the Bishop, to give them to the secret procedures of the Inquisition. There a general confession, in the style of those they had already made so often, would have not only obtained them entire pardon, but also have procured them the means of resuming their old course; as that tribunal is *only severe towards those whose conduct and known sentiments might influence public opinion, so as to diminish the authority and the revenues of the clergy*. Mengoni well observes, the Inquisition was, under the wise Leopold, only a vain name in Tuscany; "where, far from giving a sanguinary monk the power to burn people, and cruelly persecute them, this tribunal is curbed."

The other injurious passages of the Pope's letter to

Ricci, may be deduced from the reply which the Bishop of Pistoia made him, August, 1781.

After having complained bitterly of being treated by the Pontiff as a man of bad faith, as a fanatic, a liar, a calumniator, a seditious person, a usurper of the rights of others, &c. ; Ricci endeavors to evince again what he had already proved so often respecting the Dominicans, who must be regarded as the seducers of the nuns.

“It is certain, that the connivance of the provincials, priors, and confessors, who have been for so many years with this society, and who were all informed of its evils, is inexcusable. If I became apprehensive of such evil having spread to other convents, I had very great reason for it, since, from the depositions made six years ago by the nuns of Catherine, and of which the originals are in the Secretary's office, it appears that the same impious opinions entertained by the two unfortunate nuns, were held and taught, though not so completely reduced to system, in that convent, by some Dominican monks, who afterwards went as confessors and priors, or were some way else interested in the government of these other convents.”

He then repeats, that the confessor, on taking possession of his office, used openly to choose a *mistress among the nuns* ; and that, when any of them were sick, there was a fête at the convent. The confessor made the nuns attend him at table, and there he played cards and danced with them, &c. “Need we be astonished,” said he, “if the disorders of so many nuns, who had been all tempted, and many seduced, should eventually have spread through the town, or if their scandalous opinions and actions should have been the subject of conversation in public circles?”

Ricci immediately carried the brief he had received to Leopold, who, enraged at its contents, determined upon replying to it himself. He sent a very strong remonstrance to Rome. He complained in it of the Pope's conduct to the Bishop, whom he determined to protect with all his power. He added, that he

would never consent that the nuns should be delivered over to the ecclesiastical authority, as the Pope had ordered ; and he openly threatened to provide for the reformation of all the convents in his dominions according to his own discretion, if the Pope refused to submit them to the spiritual authority of their ordinary.

The Court of Rome immediately replied, that the Grand Duke might follow his own discretion with regard to the two nuns, and that the other convents in Tuscany should in future be under the power of the bishops only. The pope found himself compelled to write to Ricci in terms totally opposite to those expressed in the brief, and to grant him all he asked. This unexpected proceeding of Leopold confounded both the Holy See and its partisans in Tuscany, whose steps it was necessary incessantly to watch, in order to take away the possibility of their re-union.

Ricci mentions, that the Spanish minister at Rome sent the papers relative to this affair to his court, to serve as a model for the reforms of a similar kind which they proposed to undertake in Spain. Nothing is more useful than thus to show that correct actions are at the same time honorable, and that, in proportion as they extend their beneficial efforts, they increase the reputation of their authors. The circumstance just mentioned is also of importance in showing that Rome never yields but to necessity ; and that feebleness and timidity find justice and right of no avail, in a contest with that vain and selfish court.

The Pope, who had been completely overcome in the affair of Ricci, took his revenge on the General of the Dominicans, whom he punished by two terrible reprimands for having disguised the true state of things at Prato, and thus brought his court into such a humiliating situation. He also reproached him with having permitted certain bad theses to be discussed in the convent of Mark at Florence ; and in fact, so terrified the poor monk, that he left the pontifical audience in such a condition of grief and fright, as to be unable to find the door of the apartment. The Grand Duke, on

his part, ordered the Avocat Fei before him, and gave him a similar castigation for his want of good service.

As soon as Ricci had obtained his authority, he did every thing in his power to soften the affliction which the nuns felt from his success. He gave them permission to choose their own confessor out of a list he laid before them of seculars and regulars. They expressed the most lively desire to have, at least, a chaplain of their own order; but Ricci resisted all their solicitations. He had been too well taught the dissolute character of these monks, to remit his severity; and Leopold had himself prohibited any indulgence of the kind requested. So determined was he, therefore, in his resistance, that he refused the permission to the convent of Vincent, to which the Archbishop of Florence had promised this favor in the name of Ricci, who, he falsely said, had given him his word on this subject. The affair terminated in the disgrace of the Archbishop. From this epoch Ricci dates the enmity of Martini, and as a consequence, that of Seratti; whom the prelate had no difficulty in irritating against the *protégé* of their common master.

The two affairs, that of the Sacred Heart, and that of the Dominicans, united both the disciples of Dominic and those of Loyola against Ricci. He was attacked on all sides, and it was only the esteem and particular protection of Leopold, that enabled him to resist the intrigues and mischievous intentions of his adversaries. Even this, however, was another cause of enmity against him; for it made him disliked by all the ambitious members of the Tuscan court, among whom especially may be mentioned Seratti, the friend both of Martini and the Nuncio.

About this time Ricci had several disputes, both with Rome and the prelates, about the keeping of Lent. It was his constant desire to bring the church as much as possible back to its ancient discipline. His attempts in this respect appear to have been dictated by the same good sense, which guided him in his other reforms. He in some measure succeeded, but brought on himself, as in

the other affairs he took in hand, a whole host of opponents. Another circumstance also, which gave him a great deal of uneasiness, was the dangerous and fanatical conduct of the Lent preachers, whose manner of exercising their ministry had obtained them, in many places, the name of *Sacred Comedians*. These men carefully sought the most frequented churches, the pulpits most in repute, and used every means to get themselves chosen by the magistrates, or by those who had the appointment. It was yet worse in the country. They preached sermons there, which they had received by inheritance, or which were drawn from the archives of their convents. From his first arrival at Pistoia, the zealous Bishop opposed these missionaries, and succeeded in deterring the timid from continuing their mischievous practices.

During the Lent of 1782, the monk who preached at the cathedral had the boldness to abuse the proceedings of the government in no very measured terms. Ricci admonished him to refrain from all such expressions in future. The missionary promised to obey the injunction; but he almost immediately broke his word. The Bishop believed himself called upon to put a stop to this scandal. The preacher was strongly reprimanded. He, on the other hand, threatened to leave the city, which he knew would give rise to considerable disturbance; but at the moment measures were about to be taken against him, he was seized with a panic, submitted himself, and gave a promise of never again committing the same error. About that time, the Archbishop Martini, being opposed in all his conduct to Ricci, imposed upon the regulars in his diocese who had no cure of souls, the duty of catechising in the churches on Sundays and feast-days. This order was given, says Ricci, to astonish all those who knew the just complaints which had been made at the Council of Trent, against the teaching of monks. The Secretary for the jurisdiction of the Prince cited the example of the Florentine prelate with much approbation to the other bishops, and Ricci saw himself

obliged to appeal to Leopold. Having received renewed promises of protection, he issued a decree, forbidding any regular's preaching in his diocese, before his doctrine and his principles had undergone an examination. The result was, that the monks no longer presented themselves as preachers; and the greater part of those already engaged, retired. He also obliged the regulars before preaching, even in their own churches, to go and receive the benediction of the curés. This raised more enemies against him than all he had before done.

In supplying the void which the want of sermons had left, he ordered the curés and their assistants to give expositions of the sacrament. Another means employed for the instruction of the people, was the publication of a good catechism. Ricci chose from among all the Jansenist catechisms that which seemed the best adapted for his purpose: those of Colbert and of Mesenguy, otherwise so excellent, were rejected, for fear of giving unnecessary offence to the Court of Rome, from which it was necessary to keep all suspicion of false doctrine. He preferred the catechism of Gourlin, which had received the approval of the Inquisition, and had been recommended by Ippoliti, his predecessor. Ricci prepared the publication by a pastoral letter, in which he attacks the various errors which had crept into the Church by departing from the study of the Scriptures.

Rome could scarcely retain her indignation, when Leopold suppressed the taxes, all of which Tuscany had hitherto scrupulously paid into her treasury. She, however, entirely lost her patience at the abolition of the tribunal of the Inquisition. This tribunal had been always held by the *Frères Mineurs Conventuels*. The imprudence of an Inquisitor, contributed to deprive it of its power under the government of the House of Lorraine. Thomas Crudeli, a man of letters, at that time a prisoner in the dungeons of the Holy Office, found means to inform his friends of his situation, and to assure them that, if he was not speedily

freed, the bad treatment which he received, acting upon a delicate and feeble frame, would inevitably prove fatal to him. Count de Richecourt, the head of the Regency, was informed by those who had the boldness to interest themselves in the affair, of all that had occurred. He instantly delivered Crudeli from those wretches, and demanded of the Court of Vienna the abolition of the odious Inquisition. A long negotiation was entered into with Rome. The Tuscan Government would not interfere, and was contented with modifying the power of the Holy Office. Pius VI., however, would yield nothing; and his resentment against Joseph and Leopold became so violent, that he suffered the most inflammatory pamphlets to be published against them. But his anger was chiefly directed against Ricci; who, it was believed, had instigated the Duke to all these things: but the Duke was too enlightened to brook such a submission, and was not willing to share the credit of his measures with any one.

The spring of the year 1782 was so excessively rainy, that the crops were near being all destroyed, and every measure which superstition could invent, was employed to remove the threatened calamity. Ricci opposed these superstitious practices, and took occasion to give many salutary instructions on the subject of image-worship, many of the greatest errors of which he endeavored to extirpate. A long contest with the monks was the consequence. At first it was only a war of words, but his adversaries at last had recourse to the lowest kind of abuse. The priests who were attached to Ricci, were abused in the public streets, and insulted with popular songs containing every species of invective. Out of Tuscany, the whole order of the Franciscans took part in the dispute, till at last even the friends of the Bishop began to suspect that his procedure was imprudent, and calculated to favor the sect of the Phantasiasts.

About this time the Grand Duke signified his approval of Ricci's plan for the establishment of an

Ecclesiastical Academy at Pistoia ; and that he might have a fit situation for it, gave him the convent of the Olivétains, which he was on the point of suppressing. Armed with this decree, the Bishop, for fear of fraud, unexpectedly signified it to the monks when they were assembled for dinner in the refectory. At the same time he took possession of the convent, and of the country-houses which belonged to the monks. He put his seal upon all the papers, and had an inventory made of the different effects, and of the furniture, without causing any noise or disturbance. The nobles of Pistoia could not repress their chagrin at this event, which deprived them of a retreat where they placed their children who interfered with their ambitious projects ; and furnished them with the means of dissipating, either by gaming or conversation, their languor and sloth.

Some proofs exist of the amusements followed by those *devout* nobles. The Abbé's *tables du quartier* were found covered with the reckonings of a game, which showed the manner of passing their evenings. At another place cards were discovered ; and the library of the convent, which consisted of only about a hundred volumes, was in the most miserable state of filth and confusion. *The Scriptures*, divided into several little volumes, *were not even complete*. Such was the state of the library, that there was nothing in it of any value, but some editions of the year 1400 ; the rest consisted of the old casuists, and other such authors, so that Leopold said *he would not give five shillings for the whole !* Such was the state of this establishment, as respected its interior ; but the building itself had been just repaired, and Ricci was overjoyed at being enabled by the acquisition of it to open his academy. His first object, after obtaining this situation, was to find a good theological professor ; and not hoping to obtain one in Tuscany, he applied to the celebrated Tamberini, head of the new theological school at Pavia, who sent him Jean-Baptiste Ganzi, of the same school, on whose principles he might rely.

In all his subsequent measures he did nothing without consulting his friends,—the Jansenists of France and Holland. The success of the institution answered his labor; and when at his own fall, the institution also fell, he expressed the deepest regret at the event, and at the barbarous conduct of those by whom it was occasioned.

Ricci was extremely desirous of establishing moral conferences in his diocese, not merely formal, as they had hitherto been, but such as were likely to produce real practical good. This was at the epoch when Leopold had reduced the regulars within the jurisdiction of their bishops. Ricci took advantage of it to make them assist the seculars in the monthly conferences; and succeeded beyond his expectation. The order he had received to inspect the studies of the regulars, induced him to visit the convent of the *Mineurs Observantins* at Giaccherino, near Pistoia, in order to examine the library. The collection of books in this convent was valuable and well chosen; “but such,” says Ricci, “was the sloth and bad management of the monks, that it was left in a state which rendered it perfectly useless to the pupils. The room where the books were kept was the least known, and the most seldom frequented in the house. There were even some *superiors of convents who could not say where the library was, and who followed Ricci to discover in what part of the convent the books were to be found.* At Giaccherino, the library was in a little room devoted to the reception of all old and useless papers. The cobwebs which hung from the ceiling covered the unfortunate visitor every step he set, and which he had been prepared to expect, from the difficulty experienced by the monks in finding the key of the room.” A promise, however, was given of amendment, and the Bishop went away satisfied. A similar circumstance took place at the convent of the Paolotti at Pistoia; from which the Provincial, *thinking that books were a useless kind of furniture*, had sent all it possessed to the convent of the same order at Florence, to obtain the

thanks of the monks in the capital. It will not cause surprise, to find that the regulars were not much devoted to study ; so far, indeed, was this from being the case, that they gave themselves up to every kind of dissipation, and when some of them were not so disposed, they were even *prohibited by the superiors from using books* purchased with their own money.

Ricci examined some of the students at Giaccherino, to discover the state of religious knowledge among them, and found them in deplorable ignorance. Questions the most useless were discussed in the most barbarous style of scholastic folly, while the great doctrines of religion were treated in a manner so ridiculous, that even Molina himself professed himself offended. The infallibility of the Pope, his absolute temporal power over princes, and all the most silly doctrines of the Court of Rome, were stoutly defended by them, and made to support the most preposterous opinions.

“The Franciscans,” says Ricci, “are for the most part, in the present day, without the least learning, even without the principles of grammar. Latin is almost entirely unknown among them, and when tried, they were unable to translate the decisions of the Council of Trent, the Roman Catechism, or the historical books of the Scriptures. They were obliged to employ a dictionary to construe their commonest lessons ; and *the cleverest among them never thought of looking into the subjects which they were appointed to teach, till they were made doctors, or professors of theology!* Others less clever, were made preachers or confessors ; in which capacities they only consulted some old and well-known casuist, or preached the sermons they had found in the convent.” Ricci employed every means in his power to remedy these abuses, but in vain ; and he saw his best and most useful projects either eluded by art, or stopped by the power of the monks, or the bad conduct of Leopold’s ministers.

The Bishop found, that to commence *an attack on the monks is to bid farewell for ever to all peace and tranquillity.* The first antagonist he had to meet, in

his endeavor to do away with the prerogatives of the monks in his diocese, was the monk Lampredi, to whom, very imprudently, had been given the power of visiting the convents of his order, in quality of Provincial. Ricci opposed him, and succeeded in preventing Lampredi from making his fortune, which a visitor on such an occasion is almost sure of doing. The same man wished, on some foolish pretence, to remove the college of Giaccherino elsewhere; but the Bishop prevented any such change taking place, saying, that such a thing could not be done without an express order from the Prince. Every victory which Ricci thus obtained, furnished him with a reason for writing to Leopold, whom he assured of the possibility of reforming the whole monkish system, which was principally to be done by taking away all the privileges of the particular monastic dignities, and by making every convent a separate isolated establishment; thus doing away with that *imperium in imperio*.

The Bishop was diligent, notwithstanding all opposition, in scattering abroad the most useful books. One of these was the *Opusculum*, in which the Lieutenant-Governor of Pistoia pretended that the opinions of Calvin and Zuinglius were supported. The question was judged by the theologians of Florence; and being decided in the negative, the Lieutenant only got a sharp rebuke from Leopold for his officious zeal. Ricci was next charged with the superintendence of three congregations of priests at Pistoia; and either to reform or suppress them, as he saw fit. He employed the gentlest means to bring these ecclesiastics to reason, but in vain; and was then obliged to have recourse to compulsion. He also reformed an abuse which had been long existing. The prebendaries of the cathedral of Pistoia enjoyed a very rich revenue without performing any service, which they got done for them by chaplains, to whom they paid a very small stipend, and who were, consequently, the most ignorant of the clergy.

This took place in 1782. The following year, Ric-

ci's enemies commenced their attacks with renewed violence. Placards were put upon the cathedral gate, with the inscription "Orate pro episcopo nostro heterodoxo"—*Pray for our heretic bishop!* He was accused of heresy, and anonymous letters were sent to him full of menaces and abuse. Nor were these threats altogether without meaning; for his domestics had been bribed to admit people into his study; and he was assured that, on his going to his seat in the country, a conspiracy had been formed to take away his life, which design an assassin had offered to put in execution for five hundred crowns. So many dangers alienated from him his friends and relatives. The ministers of the Grand Duke, and even his colleagues, took advantage of it to oppose his designs, and to raise against him new enemies at court. Rome also entered into the conspiracy, and condemned his Catechism; but the Bishop, taking advantage of the approbation which the Inquisition had expressed respecting that of Venice, retained his Catechism in use, without taking notice of the prohibition.

Leopold wished to render his reform general, and every where sent the same instructions and the same orders, but he was not always seconded and obeyed. About this time he addressed a circular to all the bishops of his states, sending them at the same time the pastoral letter of the Archbishop of Saltzburg, of June, 1782. "Leopold intended," says Ricci, "to lead the people committed to his care, gradually to remove from the forms of worship all the superstitious observances that their own ignorance, or that of the clergy, or the ambitious and avaricious spirit of the latter, had mingled with them; and if he succeeded, he hoped to overcome the indifference of reasoners, and *the incredulity of the learned towards religion, the natural results of the gross debasement of the popular worship!*"

This was equally the object of Ricci, who, as soon as he received from the Grand Duke the pastoral letter of the German Archbishop, hastened to follow up the views of the Prince his protector. He reprinted the

letter, and sent a copy to each of the clergy, whom he begged to inform him of what was wanting to be done in his diocese, in order that God might there be worshipped "in spirit and in truth." The curés replied immediately; and it was on their answers that Ricci founded the reforms he introduced into his diocese, and organized those which he afterwards reduced into a system, and which he fixed definitively on occasion of his famous synod.

He limited himself, for the present, to "restricting the functions of the priests to the explanation of the Gospel during high mass, to the Catechism before and after vespers, and to benediction at the end of the ceremony. He moreover ordered, that the litanies should be sung in the vulgar tongue, and that not more than fourteen candles should be lighted!" The people, thus deprived of the splendors of the ceremony, murmured more loudly than ever. Besides this, the Bishop, that the people might be induced to frequent their own parishes, ordered private chapels to be shut on Sundays and holidays; and forbade certain splendid ceremonies to be performed, which attracted the people from their labor, and from attending their parochial churches.

The Grand Duke, seeing that all went according to his wishes in the diocese of Pistoia and Prato, loaded them with his favors. He granted to the seminary of Prato the convent of the Recollets, and gratified the new seminary of Pistoia with the suppressed convent of Claire. He gave the Dominican convent to the Dominican nuns, for the purpose of being employed as a school, under the protection of the Government. He inspected the improvements made by Ricci in his diocese, and was delighted to see that he had suppressed the number of altars, allowing only one in each church. "He encouraged me," says Ricci, "to make the same reforms in all my diocese. The project, however, was interrupted."

The institution for the women styled *Abbandonate*, was now removed to the convent which the Dominican

nuns had quitted. Ricci, hoping in time to form useful women and good mothers of families, obtained permission of the Prince to restore that institution to its original simplicity. The women were now seen publicly at church on Sundays and other holidays. Opportunities were afforded them to marry, and to vend silk handkerchiefs, for the manufacture of which they were famous. The noble governors of the hospital thought these reforms too radical, and addressed themselves to the Grand Duke ; but the latter ratified all Ricci had done.

Unfortunately, all the measures which had been taken to produce a reform by the suppression of the curés of the old congregations, were eluded, or falsely interpreted, in Tuscany, where their execution was committed to persons who brought them into contempt. Rome forgot not to assist in this. Defamatory libels were every where circulated against the Grand Duke and the Emperor, and sedition was preached from a variety of pulpits. Leopold was accused of changing, like Henry VIII. of England, the ancient faith ; and the doctrine of Ricci was represented as full of heresy. None of the benefits produced by the new law were acknowledged by these blind bigots ; and it was only fear which prevented their opposing its execution, when Leopold showed himself decidedly resolved to maintain it. "When a nation," says Ricci, "has blindly submitted for ages to the domination of priests and nobles, these latter do not neglect to profit by their respective situations. Although naturally adverse to each other, they league together to attack those who put their privileges in danger, and who endeavor to break the spell by which the people are bound."

CHAPTER VII.

Ecclesiastical Assembly at Florence.—Acts passed by it.—Answers of the Bishops.

THE Episcopal assembly of Florence is less known out of Tuscany, than the Synod of Pistoia ; yet its history and its acts, will be interesting to those who are desirous of knowing the principal opponents of the ecclesiastical reforms projected by Leopold. We shall add to it a few documents relative to the jurisdiction over the church *which* was exercised by the civil powers. They were printed during the lifetime of Leopold, and were intended to enlighten his clergy, and prepare the way for those measures to which he was desirous that they should agree, for the general welfare of the Tuscans.

I. One of the seven quarto volumes which contain the acts alluded to, is entitled, "History of the Assembly of the Archbishops and Bishops of Tuscany, held at Florence in 1787." It was printed at Florence, in 1788 ; and drawn up as well as the other six volumes, by the Abbé Reginald Tanzini.

The preface contains a deplorable picture of the ignorance and servility of the Tuscan priests at that period.

"The famous constitution *Unigenitus*," it is observed, "which encountered so much opposition in France, was received in Tuscany without the slightest objection or hesitation ; for in a synod of Pistoia held in 1721, it was placed immediately after a short confession of faith.

"Not only were the Bulls of the Popes considered as so many irrevocable laws, which were not subject to the smallest explanation ; but also, all the decrees and consultations of the Romish Congregations. If a book was inserted in the Index Expurgatorius, it was a sufficient reason for ordering it to be burned, or for locking it up in some inaccessible corner, to serve as

food for worms, with the Koran, and writings of atheists and sceptics.

“Every action, and every faulty and inconsiderate expression, which had happened to give offence to any hypocritical or ignorant female, were viewed in the light of crimes which it was proper to bring to the knowledge of the Inquisition, and to punish in a more terrible manner than ordinary offences against the laws of civil society.

“The Count della Gherardesca, Archbishop of Florence, with Incontri, the able opponent of the Casuists, and even Martini, who were his successors, labored to dissipate such gross ignorance. The first had the Catechism of Montpelier translated into Italian, and distributed throughout his diocese. Rome condemned the translation, and the prelate died of chagrin.”

Bishop Alamanni exerted himself in the same way to diffuse information through Pistoia and Prato. “The ignorance in that diocese was so deep-rooted and scandalous, that many of the priests not only did not understand, but could not even read Latin.” Alamanni’s vicar, who had the character of being the most learned person in his diocese, warmly opposed the plan of instituting a theological professorship, under pretence “that it was *dangerous to allow the young clergy to investigate the evidences of religion*, and become acquainted with the arguments which had been employed in attacking it.”

It was the doctrine of Probabilism with which Alamanni had to contend; and which he resisted successfully, though not without much disagreement, by opposing to it the morality of Concina. Such was the ungovernable violence of the two parties, that they had recourse not only to calumny, but to blows; and the Government was finally obliged to banish the heads of the *Anti-Concinniste* faction.

Ippoliti, who succeeded him, followed his example. The writings of the monks of Port-Royal, Arnauld, Nicole, Duguet, Gourlin, and Quesnel, were disseminated during the time that he was Bishop; and Ricci, finally completed their triumph.

The diocesses of Colle and Chiusi followed the same example.

Next follows a statistical account of the ecclesiastical state of Tuscany. In 1784, the Grand Duchy contained the astonishing number of 7,957 secular priests; 2,581 persons in orders of an inferior rank; 2,433 regular priests, with 1,627 lay-brothers, distributed over two hundred and thirteen convents; besides 7,670 nuns, occupying a hundred and thirty-six establishments of seclusion.

Then succeeds a long enumeration of reforms effected by the Grand Duke, before convoking that assembly, which was to put the finishing stroke to his ecclesiastical designs, to prepare their ratification, and to give notice to the approaching national council of the measures which he intended it to complete and put in force.

Leopold endeavored to give fresh vigor to ecclesiastical studies by the foundation of academies, which should be strictly confined to such an object; and he strongly inculcated on the bishops the necessity of keeping a vigilant eye on the morals of the clergy, and of admitting no one into the priesthood, who was not in every respect worthy of becoming a member of it. He farther adopted every possible measure for preventing the too great poverty, and consequent contempt, of the clergy; he rendered the curacies perpetual, and compelled the curates to reside, and to perform their duties with punctuality. Next, he abolished the exemptions and noxious privileges enjoyed by the regular clergy; and it was his desire that they should neither be dependent on Rome, or any superior, or on any bishop residing without the limits of the state. He never appointed any superiors but such as were Tuscans and natives of the kingdom; he suppressed the class of hermits; and he was anxious to prevent the payment of taxes to any one not residing within the kingdom. He prohibited females from assuming the religious habit before the age of twenty-five, and

from making formal profession before they were thirty. He reduced all the female convents where the communal life was not, or could not be strictly observed; and converted them into conservatories entirely dependent on the Government, except in spiritual matters, in which no vows were required, and in which they were obliged to instruct young females, and to keep open school. He diminished the pomp of the church festivals and ceremonies, as well as their numbers; abolished all societies denominated *Pious*, all congregations, confraternities, and third orders, &c.; and substituted for them a single confraternity, called the Confraternity of Charity, which was ordered to assist in the discharge of religious functions, in succoring and relieving the sick, in accompanying the viaticum, &c. He suppressed the Inquisition, and restored to the bishops the right of trying spiritual causes, exhorting them at the same time to conduct themselves with clemency and mildness. He forbade, in the strongest terms, the publication of any address, censure, or excommunication, which had not been sanctioned by the royal *Exequatur*; he totally prohibited and suppressed the bulls *In cœna* and *Ambitiosæ*; abolished the privilege enjoyed by the priests of trying laymen in their courts; subjected every one in holy orders to the jurisdiction of the civil tribunals, when the offence charged was of a criminal character; and left to the ecclesiastical courts, merely the cognizance of matters of a purely spiritual nature.

In a preliminary discourse, the author informs us, that the Tuscan bishops, in obedience to the orders of the Grand Duke, prepared to hold their diocesan synods, when they received from Leopold fifty-seven theological points, which he desired them to consider, and to send him their answers.

The same was signified in a second circular, dated January, 1786, which contained a declaration of the intention of Leopold to purge religion of the abuses and superstitions by which it was disfigured, and to restore it to its primitive purity and perfection. He at the

same time implored them to express their sentiments fearlessly and boldly on that head. "The intelligence and information of the Grand Duke were every where admired, and his fifty-seven points were reprinted in France."

Ricci availed himself of this circumstance to hold a diocesan synod of Pistoia.

The answers of the bishops to the fifty-seven points being far from uniform, the Grand Duke adopted the resolution of calling, previously to the convocation of the national council of which he had sketched the plan, an assembly of bishops, in which the matters intended to be agitated, should be prepared and discussed in such a way as to leave no pretext for opposition or discord. In March, 1787, the bishops were convoked; and their assembly opened in the following April.

The whole of Tuscany was occupied with this event, and more particularly those persons who had either been delighted with the suppression of the Jesuits, or who deplored that unexpected catastrophe. The former opposed, with the Prince and some Tuscan prelates, the pretensions of the Court of Rome and the superstitious notions of the vulgar, particularly the Worship of the Sacred Heart, *Cordicoles*, which was the rallying sign of the secret Society of the Jesuits, *the impenetrable mystery of whose proceedings concealed the continual additions which it made to its members*. The others, on the contrary, employed every means in their power to support that society, and were aided in their pernicious designs by the populace, the monks, and the Court of Rome.

Three archbishops and fourteen bishops attended the first session, and were, each of them, accompanied by two or three legal advisers. A violent dispute took place in regard to the manner of expressing the opinion and will of the assembly, or rather on the canonical mode of procedure in councils of a similar kind; the resolutions of the assembly, on that point, naturally serving as a model for the guidance of the approaching national council. The opposition party, that is five-

sixths of the assembly, loudly called for the plurality of votes, which were in their favor, as the best mode of expressing it; the other party insisted on the unanimity which the Grand Duke had demanded in his circular. The question was finally determined in favor of a plurality of votes, and the Bishops of Pistoia, of Colle, and of Chiusi, were obliged to content themselves with an insertion of their protest against this irregularity.

The second session opened by a recommendation of secrecy in regard to the proceedings of the assembly,—a secrecy which had been violated in so scandalous a manner, in regard to what had taken place at the first meeting of the bishops, that the speeches of each of the members had been very currently reported in almost every house at Florence.

They next proceeded to an examination of the three first points proposed by the Grand Duke. All the members agreed in the opinion expressed by the Prince, except in regard to the deliberative voice which he conferred on those who were only priests; and which the assembly, with the exception of the Bishops of Pistoia, Colle, and Chiusi, and the canons and theologians Vecchi, Tanzini, Palmieri, Longinelli, &c., would only recognise as consultative. In the very animated discussion which took place on the subject, the Bishop of Pescia behaved with the greatest violence, and allowed himself to be so transported with passion, that he accused Palmieri of heresy, because he had proposed an examination of the right of the priests to sit as synodal judges. Lampredi, the adviser of the Archbishop of Pisa, gave the appellation of conventicles to those councils which had permitted such an irregularity; notwithstanding his opponents distinctly proved that such had been the practice in the councils which were held in the times of the primitive Church.

In the third session, the subject of the plurality or unanimity of votes, as necessary for guiding the decisions of the approaching council, was renewed. The fifteen bishops of the opposition party declared in

favor of a plurality, in all cases whatsoever ; the remaining three, only in cases relating to the discipline of the Church, strict unanimity being always required in matters of faith.

These three prelates gave in their vote, concerning the deliberative right of the priests in synodal assemblies, for insertion among the acts.

The assembly next proceeded to an examination of the fourth point, on which no discussion took place ; *the necessity of correcting the missal and breviary having been agreed to by a resolution.* The three metropolitans were ordered to execute this duty with as little delay as possible.

The proposal for using the language of the country in the administration of the sacraments was not so well received ; and the opposition, in endeavoring to combat its propriety, gave proofs of their ignorance, which were very carefully exposed. However, after showing the opponents of the measure that the Latin language was universally understood and spoken, at the period of composing the liturgy, *all of them agreed that it would be proper to employ a language which was familiar to the people.*

In regard to the fifth point, the fathers were unanimously of opinion, that the bishops possessed the privilege of granting all lawful dispensations. The opposition party maintained that the privilege of granting them, enjoyed by the court of Rome, ought to be respected ; but became divided as to whether it would be sufficient to demand from the Pope power to resume their ancient rights, or whether it would be most proper to receive at his hands the power necessary for granting dispensations. The three bishops of the adverse party refused to agree to this last proposition, because it would have the effect of making the episcopal body be looked upon as merely the delegates, in that respect, of the Court of Rome, which ever afterwards, whenever it might think proper to repent of the concession, would resume the privilege under pretence of its being merely a temporary grant. These three

prelates having finally agreed, for the purpose of attesting it by a specific act, to request permission to resume the exercise of their ancient rights, of which they only considered themselves the depositaries, and which they consequently could not give up, the Bishops of Samminiato and of Soana joined them. The others continued their opposition, principally at the instigation of the Archbishop of Pisa.

By order of the Grand-duke, the affair of the Bishop of Chiusi and Pienza was taken into consideration. A pastoral letter in regard to the *hidden* truths of sound doctrine, which he had addressed, in April, 1786, to the clergy and the orthodox part of his diocese, had been approved by several theologians of the highest merit and reputation, and was afterwards printed and published. Rome condemned it in the course of that year by a brief, which it transmitted to the prelate, accusing him of evil intentions, and enjoining him to retract. The prelate, in his reply, cleared himself from the accusation as to the purity of his intentions, of which, he said, no one had any right to judge; demonstrated the absolute impossibility of retracting the whole of what he had advanced in his pastoral address, inasmuch as it contained many unquestionable articles of belief; and requested that the errors of which he had been guilty might be pointed out to him as soon as possible, as he only waited to be made aware of them, in order to retract them. Next year the Pope despatched another brief, much more violent than the first, and full of the grossest abuse, not only of the Bishop of Chiusi, but of the whole episcopal body of Tuscany, of the Government, and of the Prince who was at its head, who, it was there alleged, was tinctured with heterodox opinions. The prelate, after such a gross personal insult, in despair of receiving any justice at the hands of the Court of Rome, communicated the whole affair to the Grand Duke.

There is also an excellent memorial by Ricci, which was read in the assembly, concerning the inalienable rights of the clergy to full and absolute jurisdiction

over their diocesses—rights of which the councils neither wished nor could deprive them, and which they have only explained by the canons; rights which all pastors are obliged to claim in full, and which they must exercise for the good of those committed to their charge. This is the passage which relates to the reservations of the Court of Rome.

“During the early ages of the Church, no instance occurs of any general and perpetual reservation by the councils in favor of the Pope, nor of any limitation of the power of the bishops prescribed by the Popes themselves. What now remains of the applications which were made to Rome at that time, are in fact any thing but reservations or limitations. The practice then was, to communicate to the Bishop of Rome the most difficult and important cases which occurred; to inform her of the fortunate or unfortunate state of the churches which were spread abroad in different parts of the world, and to request her to interest herself in regard to them. The Church of Rome communicated in the same manner her affairs to the other churches, particularly to those which were the most celebrated and most respectable. As they only formed altogether one body and family under the authority of one supreme and invisible head, Jesus Christ, every thing which occurred, whether fortunate or unfortunate, was considered as affecting the whole. The communications to the Church at Rome were naturally of more frequent occurrence than to any other, from its being the most important and respectable. That circumstance, however, does not by any means prove a right of reservation on her part, which is contradicted by what actually took place on such occasions; the most authentic of the ancient decretals being only simple advices or exhortations.

“Rome herself did not even pretend to the possession of any legislative authority. The Popes, when they were consulted on any point, either solved the doubts which were proposed, or prescribed the observation of rules, not on the authority of any laws en-

acted by themselves, or any right of reservation, but on that of tradition and the canons, to which they acknowledged themselves bound to yield obedience. Whenever they attempted a departure from these principles, or sought to convert them to any bad purpose, the rest of the churches protested against the irregularity of the proceeding, and boldly applied to it the proper remedy.

“There can be no doubt that the attempt to legislate for, and to command the rest of the churches, took its origin after the period of the *false decretals*, and that it was not made either immediately or at once; for, in general, even the decrees of Innocent III., and Alexander III. retained, for a long time after that period, the mere character of exhortations and advices. The frequency, however, of these consultations, the universal ignorance which prevailed every where except at Rome, and the political circumstances of the times, made the advice of the Popes to be carried into effect without the slightest hesitation or modification. Hence, in the course of time, they were considered as of equal authority with the laws; while the Popes themselves, not finding any resistance to their injunctions, and pretending to believe that they were invested with authority to pronounce them, went so far as to arrogate that every thing relating to the church was within the cognizance of their jurisdiction.

“Nothing is more common than to see absolute and unlimited power degenerating into excess and tyranny; and such was the case with the authority of the Popes. The extravagances of the despotism of the Court of Rome, gave rise to murmurs and dissatisfaction. The power which they enjoyed was never a source of peace and tranquillity. The concordats of Germany and France, the pragmatic sanctions, the liberties of the Gallican Church, as they were called, are all of them to be considered as so many proofs of the opposition which was made to the attempts of the Court of Rome, and as so many bulwarks raised by the bishops and the people, with the view of preserving to them-

selves some portion of their primitive and indestructible rights.

“The councils of Constance and Basle wished to strike at the very root of the evil; that of Trent attempted to restore to the bishops as much of their authority as the preponderance of the Court of Rome would permit. All these attempts have been unsuccessful; and Rome, by the creation of its various Congregations, has devised so many methods of multiplying its reservations, that they have become so numerous as scarcely to leave at the disposal of the bishops a shadow of the authority which originally formed a part of the episcopal character.”

The seventh article was next taken into consideration. The opposition spent but little time in combating the uniformity of instruction and doctrine demanded by Leopold, that it might let loose all its fury and violence against Augustin, whom it used every effort to blacken, as being the only source of that uniform doctrine. Lampredi went so far as to declare the author a *hot-headed declaimer!* The opposition bishops, not knowing either how to avert the blow with which they were threatened, or how they could deny the authority of a father of the Church so celebrated as Augustin, offered to admit it, on condition that his works should always be accompanied by those of his faithful interpreter, Thomas. The Dominicans had succeeded in making that scholastic writer speak the language of the Jesuits, and they were desirous of making common cause with them.

It was objected, however, that the consequence of such a proceeding, would be a return to all the absurdities of the ancient school; that the writings of Augustin had been perfectly well understood until the time of Thomas, who had rendered them obscure by his attempts to explain them; that Baius, Jansenius, and Quesnel, to whom it was pretended that he had given birth, made their appearance after his interpreter; and finally that the proposition of Mamachi, *Augustinus eget Thoma interprete*, Augustin requires

the explanations of Thomas, had been tacitly condemned by the See of Rome. It was only in consequence of this partial concession on the part of the Court of Rome, that Vasquez, general of the Augustins had recalled the prohibition which he had issued four years before, to quote or name Thomas in any disputes which might arise in future: "the time," said he, "is gone by, in which there is any ground for dreading the bugbear accusation of being tinctured with that chimerical heresy, denominated Jansenism."

The necessity, however, of accompanying Augustin with the explanations of Thomas, was decreed by a majority of the assembly; and a commission named to regulate the method of instruction, and to point out the authors who had been most successful in expounding the doctrines of that writer. It is not a little remarkable that a work was proposed, in which the adversaries of the opposition proved that the writer had inculcated the seditious maxims of Pope Gregory VII., by applying to sovereign princes the epithets of "servants of the Pope;" by decrying the authority of general councils, and converting the Roman Pontiff into an absolute despot. The Archbishop of Florence denominated these grave errors "trifling blemishes," an expression on which Ricci commented with much warmth and severity."

The measures recommended by Leopold in his eighth article for preventing any persons from receiving ordination, except those who had been properly instructed, whose morals were unexceptionable, and whose vocation could not be called in question, as well as for preventing a greater number from being ordained than was absolutely required for the service of the Church, gave the opposition some reason to fear that he wished to diminish the number of the clergy. They accordingly employed their utmost efforts to prove that Tuscany instead of having too many priests, or any who were useless, rather stood in need of some addition to its present number; and urged that opinion with such determined obstinacy, that it became necessary to

allow each bishop to regulate his diocess in that matter as he might deem most proper. The consequence was, that while all agreed to the truth of the principle that no useless priests should be ordained, each reserved to himself the right of ordaining as many as he chose. The clergy denominated Eugenian, belonging to the cathedral of Florence, who were made priests for no other reason than the services which they had rendered to that church, were exempted from all reform. From thirty-three clerks who composed it at its commencement, that body had increased to one hundred and fifty. The grand argument employed throughout the whole of this discussion was, that bishops ought not to tie up their own hands.

The same argument was made use of to combat the ninth point, concerning the necessity of fixing eighteen as the proper age for receiving the tonsure, and entering into the clerical profession; as well as of ridding the churches and the service, of the children employed in the choir, who went through their duty with as little decency as fervor. The fear of seeing the numbers of the clergy diminished by the lopping off of any one of the shoots from which it was increased, was so great, that it became necessary to leave this article also to the discretion of the bishops.

Testimony was given by Longinelli, who was director, during eleven years, in regard to the Eugenian clergy of Florence, the most numerous collegiate body perhaps in the whole of Europe. Speaking of their disorderly habits, he says, "At the time that I resided in that city, I used my best endeavors to eradicate, at least, the most apparent causes and occasions of the irregularities which were committed; such, for example, as the nocturnal service; but I dare not flatter myself that I succeeded in extirpating the whole. The admixture of so many little boys of very tender years, opens so many sources of disorder, that the utmost vigilance of the most attentive master is incapable of detecting them. The children who enter into the society of these young clerks, find these disorders in full ope-

ration, and in a short time they also become infected with the contagion." Longinelli reckons four hundred persons in orders, at Florence alone.

The tenth, the eleventh, and the twelfth articles, furnished but little food for dispute. The opponents of the measures promised to conform themselves to them as far as possible; and the other bishops declared that they would regulate their conduct by the expressions of Leopold, in the same way as with the two preceding articles.

The thirteenth article presents nothing remarkable, except the unanimous adoption, after some little debate, of the principle put forth by the Grand Duke, "that the right of patronage in the case of churches, cannot justify any one in nominating a pastor who is disagreeable to the congregation; and that due deference must be paid in every case, to the right which the people have to good spiritual directors and solid instruction."

The fourteenth article gave rise to a very interesting and very animated discussion on the practice of *asking charity for saying masses*; a means employed by an *avaricious priesthood for retaining the people in ignorance, and inducing them to believe that they thereby purchase the holy sacrifice and its spiritual effects*. The practice had been permitted when the clergy were poor, and was consequently obliged to procure their support from the charity of the people; but since they have possessed in abundance what is necessary for their maintenance, it only served to increase the numbers of the useless clergy, who looked upon their profession merely as a trade and means of subsistence. The opposition, from an opinion that the Church had not enough of property to support all its ministers, without reflecting whether there was not a superfluous number, caused a resolution to be adopted, that the bishops should each of them regulate that matter according to the necessities of their diocesses.

The fifteenth article was treated in the same manner. The opposition party agreed as to the incompatibility of more than one benefice requiring personal residence,

being conferred on one clergyman ; but they would not consent to the cession of several simple benefices, until their joint incomes should amount to sixty crowns, as the Grand Duke proposed, for the support of a chaplain or curate. They saw also in this proposal the much dreaded diminution of the numbers of the clergy, and even openly avowed their fears, saying, that out of five small benefices given to five ecclesiastics, there was always a certainty of finding one really good priest—a circumstance which could not so certainly have been relied on, if they had all been united in one. This reasoning was easily refuted by their adversaries, who insisted on obedience being yielded to the commands of the Prince, by excluding from ecclesiastical orders all the lazy, and consequently useless priests, and by ordaining those only who deserved to be appointed.

In regard to the seventeenth article, the opposition resisted the declaration, that the person promoted to the enjoyment of a benefice in a diocess should in all cases have been ordained within it ; but it allowed, nevertheless, that it would be much better that such were the case.

The twentieth and twenty-first articles furnished matter for a discussion, in regard to those who were merely priests, not attached to any particular Church, and were only obliged to say mass, and to recite the breviary. The opposition party agreed to the propriety of doing away with that abuse.

Oratories and private chapels were attacked with much warmth in the course of the discussion, which took place on the twenty-second and twenty-third articles. The bishops of the opposition party would not hear of their being abolished : they consented, however, to join in prohibiting the celebration of divine service in them on Sundays and festival days, except by permission of the ordinary. The three bishops, and also the Bishop of Soana, demanded their entire suppression ; particularly on the ground of the injustice of always granting the privilege to wealth

and rank, which possess no merit in the eyes of the Almighty.

The twenty-fifth, and following articles, in regard to the decency of conduct required from priests, which necessarily prohibits them from hunting, frequenting the theatres, &c.; the dignity of the service of the Church, without either expense or shows; the ceremonies, fêtes, &c.; were entrusted, as regards their execution, to the prudence of the bishops, according to the particular circumstances of their diocesses.

The affair of the Bishop of Chiusi and Pienza was resumed. Notwithstanding the explicit orders of the Grand Duke, and the formal request of the prelate himself, the opposition party, consisting of his colleagues, peremptorily refused to examine the pastoral address in question, as well as the briefs of the Pope, through dread of offending the latter by re-judging not only what he had condemned, but also the sentence of condemnation itself. At last, they came to a resolution, in which the Bishops of Pistoia and Colle, with those of Sepolchro and Arezzo joined, that each should give in his opinion in writing, and transmit it immediately to the Grand Duke, with a proviso, that their opinions should be communicated to the Bishop of Chiusi—an injunction which Leopold faithfully observed.

The discussion on the twenty-eighth article brought under the attention of the bishops the small curtains, veils, or mantles, which it had been the practice to place before particular images. All the arguments of the bishops, theologians, and canonists, who spoke in favor of the proposal of the Grand Duke, however striking and well-founded, could only prevail on the opposition party to agree on the unveiling of the images which were held in the smallest estimation. According to their opinion, the ancient images might remain veiled, without producing the least inconvenience; provided always that the bishops took care to instruct their flocks not to attach any material or superstitious idea to that mark of respect.

The twenty-ninth article brought under their review

the anniversary masses for the repose of the dead, which had increased beyond all bounds; the exorbitant number of masses generally; the gross indecency of saying *several masses at the same time in the same church; the hurry with which masses are said* by those who celebrate them, who are driven to this indecent conduct, in order to make room for others; *the quarrels which take place* on that subject in the sacristies; *the high or low rate charged for saying masses*, according to the greater or lesser number of the candidates; the application of some masses to a particular person, either living or dead, according to the intention of the celebrator, or his constituent; the privileges attached to particular altars, days, and priests, &c. The Archbishop of Florence was the most obstinate in denying the existence of such abuses, and in wishing to preserve all these matters as they were. All the other prelates allowed that the abuses existed; but would not consent to bind themselves to do any thing more than merely to instruct their flocks to do away with the existing errors, as far as had been required by the Council of Trent.

In the course of this discussion, there occur several very pointed remarks on the personal and local privileges of the clergy; on the Gregorian altars, to which, it was pretended, the power of rescuing a soul from purgatory at will, was attached, &c.

“An error so very gross as that of the privileged altars, is connected with a great number of others in regard to indulgences. The condescension shown by the Church in granting absolutions, is in reality only a diminution of a part of the punishments pointed out by the canons of the Church: a diminution which, during the first ages, was only granted on account of extraordinary fervor in the penitent, or from a consideration of the impossibility of his undergoing the whole of the punishment which had been imposed on him. That favor now passes for a complete remission of sins; while *the absurd and false opinion everywhere prevails*, that whoever has departed this life in

possession of a *plenary indulgence, has no sin to expiate, and is received immediately into the regions of eternal glory!* Under the impression of these and other equally ridiculous and exorbitant ideas of the power of the Pope, both in this and the other world, people have not hesitated to declare that *the souls of the dead were equally capable of receiving the benefit of indulgences.*"

The fundamental principles of religion are not known or recognised, and they either will not or dare not investigate them. They do not even perceive, that the excessive number of privileges of which they boast, are a sufficient proof of their being ill founded.

"If it were true, as is stated by some persons, that a soul was delivered from purgatory each time that a privileged mass, whether local or personal, was said, *purgatory ought not only to be always empty, but to have a very large sum at its debit,* in behalf of the souls who have not yet made their appearance there. In every parish church, by an indulgence of Clement XIII., the grand altar is privileged. There is always one of the same kind in every church of the regular monks, possessed of seven altars; and in every other the privilege exists, at least for some particular day in the week. The number of priests possessing the privilege personally is very great. On a moderate calculation, the privileged masses which are said every day in the city and diocese of Florence alone, amount to several hundreds, and consequently exceed, to a considerable degree, the number of persons who die in the course of the day. The same may be said to be the case proportionally in all Catholic countries."

The thirty-seventh article gave rise to the display of much sound argument and erudition, in support of, and of much obstinacy, bad faith, and ignorance, in opposition to the desire which the Grand Duke had expressed of prohibiting more than one mass from being said at the same time, and of permitting only one altar in the same church. The opposition party

would only promise to abolish those altars which were useless, or indecorously situated.

On the fortieth article, the dispute in regard to the jurisdiction of the curates was renewed. The opposition party would not consent to their possessing any, and maintained that they were, and ought to be, entirely dependent on the bishops.

The theologians and canonists delivered their opinions in regard to the affair of the Bishop of Chiusi and Pienza. All of them agreed in praise of his pastoral address, which they declared to be faultless, and in censuring the replies of the Pope, as well as the calumnies, and vague and undefined accusations which were preferred against the whole of the episcopal body, the Tuscan Government, &c.

Ricci took up the defence of the Bishop of Chiusi with much warmth, insisted on the bishops coming to a determination on the matter as soon and as clearly as possible, and on demanding from the See of Rome ample reparation for the injury; maintaining that if its error was once pointed out, the Court of Rome could not fail to yield to their remonstrances. The boldness of Ricci is so much the more remarkable, as he had just received intelligence of an insurrection which had been excited at Prato, in honor of the Girle of the Holy Virgin.

The fifty-fourth article gave rise to a discussion in regard to the books prohibited at Rome, among which were found, some of those which the Grand Duke proposed to form part of the curate's library. The opposition party rejected the whole, after having declared, that they did not thereby pretend to condemn either the authors or their writings. The argument by which it attempted to justify their conduct in that respect was, that it was much better to give the priests those works only which were exempt from all suspicion, stain, or censure. The three prelates who were of a contrary opinion, accepted the article proposed by Leopold without the smallest hesitation or modification.

Among other books which were pointed out, were

the writings of Quesnel, Le Tourneux, &c., to which Ricci added those of Nicole, "The Provincial Letters," Godeau, Duguet, &c.

The fifty-sixth article was more favorably received. The bishops agreed generally in the necessity of curtailing the privileges of the regular orders, so as to reduce them to the situation of mere coadjutors of the curates, and to render the possession of their properties dependent on their making themselves useful in their parishes, instead of injuring the service of the churches, and attracting the people to themselves solely for their own advantage, as had hitherto been the case.

The fiftieth article required the convents to be independent of their provincials and generals. That independence appeared to the greater part of the opposition to have been sufficiently secured by the laws which already existed in full operation in the Grand Duchy. The bishops of Pistoia and Colle declared that they preferred, according to Leopold's proposal, that each convent should form a separate community, subject only to the control of the bishop of the diocese in which it was situated.

The Grand Duke added four new questions to his fifty-seven articles, which furnished matter for some interesting discussions. One of those related to the baptisteries, which the opposition party would not consent to grant to all parishes, principally at the instigation of the two archbishops of Florence and Pisa; another, to the abolition of the mendicity of the religious orders. The opponents of these measures did not deny the inconveniences resulting from the license which these orders had to beg; but they exaggerated the impossibility, on the other hand, of providing in a proper manner for the support of the mendicant orders.

The important subject of marriage presented one peculiar feature. The opposition party would not agree to the nullity, in a civil point of view, of mere promises, whether written or verbal, as the bishops of Pistoia, Colle, Chiusi, and Soana would have wished them. They agreed, however, with those enlightened prelates,

in admitting that there was a distinct difference between the contract and the sacrament, and even allowed that the sovereign possessed all authority in regard to the former.

The commission which had been appointed to draw up a plan of ecclesiastical study which would render the doctrine of the Church both sound and uniform, at length delivered the fruits of their labors to the assembly. The disputes in regard to Augustin and Thomas, and to systems of theology containing propositions injurious to the rights of sovereign princes, were in consequence renewed.

The opposition party displayed their ill-will on the subject of useless oaths, which they would not consent to abolish, notwithstanding the powerful reasons urged in behalf of such a measure.

This obstinacy brought on a discussion in regard to the oath of vassalage to the Pope taken by the bishops, which Tanzini denominates a feudal remnant of *Hildebrandine policy*.

The opposition party had neither the boldness to support, nor to forbid the taking of it in future; but found the means of getting out of the dilemma, without compromising itself with the Court of Rome, by saying that they had nothing to suggest to the Grand Duke on that head. The bishops of Pistoia, Colle, Chiusi, and Soana implored the Prince to take the matter into serious consideration, and stated their conviction that a simple promise of canonical obedience was all that was required.

The plan of a uniform course of study for the whole of Tuscany was considerably amended by the suggestions of the Bishops of Pistoia, Colle, and Chiusi: the opposition party would not, however, consent to the abolition of the scholastic method of instruction, which those prelates were anxious to extirpate as an invention of the dark ages, and to substitute for it the scriptures, tradition, and the fathers. Neither would they depart from the necessity of employing the writings of Thomas for the interpretation of those of Augustin.

Several memorials from the synod of Pistoia to the Grand Duke were transmitted by the latter for examination to the assembly. Notwithstanding the opinion of the Prince, which on the whole was favorable to them, the assembly received them very coldly. Among other matters, they refused a request in one of them to refer all the fêtes to the Sunday following the day of their occurrence, to abolish the necessity of abstaining from labor on these days, and on the evenings preceding fasts, with that of attending mass not only on these days, but also on the festival days which had been abolished, but which were still attended with that obligation.

Another memorial contained the project of a general reform of the religious orders of every description, which Ricci was desirous of uniting under one single institute, namely, that of Benedict. In that case there would only have been one convent, always situated in the country, for each town, and containing, with the exception of one or two priests required for the administration of the sacraments, only lay monks. The opposition party would not, however, agree on any terms to the execution of that plan.

The nineteenth and last session was held in June, 1787.

The Grand Duke gave orders that the acts of the assembly should remain open during eight days, for the purpose of affording an opportunity of inserting replies to the articles already deposited. He gave audience to the assembly in a body, and testified to them his vexation at the malignant spirit with which they had misrepresented his intentions, and the selfishness which had induced them to reject his proposals; at the little harmony and concord which existed among the bishops, and at the spirit of prejudice and party which had actuated them, &c.

The Prince afterwards prohibited in his states the "Journal of Rome," the "*Projet de Bourg-Fontaine*," and other periodical and defamatory publications, which, after being composed at Rome, were disseminated throughout the whole of Tuscany, "for the pur-

pose of exciting sedition, and increasing the superstition which gave birth to it."

The writer terminates his volume with some very appropriate and just reflections on the progress of knowledge; a progress which had taken place much against the wish of the assembly itself, which, although determined to delay the intellectual revolution which was operating, as much as possible, could not prevent that body from coming up to that which had already taken place. Although there was a predominant party inimical to reform, many resolutions were passed, which, a century before, would have been considered as so many heresies. Without paying the least attention to the Court of Rome, the studies of the regular clergy were distinctly pointed out and determined; themselves subjected to the control of the ordinaries, and the principle of yielding obedience, and rendering themselves useful in the spiritual duty of the parishes, was formally recognised. A uniform system of ecclesiastical instruction, for which Augustin was chosen as the model, was established; the reform of the missals and breviaries was resolved on; all taxes for administering spiritual aid were abolished; and the luxury, dissipation, and gross irregularities of the clergy, were openly condemned.

II. The second volume of the Collection of the Acts, is entitled "Ecclesiastical Points compiled and transmitted by his Royal Highness to all the Archbishops and Bishops of Tuscany, with the replies of those prelates:" Florence, 1787.

The fifty-seven points proposed by the Prince relate to the necessity of holding diocesan synods; to the right of the curates to sit and vote in them; to the indispensable necessity of reforming the missals and breviaries; to the abolition of useless oaths; to the reclaiming of the authority of the bishops which had been usurped by the Court of Rome, especially the power of granting dispensations, and more particularly dispensations in matters relating to marriage; to the uniformity of doctrine and study according to the writings

of Augustin: to the prohibition to ordain priests to sinécures, to permit their receiving the tonsure and being admitted to the rank of a clergyman before the age of eighteen, and to crowd the churches and altars with the children belonging to the choir, as had formerly been the case; to the absolute necessity of ordaining none but priests worthy of being intrusted with the ministry; to the abolition of begging for saying masses; to the impropriety of one individual holding and doing the duty of several benefices; to the necessity of attaching each incumbent to a particular church in the district of his benefice; to the suppression of private oratories; to prohibiting the priests from hunting, frequenting inns, coffee-houses, theatres, gaming-houses, &c., trading, employing themselves in commercial speculations, &c.; to a reduction of the extravagant luxury of the temples, and of the theatrical pomp of festivals and religious ceremonies; to prohibiting the celebration of more than one mass in the same church; to the examination of all relics, denominated sacred, and the elimination of those which were false; to the unveiling of covered images; to the instruction to be given to the people relative to the communion of saints, and to suffrage in behalf of the dead; to the duties of curates; to exhorting the people in the language of the country on the Gospel for each day, and the explanation of the Latin prayers which are repeated; to the books to be furnished by the Government to the curates; to the submission of the regular monks and nuns to the curates and bishops; and to the invalidity in Tuscany of orders, permissions, dispensations from Rome, unless accompanied by the *Exequator* from Government.

The first answer is from the Archbishop of Florence, Martini, the chief of the opposition party in the national ecclesiastical assembly. That prelate principally combats the proposal for correcting the missals and breviaries, the administration of the sacraments in the common language of the country; the validity of dispensations granted by the ordinaries, all innovations

tending to diminish the solemnity and splendor of the external part of religious worship, or the number of priests, clerks, or festivals.

The answer of Sciarelli, Bishop of Colle, and one of the three prelates who favored a thorough reform, follows next. He approves of all the proposals of the Grand Duke; advises following the example of Ricci after his council, both as to the nature and the mode of the reform to be effected; quotes, as one of the oaths which ought to be abolished, that which is taken to the See of Rome at the time of consecration; considers ordinary bishops possessed of sufficient power, without having recourse to the Pope, to govern their diocess, to grant dispensations in all lawful cases, &c.; shows a disposition to abolish all ceremonies, processions, fêtes, &c., and to eject all images which might have been adjudged dangerous or useless; adds several books to those which had been selected, to form the curates' library, and among others, the works of authors accused of Jansenism; and proposes the suppression of some of the very few convents existing in his diocess.

Mancini, Bishop of Fiesole, and one of the most violent of the opposition party, follows next. Before giving his answers, he puts forth several general principles, in which he declares all reform dangerous and unlawful. "It would be highly culpable," says he, "to attempt to re-establish the ancient discipline of the Church, by virtue of which the diocesses had no distinct boundary, the priests were not obliged to lead a life of celibacy, and lived from day to day on the offerings of their flocks, and the communion was administered in both kinds."

He is also of opinion, that it would be excessively ridiculous to deny the right of the Pope to the universal superintendence and control of the Church, since the Protestants themselves had confessed that he was the true basis of the stability of the Catholic religion. "The sole aim of those writers who attack the supremacy of the Pope," says he, "is to sever every political

and religious tie, and to destroy, in the first place, the authority of the Popes by the agency of crowned heads, and in the next, to overturn the thrones of sovereigns themselves, by means of the united power of the people."

Mancini reduces almost to nothing the authority of the diocesan synod, deprives the curates of all right to vote, rejects the proposal for correcting the breviaries, and the use of the vulgar tongue in the liturgy; will not hear of the bishops reclaiming any of their rights which might have devolved to the see of Rome; defends all religious festivals, the pomp of the churches, and the splendor of the images; rejects from the list of books which had been proposed, all those which were suspected of a leaning to Jansenism, and substitutes for them others, which he reckons better; and testifies great dread of intermeddling with the privileges and exemptions of the monks, &c.

Ricci approves of every thing which had been proposed; quotes the synod of Jansenists at Utrecht in 1763, as a model for the Tuscan bishops in their diocesan synods, to which their curates ought to be admitted as judges; and advises the adoption of the greatest caution "against the intrigues of the Court of Rome, which will make use of the monks, or the Nuncio, to overturn the plans of those synods." He hopes that the bishops will not so far forget either their duties or their rights, as to request authority from the Papal Court for granting dispensations, or to square their conduct, in condemning books, by the Index of prohibited books published at Rome—an Index whose authority is not recognised in Tuscany. He requests the immediate assistance of Government in extirpating all abuses and superstitious practices, proposes several books, the greater part of them prohibited, to be given to the curates, &c.

The answers of Franseschi, Archbishop of Pisa, are the most fanatical and intractable of the whole body. He carefully keeps out of view, or openly condemns, all measures tending to diminish in any way the rights

or pretensions, the privileges and prerogatives of the Court of Rome, and its usurpations of the rights of the bishops; the encroachments of the latter on those of the curates; the blind respect of the people towards religious prejudices; the power and wealth of the clergy; the superstition of their flocks, &c.

Borghesi, Archbishop of Siena, also shows himself a zealous opponent. Among other things, he utters exclamations of regret at the boldness which could have prompted any one to insert in the list of books for the curates, the writings of Quesnel, and pronounces a pompous eulogy on the Bull *Unigenitus*, which had condemned him.

Pannilini, Bishop of Chiusi and Pienza, joins frankly in the principles professed by the Government. He dissuades the Grand Duke from assembling his bishops, with whose opposition to his maxims, and attachment to prejudices of every description, he professes to be well acquainted; and gives as his opinion, that they ought not to be permitted to hold diocesan synods, except with the assistance of two deputies from the Government, and on condition that they should adopt for their model, a synod which had already been approved, such, for example, as that of Pistoia. He distinguishes clearly, in the affair of marriage, the nuptial contract from the nuptial benediction. "In the quality of a civil contract it always remained under the control of the princes, and of the laws of the different countries; and was only withdrawn from that control since the time when the Church added the nuptial benediction to the civil formalities required by Government."

The Bishop of Chiusi, in deciding on the different points, always embraces the views of the Grand Duke, and sometimes even goes beyond them.

The answers of Franci, Bishop of Grossetto, and one of the most unreasonable of the opposition party, are scarcely any thing else than an apology for all the abuses, all the superstitious practices, and all the usurpations of the Court of Rome, and of the bishops. That prelate pretends that the suppression of the

society for liberating souls from purgatory, and of the practice of begging for their support, had given rise to doubts in the minds of the people as to the very existence of purgatory itself.

Santo, Bishop of Soana, wholly devoted to the principles professed by the Augustinians or Jansenists, and by the canonists or politicians, approves and even extends Leopold's plans of reform, especially those for erecting in Tuscany an independent national church. He insists with much earnestness on the necessity of reforming the "breviary, which is so full of fabulous and foolish stories;" and proposes the tenth synod of Charles Boromeus, and the synod of Jansenists at Utrecht in 1763, as the best models for the diocesan synods of Tuscany. "The privileges of the Court of Rome," he denominates, are "constantly pernicious," and confesses that "the books proposed by the Grand Duke for the curates are undoubtedly possessed of merit, whatever the partisans of the Court of Rome may say to the contrary;" but requests some little indulgence for his own diocese, which fell in with the jurisdiction of the Pope, was consequently infested with great prejudice, and in which "a book prohibited by the Court of Rome was held in the utmost abomination."

The Bishop of Arezzo, Marani, opposes the schemes of Leopold, but as it seems through policy and timidity, as he gives us to understand in the general considerations, with which he has prefaced his answers. Sudden and unexpected reforms would, in his opinion, disturb the consciences of the simple; and perhaps by that means the tranquillity of the state.

Alexander Ciribi, Bishop of Cortona, acknowledges the necessity of several reforms, and agrees to the execution of some of them.

The most complete and decided opposition was expressed in the answers of Pecci, Bishop of Montaleino. His general objection to all the proposed reforms is, "that *the doctrines* which circulate under the garb of true piety are the most pernicious, because *they tend*

to overthrow, by little and little, the Christian religion itself."

Franzese, Bishop of Montepulciano, was the most obstinate defender of the Court of Rome, and the most zealous enemy of all change or innovation in the shape of reform. Some idea may be formed of this, from a letter which he addressed to the Grand Duke, at the time of sending his answers to the fifty-seven ecclesiastical points.

In that letter he describes Leopold as surrounded with a set of bishops who had shamelessly introduced the most pernicious projects, and who scrupled not to make a tool of the Prince for inflicting on religion the most fatal blows, with the view of entirely overturning it. "They have almost succeeded in carrying their designs into effect in Tuscany," says he, "where they have introduced heresy and schism, which are slowly destroying some diocesses, and where they support that party which, by and by, will separate the Grand Duchy from the Church of Rome.

"They have already succeeded in making the Tuscan church take several steps towards complete independence. We see monks and nuns reduced to a regular state by the sole authority of bishops, who really are apostates, perjurers to God, and rebels to the Church."

He next proceeds to make several violent attacks on the changes introduced into the calendars of different diocesses, on all licenses, and especially on matrimonial dispensations granted by those only holding the rank and authority of bishop. "What is the consequence of these things? In the dominions of your Royal Highness there are apostates and rebels to God, persons who keep concubines, and who live in that state of damnation, without the smallest remorse."

He next attacks what he calls the "schismatic Synod of Utrecht, which one party, says he, praised in the highest degree, and endeavored to disseminate copies of its acts among the people. Speaking of the "Ecclesiastical Annals of Florence,"—"I protest before God,

that they are sufficient to inspire any true Catholic with horror, and that they are a scandal to the whole Church."

He complains in the bitterest terms of the suppression of the convents. "It is disgusting, to hear enemies exclaiming every where with all their might, that the monastic orders are useless."

He endeavors to prove that the Jansenism of Tuscany, which he terms the growing heresy, was making every imaginable effort to establish "natural religion, which, to say the truth," adds he, "is only a brutal deism." This is the end aimed at by all these new deists, who have, by deceiving them, contrived to glide in among the Catholics: their sole aim is, to degrade the church of Tuscany to a level with the deism of Holland, of England, and a great part of Germany."

The Bishop of Montepulciano, in his answers to the fifty-seven points, instead of consenting to the correction of the breviary and Romish missals, which, in his opinion, have no occasion to be altered, implores the Grand Duke to give orders for re-establishing them in their ancient form in all the diocesses in which, to the great scandal of true believers, they had attempted to reform them. He represents the doctrine of Augustin as extremely dangerous, since "Luther, Calvin, and Jansenius, with all his adherents, have erroneously pretended that their false doctrines were founded on the writings of that father of the Church." These innovators, says he, easily convert his doctrines to the worst purposes, "especially those relating to grace and free-will, whenever they wish to deprive man of that same free-will, in order to set down every thing to the account of grace." He proscribes even the celebrated work of Muratori, "Devotion Regulated," that writer having, in his opinion, shown himself, in that work, "equally deficient in talent and in genius."

It may easily be conceived, that, after condemning Muratori, he does not hesitate to threaten with damnation "all the rash projectors and enemies of the Catholic religion, who have had the effrontery to pro-

pose the reading of books prohibited by the Court of Rome." The "Moral Reflections of Quesnel,"—"in which," says he, "the Church, by a decided and unalterable sentence, has borne testimony to a hundred and one heresies, errors, and dangerous opinions," &c.; the Treatises of Tamburini, "a declared enemy of the Holy See;" and the "Ecclesiastical History of Racine," which fills the mind with false and mistaken prejudices against the Court of Rome, &c.—he terms, the most *venomous* books.

III. The opposition which Leopold encountered from the majority of the higher order of the clergy, at the time of the ecclesiastical assembly of Florence, ought to be set down to the account of corruption and knavery.

The Prince, on his accession to the throne, had adopted every possible means for diffusing information and knowledge among his subjects, and particularly among those who are entrusted with the guidance and instruction of others.

In 1770, he ordered to be begun the publication of a work, entitled "Collection of Writings relative to the dependence of Ecclesiastical jurisdiction on Civil authority." The work contained all the reports, memoirs, and consultations, composed in different Catholic countries by order of their governments, with the view of turning the lights of reason and philosophy to the maxims and conduct of the clergy, and of *setting bounds to the insatiable cupidity, and inextinguishable thirst after power*, which the Court of Rome had always manifested, and which had proved *an invincible obstacle to the political, moral, and religious improvement*, both of the people and of their sovereigns.

We quote from this collection what appears to be most in unison with the principles of Ricci, of Leopold himself, and of the enlightened men of his age, who were desirous of seeing, in the homage rendered to the Almighty, a guarantee for the practice of all the social virtues,—and in the ministers of religion, the comfort-

ers of man, the messengers of peace, the friends of good order and humanity.

IV. In the defence of Cecile Fargo, who had been accused of sorcery, pronounced at Naples by the Counsellor Joseph Raffaele, March, 1770, we read as follows :—

“ Christians yielded the most complete obedience to the civil authority, whilst they were weak. As soon, however, as they felt themselves less dependent on its protection ; when they became more numerous, and more wealthy, they still professed fidelity to the civil authority, and allowed that it had a right to exact it from them ; but they used this profession of humility and obedience, merely for the purpose of increasing those immunities and privileges which inconsiderate princes were so imprudent as to offer to them, and which ended in releasing them from the performance of every duty towards society, or its members.

“ When the world became Christian, the people ceased to enjoy any prerogatives, or privileges, and became what the mass of the population of heathen countries had formerly been, and what the mass of the people in most countries still is—the useful and energetic, but despised and oppressed portion of society. The only chosen and privileged class, the only one that enjoyed the pleasures and comforts of life, was the clergy, which dictated its own privileges, but recognised the performance of no duties.

“ The transference of the seat of empire to Constantinople was the origin of the power of the western clergy, and of the Bishop of Rome, the most powerful prelate in the Latin Church. The heresy of the Iconoclasts was adroitly employed by him to render himself entirely independent of the Greek government.

“ The obligations contracted towards the Court of Rome by the Carlovingian race, which had been established, or rather legitimated in the possession of the throne of France by the Bishop of Rome, who had not as yet the hardihood to call himself its sovereign, with the gratitude evinced by the same race in return for

the Empire of the West, which they soon after received at his hands, rendered the Popes formidable, first to the Lombards, who were masters of Italy, and next to the Emperors of the West themselves.

“Gregory XI. mounted the Papal throne, and reduced into a regular system, the whole of that hitherto unshapely mass of privileges and exemptions, which had been slowly constructed, partly on the ignorance and superstition of the people, and partly on the weakness and cowardice of the different governments. Instead of considering, or allowing others to consider, those prerogatives and privileges as derived from the good-will of those emperors who had been recognised as their sovereigns, the Popes boldly laid claim to them as original and incontestable rights; became, *by divine right*, what it was now impossible to prevent them from becoming; and even carried their unfounded and ridiculous pretensions so far as to grasp at absolute universal empire. The two Councils of Lateran sanctioned this gigantic system, by the adherence, believed to be infallible, of deputies from the whole Church, who, they said, had been assembled in the name and by the authority of the Holy Spirit. From that period, whoever ventured to attack either the persons or the property of the clergy, was threatened with the spiritual thunder of the Church, and its awful consequences, both in this world and the next. The energies and the intelligence of mankind were thus completely paralyzed, and society, in the very period of its infancy, fell into the weakness and decrepitude of age.¹

“The clergy, now constituting an immense army without either restraint or moderation, formed in every kingdom a kind of separate state, which did not recognise the control of the sovereign, and was consequently superior to him. At first, it only yielded obedience to its immediate chiefs, the bishops and archbishops; but by their means connected itself in a very short time with the supreme head of all, the Bishop of Rome; and a theocracy, in consequence, gave law to the whole Christian world.”

V. The twenty-fourth number, in which Bianchi demonstrates that the clergy are subject to the civil power, and that they ought to bear a part in contributing to the expenses of the Government, proves, that the privileges granted to the clergy, through the weakness of sovereigns, were in a short time converted into canons, which contained what it denominated its rights. By degrees, new canons were enacted for the extension of the old, and new rights created by the priests themselves, in aid of those which they owed to the indulgence or concessions of Government. In this manner was the enormous edifice of sacerdotal power constructed; a power supported by civil and religious laws, composed of the real and personal immunities of the clergy, and declared by it to be sacred and inviolable. To attempt the least encroachment upon it was high treason—a crime at all times dreadful, but more especially so, when the clergy are invested with the supreme authority, and are considered by the ignorant and superstitious multitude as the avengers of that God whose will they profess to declare.

VI. It was, however, more especially the Bull *In cæna Domini*, as containing a sketch of all the pretended rights of the Pope, which irritated the Catholic governments of that period; particularly after the scandalous affair of the Duke of Parma, in which the Pope had the impudence to bring forward that Bull in support of his insolent proceedings. The Senate of Venice had a report of the whole drawn up for their information, March, 1769.

In that document it is proved to demonstration, by a minute and careful examination of each article of the anti-social Bull *In cæna Domini*, that in many of its points it is destructive of all civil authority, and that it wounds it deeply in the others; that if it were scrupulously observed by the clergy and their flocks, all government would be at an end, and the Pope would be sole master both of the actions and consciences, the persons and the property, of every people, who, in conse-

quence, would be alike destitute of princes and magistrates, of councils and bishops.

The Republic of Venice never consented to receive the Bull *In cœna*, and proscribed it frequently, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the Pontifical Nuncios; rejecting on all occasions the interference of the confessors employed by the Court of Rome to relieve its subjects from the censures incurred by contravening the provisions of the Bull, and preventing them from executing their functions.

The Court of Rome, which never blushed to employ any means which had been useful to them in former times, and might still be so in future—Rome, to this very day, delegates authority for granting absolution in those cases which it has reserved in the Bull *In cœna Domini*; and there are *priests, subjects of anti-Catholic governments, who are not only furnished with that authority, but who also exercise it without hesitation.*

VII. The Republic of Venice ordered an account to be drawn up, by an ecclesiastical commission of its own appointment, of the amount of money which was annually extracted from its subjects by the pernicious organization of the clergy. The Court of Rome still continues to levy the same contribution as it formerly did on the inhabitants of Catholic countries.

The annual revenue of the ecclesiastical benefices held by the subjects of the republic, and not situated within its territories, amount to 260,000 francs.

The ecclesiastical pensions payable to foreigners, to 75,000 francs.

Twenty-eight bulls, for canonical induction to patriarchal, episcopal, and archiepiscopal sees, obtained in the course of ten years, had cost nearly 5,000,000 francs; without reckoning in that enormous sum, the very great expense incurred by those who had been nominated, in making a journey to Rome for the purpose of being consecrated.

During the same ten years, 50,000 francs had been

paid for forty-two Bulls for abbeys, priories, and provostships.

One hundred and ten Bulls for pensions, which had been granted, amounted to 78,800 francs.

Two hundred and twenty-five Bulls for parish churches, had been worth to the Pope 130,000 francs, without reckoning what the curates must have paid privately to the cardinals, if they had been maintained during the months reserved for these princes of the Church.

Twenty-seven Bulls for canonships, collegiate churches, &c. cost more than 80,000 francs.

Forty-five Bulls for collations to one hundred and fifty simple benefices, amounted to 12,600 francs.

During the year 1768, there arrived from Rome 1130 rescripts, indulgences, privileges to altars, dispensations relative to the granting of holy orders, permissions to maintain private chapels, diplomas conferring the title of count, &c.; the whole for the sum of 44,500 francs.

Rome granted, during the same year, 589 dispensations for marriages, which brought an enormous and unknown sum into its treasury. All that it was possible to discover as to its amount, was, that those dispensations which were requested and obtained without any good reason being alleged, cost ten times, and even twenty times, more than those for which any real cause was assigned. The report reckons all these dispensations, on an average of the highest and lowest rates, at a sum of 1,050,000 francs.

The report also states, that the conduct of the Court of Rome, in this respect, is contrary to the recommendations of the Council of Trent, which in the fifth chapter of its twenty-fourth Session on reform, gives its advice to grant dispensations of marriage as seldom as possible, and orders them to be issued, in all cases, free of expense. The same Council forbids granting them in the second degree, unless for reasons of a grave and public nature, and in favor of princes and kings only, whose marriage may affect the interests of religion or the state. The Court of Rome, without paying the

slightest regard to that prohibition, granted in the course of a single year, twenty-four dispensations to citizens of the Republic, whose only claims to the indulgence of the Papal Court were the large sums of money which they were willing to place at its disposal.

VIII. "At first," says another memoir, addressed to the Venetian Senate, "the Popes graciously entreated the bishops, to confer some ecclesiastical benefice on the poor priests, whom they recommended to their protection; but in a short time these entreaties were changed into exhortations, the exhortations into admonitions, the admonitions into orders, threats, excommunications, pecuniary fines, and finally, into an absolute despotism, which overthrew the whole system on which benefices had originally been granted. By these means not only were mandates, expectations, anticipations, and all the other stratagems devised by the Court of Rome for its own advantage and the ruin of others, introduced; but a large field was opened for keeping alive every abuse by which the Church was disfigured, and the patrimony of the poor exhausted, and which have given rise to so many grounds of difference in the last general councils. The regulations of the Roman chancery, the plurality of benefices, translations from one living to another, resignations in favor of particular individuals, assistantships, with a clause for future succession, commendams, resignations in court, first fruits, dispensations from possessing the qualifications required by the canons, and a great number of other irregularities and abuses deplored by the pious, and condemned by the decrees of the Church, are still in existence, and still practised in the same way as they formerly were.

"So far all this only relates to the interests of religion. But is the civil authority less injured by this overthrow of principle and good order? Ought it to sit in patience and allow a foreign prince to distribute its revenues and its wealth, to levy contributions, and to attach to him by an oath of fidelity those with whose government it is intrusted, without his having any

title to allege in favor of such authority, or being able to exhibit the least claim for such sovereign dominion?"

IX. The abuses caused by the excessive number of masses, were attacked in a vigorous and unanswerable manner, in a memoir on that subject.

Perpetual foundations for saying masses, and legacies destined for their support, were unknown in any part of the Church during several centuries, and still are so in the East, where the maxims and customs prevalent in primitive ages, have been more strictly maintained. Devout persons occasionally bequeathed gifts to the Church for the remission of their sins, but without imposing any particular condition or obligation.

The parish mass was, for a long time, the only one which was celebrated; and Christians were bound by the canons of the Church to assist at it. Until the sixth century, bread and wine, intended to relieve the most urgent wants of the Church and of the poor, were the only offerings presented to the priest who celebrated mass. In the ninth century private masses began, and they came into great vogue, principally by means of the monks. The secular clergy showed themselves eager to take advantage of them, and great murmuring and dissatisfaction were occasioned by such an unheard-of innovation on the established practice of the Church. These murmurs redoubled, when the private masses became *solitary*, that is, when they were celebrated by a single priest, without the presence or assistance of any one.

The great increase in numbers of the clergy gave rise to such an increase in the number of masses, that it at last became necessary to say several at the same time in the same church. The parish masses were in consequence given up, and the people were obliged to accustom themselves to join bodily and mentally in the masses which were said by the priests for a particular purpose, either expressed or understood.

Hence arose the practice of asking charity in behalf of masses, and next that of paying a salary to the

celebrator, or *the price of the sacrifice*, as they impudently termed it. Popes Eugenius II. and Leo IV. made the most vigorous exertions to prevent this strange abuse, which did not come into general practice till after the twelfth century.

“To complete our shame and extreme wretchedness, the sacrifice of the mass has been profaned to such a degree both by the regular and secular clergy, that they have had the impudence to establish fixed rates for saying masses, like so many mechanics and mercenaries; rates which vary according to the fatigue and quantity of time required for celebrating them. The practice came so much into vogue, that nothing was so common as to augment the price for masses which were chanted, and for those celebrated at a privileged altar. The priest turned every circumstance to account—the devotion of the people towards a particular saint, a relic, an image reported to be miraculous,” &c.

This devotion, powerfully stimulated by the innumerable contrivances which the avarice of the monks suggested, caused a great influx of masses into their convents. They had consigned to them, in the course of a very short time, more than they could celebrate; but being reluctant either to put a check upon the credulity of the public, or to restore what had only been given them upon conditions with which they were unable to comply, they addressed themselves to the Court of Rome, which agreed to divide with them what they had no title to, and allowed them to retain the remainder with a clear conscience. “The monks were thus released from all obligation to repair the evils, of whatever magnitude, which they had originated, by celebrating one or more masses, which the common people ironically termed the great mass; or, by paying a money tax for the support of Peter’s at Rome, which the agents of that court denominated the Composition tax.”

The people requested to be informed if a single mass was equivalent to many? and in case of its being so,

why the priests burthen themselves with so many at the same time, and collected the price of celebrating them? If on the other hand one is not as good as several, they requested to know why these priests did not restore the money which they had received on promises which they would not keep?

After this question, to which it would be very difficult to reply in a satisfactory manner, the memorialist enters into various details in regard to the different indulgences granted by the See of Rome at different periods, to the religious orders which had been charged with the celebration of more masses than they could perform, and from which they desired to be released. In the seventeen century these indulgences came into fashion; in the eighteenth they were multiplied beyond all precedent, by the prodigality of Benedict XIV.

In the church of the Dominicans of the order of John and Paul at Venice, there were found in arrear in 1743, 16,400 masses; and the following year, in the church of Lady dell-Orto, the duty of which was performed by Cistercian monks, no fewer than 14,300.

X. In a memorial presented to the Junto of the Ten Sages, commissioned *ad pais causas*, June, 1767, we read that, until the time of Gregory VII., the very few oaths which had been taken to the Bishop of Rome by the other bishops, were only simple promises of canonical deference. Hildebrand exacted with rigor as duties of fidelity, what his predecessors had very rarely solicited as pledges of union. He changed the formula of the oath, and exacted that homage from his colleagues, whom he was desirous of reducing to the situation of vassals to the Roman See, whose subjects they become at the very moment when the authority which they acquire over their fellow citizens ought to leave them free from all obligations except those due to their country.

The next paper proves, by the most natural interpretation of each article in the oath taken by the bishops to the See of Rome, that it is nothing else but

an express and solemn promise on oath to betray their respective sovereigns, and that each clause of the oath imposes an obligation to commit high treason.

XI. The canon law is attacked by a monk named Francis-Wenceslaus Barkovich. "The letters which we have quoted, the decretals of Mercator, are full of maxims unknown before that time: dictated by the grossest ignorance, they abound in the most glaring anachronisms; are wholly unworthy of the majestic simplicity of the first ages of Christianity, and entirely contrary to its ancient practice. The discovery of the imposture came too late. The Court of Rome, taking advantage of the ignorance which everywhere prevailed, laid hold of it at once, first for establishing, and afterwards for consolidating and extending beyond all precedent, the authority which she arrogated to herself.

"The principal doctrines inculcated in that fraudulent collection are, that the Pope is bishop of all Christendom; that all causes of importance ought to be brought by appeal before the See of Rome; that causes relating to bishops belong exclusively to the Pope; that he ought to convoke and preside in all general councils; that no council, whether general or particular, is binding unless approved of by the Pope; that he has authority to allow bishops to give up the churches to which they have been appointed, for the purpose of being translated to a richer and more illustrious See; that apostolic appeals to the See of Rome were usual before the Council of Sardica; that metropolitans were never allowed to enter upon the exercise of their functions before obtaining the *pallium* at the hands of the Pope; that from the very origin of Christianity, it was an established and undisputed maxim that every church which departed from the usages and ceremonies adopted by the Church of Rome, ought to be considered as heretical, &c.

"Notwithstanding the measures adopted in latter times for checking the excessive power of the Popes, that power is still sufficiently enormous to encourage the hope of re-establishing and enlarging it. Sove-

reign princes will have always grounds for fear whilst the bishops are treated as subjects by the Court of Rome ; whilst money shall continue to flow in abundance towards Rome, and while the favors which these princes allow her to distribute with such profusion, shall have the power of procuring for her partisans and abettors."

XII. An important and excellent memoir was drawn up by the commission which the Republic of Venice intrusted with the reform of the public institutions for education.

The redactor of the memoir proves that the Government had done but little towards the emancipation of the civil authority by proscribing the Bull *In Cæna Domini*. "The reform which is most required," says he, "is that of the studies of ecclesiastics, in order to prevent anti-social principles from becoming the religion of those who are destined by their profession to instruct and direct the people. For this purpose it is necessary to abolish the canon law and the decretals, which are the real sources of that monstrous system—the Bull *In Cæna Domini* being only a natural and necessary consequence of it.

"In these *decretals* a doctrine is taught, which is contrary to every law both human and divine. By these decretals a monarch is set up who recognises no other limits to his dominion than the universe ; whose laws and commands the kings and princes of the earth are bound to obey ; and if any of them shall dare to maintain his right to sovereignty, he is declared guilty of treason and rebellion ; his subjects are released from their oath of fidelity, and his territories exposed and abandoned to the invasion of foreigners.

"This despot is also declared to be the legislator of the universe ; to be possessed of authority to alter, reform, or abolish, the laws of all kingdoms and of all states ; to be a judge, to the decisions of whose tribunal all the sovereigns of the earth must submit ; whose decrees are infallible, and admit of no appeal, because those which he pronounces are held to be the decrees

of God himself; and those who appeal from them, are declared to be rebellious and refractory, and are deprived of all communion with the pious.

“This code has no other end in view than that of establishing despotism and universal monarchy throughout the whole earth. All sovereigns are bound to yield homage and obedience to that formidable monarch; and if the least opposition is exhibited, rebellions, wars, and insurrections, are the consequence; while the sovereigns, who, in defence of their just rights, have had the misfortune to offend this priest-king, are deprived at once of their kingdoms and their lives—a melancholy prediction of the misfortunes and premature death of Joseph the Second and Leopold.

“A bold and enterprising militia,” the Roman priests, “animated by fanaticism, cupidity, and ambition, bound by vows and solemn oaths, and always ready, on the slightest signal from that monarch, to whom, by the rules of its institution, it is called upon to yield the most blind and slavish obedience, to excite the storm of rebellion and insurrection,—that militia, which is spread over every state in Christendom, is fraught with danger and alarm; because, by taking advantage of the superstition and ignorance of the people, whose good opinion it has acquired by a false character for piety and knowledge, it is sufficiently powerful to give just cause of dread, mistrust, and jealousy, to every Government in whose states it is placed.

“The Jesuits, a veteran and zealous troop, have obtained from this grateful monarch the most signal rewards and privileges: in granting which, the people have not only been deeply injured, but their rights have been sacrificed, because the Jesuits have shown themselves more anxious and careful than any other to extend the limits of the new empire, and in every state have not scrupled to excite discord and sedition for the purpose of maintaining and defending it. Even in our day, though nearly overcome by the repeated attacks which have been made upon them, they are both terrible and formidable to the most powerful mo-

narchs of Christendom, who do not believe that they can be secure from those just fears, suspicions, and jealousies, with which they have hitherto been harassed, until the order be completely abolished.

“The code of decretals was received by Raymond de Pennafort, without examination, judgment, or inquiry, in ages which were darkened by superstition and ignorance; and was compiled, according to the prejudices of these unhappy times, with no other view than that of investing the spiritual power with an absolute, despotic, and arbitrary authority. All the decretals attributed to the first three centuries of the Church are clearly false; while many of those said to belong to succeeding ages, have evidently been falsified to suit and accommodate the new system of Government.”

These decretals have regularly been invoked whenever it became necessary to employ a pretended defence of the rights of God as a pretext for invading those belonging to Cæsar. These latter rights were, however, recognised by our Savior himself in the presence of Pilate; were supported by the Apostles in their preachings; respected by the early saints; and their lawfulness inculcated by the fathers of the Church. They were exercised by the Emperors until the eleventh century; and if they were at length overthrown by the wars between the priesthood and the empire, and weakened by the factions of the Guelfs and Ghibelins, who stained with blood both the Church and the state, the priesthood alone is accountable for it to religion and humanity.

“To these decretals, and to the unfounded principles of divine right, are to be attributed the abuse which was made of the power of the keys, as well as the doctrine of direct and indirect dominion, which was hatched to establish a despotism infinitely more absolute and horrible than was ever witnessed in any eastern monarchy. To the same source are to be traced those interdicts which were employed to excite, to aid, and to justify the people in rebelling against, murder-

ing, deposing, and banishing, their sovereigns:—that universal government of the Church which deprived the bishops of that authority which was conferred upon them by Jesus Christ, the only supreme head and shepherd of the Church; those personal and real immunities so hurtful and injurious to the lawful jurisdiction of princes and magistrates; as well as all those other monstrous doctrines which have destroyed every idea and principle of human and divine right.

“Gregory VII. was the author of this new doctrine, and of the differences which took place between the priesthood and the empire. Supported by the forces and the fanaticism of the Countess Matilda, he carried on for several years an unjust war with the Emperor Henry IV., merely because he would not relinquish his rights. For these reasons, which ought to have rendered his memory odious both to the Church and to the State, Gregory was placed on the list of martyrs, as is attested by the lessons in his Office, which were published in 1728.”

That Pope is praised in the office alluded to, as the one who, since the time of the Apostles, has done most service to the Church, which he governed, not according to human wisdom, but in accordance with the dictates of the Holy Spirit. The author of the memorial remarks, that the doctrine which he inculcated was not that spirit of peace, of charity, of concord, of obedience and submission to established authorities, which the Gospel recommends to the practice of its disciples.

Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, was also inserted in the catalogue of saints, because he taught that the Pope had absolute authority over bishops, and that the bishops were completely independent of the civil power, to which he would not allow them to take the usual oath of fidelity.

“In our days a Cardinal found it necessary to throw all his influence and energy into the scale, in order to prevent Bellarmin, the most ferocious abettor and defender of that anti-christian doctrine, from being raised to the rank of a saint. The only title which that

haughty prelate could possibly have to such distinction, was this; that he extended the despotism of the spiritual power farther than had been imagined before his time, either by human pride, by fanaticism, or by the adulatory spirit of his brethren, the Jesuits."

The memorial next presents us with a just and energetic description of the evils which were accumulated by the spiritual power, on the heads of those princes who were bold enough to attack these absurd pretensions; and also with a striking picture of the extravagant proceedings of the successors of Gregory VII.

"Louis IX. of France was threatened by the Pope with all the terrors of an interdict, because, in an assembly of the principal lords of his kingdom, he had given orders that none of his vassals should be responsible to the ecclesiastical tribunals in matters purely civil, and that the clergy should appear before the secular judges in all causes relating to their fiefs. A few years afterwards, the Pope's legate sanctioned in a council, held in France itself, the usurpations of the clergy, notwithstanding their being so hurtful and injurious to the authority of the sovereign. The kings and princes of the earth had indeed good reason to dread even the sight of these domineering ministers of the spiritual power; for by their mandate, councils were annually assembled, without the knowledge or consent of the sovereign, in the very heart of his dominions, which, under the specious names of the liberties and immunities of the Church, confirmed the despotism and independence of the clergy. In these councils, war, peace, alliances, trade, policy, laws, modes of government, judicial systems, *the rights of monarchs*—every thing was discussed and regulated according to the views and interests of these formidable monarchs. Supported by that bold and enterprising militia which every where fomented war, discord, sedition, rebellion, ignorance, superstition, and fanaticism among the people, they were sure of their

laws and commands being received and respected by every sovereign of Christendom.

“Rome, during those ages of darkness and superstition, saw all the sovereigns of Christian states within her walls : some of them imploring pardon for having undertaken a just war in defence of their most sacred rights ; others declaring themselves the vassals and tributaries of the Church ; many receiving a precarious investiture of those states which they had obtained *either by conquest*, by consent of the people, or by inheritance through a long succession of ancestors ; and all of them obliged to submit, in full view of the people, to the vilest and most humiliating acts of degradation.”

The priests, though called upon by their profession to be the messengers of indulgence and universal charity, were only the instruments of Popes for excommunicating their enemies and opponents.

“In these latter times, during which ignorance and superstition began to be diminished, interdicts have become less frequent, notwithstanding the attention of the Popes to preserve and confirm in their Bulls that sanguinary and antichristian doctrine to which they are indebted for their exorbitant power. The Bulls of Alexander III., of Boniface VIII., and Innocent III., cannot be perused without feeling the utmost horror and indignation. Paul IV., that ferocious and violent Pope, who with so much audacity and insolence cited before his terrible tribunal at Rome, the two Emperors, Charles V. and Ferdinand III. his brother, because one of them had resigned, and the other accepted the imperial authority without his consent,—this Pope, in a Bull signed by all his cardinals, decreed, that in future, every count, baron, marquis, duke, king, or emperor, who had fallen into or should be convicted of, heresy and schism, should be totally deprived of their dominions ; that they should be incapable of possessing any in future ; and that they could never be restored to their former condition. Every action, however innocent, which did not favor his system of despotism

and universal monarchy, was declared by that Pope to be heresy. His pride made him reject the obedience which Elizabeth of England proffered to him, and his threats confirmed that kingdom in its separation from Rome.

“The interdict lately fulminated against the Duke of Parma, ought to awaken the dread and jealousy, formerly entertained by every sovereign prince, of the Court of Rome. Such a recent example of the exercise of the authority which she arrogates to herself, *over a member of a family which holds the first place in Europe in point of authority, grandeur, and power, and in times so critical and difficult for herself*, ought to inspire every sovereign with a just dread, lest, taking advantage of those opportunities with which more favorable circumstances may supply her, she again attempt to put her despotic power in force against them.

“Such is the doctrine contained and taught in decretals—a doctrine both sanguinary and seditious—a doctrine which establishes the despotism of the spiritual power, and the slavery of every sovereign—a doctrine which foment the ambitious and independent spirit of the clergy, and excites rebellion among the people; a doctrine which has caused and will continue to cause constant dread, suspicion, jealousy, and distrust in the bosom of every sovereign. It is one which strikes at the root of every natural and divine right; a doctrine which overturns the most solid foundations of human society, and which, in bringing back the times of ignorance and superstition, will renew those scenes of discord which took place between the priesthood and the empire. It is, moreover, a doctrine which must have hindered, and will continue to impede, the propagation of the Gospel among those heathen and idolatrous nations when they become aware that there is in Christianity a power which can excite, at pleasure, sedition, war, and rebellion among the people; which foment and nourishes fanaticism and superstition; and which has extended the spiritual empire even beyond the limits of the known world.

“The line of demarcation pointed out by Pope Alexander VI., who disgraced the Church by so many horrible crimes and such abandoned wickedness, is well known. In order to prevent war and discord between the Spanish and Portuguese, he fixed the limits within which they might carry on their conquests in regions altogether unknown, over which *he* could have no other rights than those of fanaticism and universal monarchy, and the new conquerors none but those acquired by force, by violence, and usurpation. This doctrine of the decretals, has more than once obliged Christian princes to violate treaties which they had entered into with infidels, and confirmed with oaths—the strongest bands of human society; and it has enslaved the church which was free in times of the fiercest persecution. It is a doctrine which was totally unknown in those ages of the Church most celebrated for their piety; it is a doctrine completely at variance with the spirit, and with the precepts of the Gospel.”

In continuation of what he had said in regard to the false titles by which the sacerdotal power is maintained, the author of the memoir expresses himself in the following terms: which we copy, as even in our days these same titles exist, because the ecclesiastical authority shows a strong desire to turn them to account, and because imprudent Governments are laboring to procure it the means.

“It was during the eleventh century that those false decretals were published, in which, besides the independence of the clergy, it was distinctly inculcated that the orders of the Court of Rome, were to be obeyed every where, and by every class of persons without delay or contradiction, and that no civil law had any force or authority against its canons and decrees; that the tribunal of the church is superior to that of the sovereign; and that the laws of the state ought only to be obeyed when they are not contrary to those of the church. About this period also were falsified those ancient laws and canons which militated against this monstrous system. The clergy supported by these

false documents, not content with the independence which they had acquired by open rebellion, and rendered audacious by the ignorance and attachment of the people, usurped a great part of the authority which belonged to the magistrates. After this usurpation, the authority of sovereigns was overthrown and demolished by means of false documents, which taught the superiority of the spiritual over the temporal power; that princes were inferior to bishops, and that they ought not to undertake or regulate any thing except according to their advice.

“Such was the monstrous system, so totally contrary to the doctrines of the Gospel, and before that time unknown in any age or nation, by means of which Gregory VII. pretended that the temporal power was subordinate to the spiritual; that the Church alone had the power of conferring crowns and judging sovereigns, and that all princes were vassals of the Court of Rome, and ought to take an oath of fidelity to her, as well as pay her an annual tribute.”

The Bishop's plans for religious reforms were put in execution. Chevalier Banchieri, who was appointed administrator of the estates belonging to the suppressed monasteries, fully concurred with him in all his measures, and a manufactory was established for the employment of the poor, which soon acquired considerable importance. Pistoia has a population of eight thousand souls. Ricci divided it into eight parishes each governed by a curé or prior, who received three hundred crowns a year, and by four chaplains, who were paid a hundred and forty crowns. Having thus united every kind of church property to the ecclesiastical patrimony, which was charged with the payment of the ministers' salaries, and the expenses of public worship, he severely forbade the priests from receiving money from the people on any pretext whatever. They were obliged to officiate, to marry, baptize, and bury *gratīs*, and the expenses of all religious ceremonies were definitively fixed. The number of tapers put round the dead was the same for both poor

and rich ; and when the sum appointed by the defunct person, or his heirs, exceeded the expense, the surplus was devoted to purposes of charity. Many of the clergy voluntarily submitted to these new regulations, and the Bishop had the satisfaction of finding that the diffusion of knowledge had begun to work effects, which he trusted could never be destroyed.

The Grand Duke augmented the funds of the ecclesiastical patrimony instituted by Ricci, and bestowed on it all the wealth of the suppressed monasteries. "These institutions," says the Bishop, "afforded in early times, retreats for men wearied with the barbarities and vices of war. But they have since been made the asylums only of idleness and sensuality. The convents became intolerable by their numbers, and served as places of confinement, where one half of the people was condemned to celibacy. Leopold saw the abuses which had been introduced; and notwithstanding the anger of the Papal Court, determined on effecting a reformation. With the riches of the monks he endowed poor parishes, whose priests almost failed of subsistence. He founded new ones where they were wanted. He assisted and established hospitals : founded places of education, and conferred such benefits on Tuscany, that his name deserves to be eternally commemorated." With the powerful assistance of Leopold, Ricci found no obstacle sufficient to retard his completion of the seminary of Pistoia. The edifice employed a considerable number of hands, formed a new feature in the appearance of the town, encouraged industry, and even tended to the revival of the Fine Arts. The petty intrigues which were sometimes employed against him, he immediately made known to Leopold, and they were as immediately stopped by the active and zealous determination of that Prince.

CHAPTER VIII.

Miraculous Image.—Matrimonial Dispensations.—Abolition of Ecclesiastical Courts.—Diminution of Convents.—Attempts against Ricci.

RICCI, having organized the seminary of Pistoia, extended his reforms to that of Prato ; but though he met with great opposition on all accounts, *the single altar* was what excited the loudest murmurs, whenever it was proposed. After alluding to a pretended miraculous image of the Virgin in a church at Arezzo, he says, that "it served as a pretext for pillage, massacres, and all kinds of impieties, of which the image was thus rendered an accomplice ;" for which reason, when he withdrew a similar image of the Virgin from its hiding-place at Prato, he had it newly painted, that it might not deceive the people, as it had formerly done, into errors and excesses.

Ricci was highly offended at the manner in which the Court of Rome dealt in dispensations of marriage, styling the trade "*infame bottega*," an infamous shop. He determined on the authority of Leopold, to grant dispensations in the diocese of Pistoia and Prato: his diocesans applied to him instead of the Papal Court, and contracted with confidence any marriages which he authorized. His dispensations cost nothing, while those of the Pope were enormously dear. In the course of five years he granted three hundred and seventeen dispensations. His conduct in this was particularly displeasing to the Papal Court, though he received pompous eulogies from the Pope on occasion of the report he made of the state of his diocese ; and the Pontifical Secretary of State, Cardinal Pallavicini, exhorted him strongly to hold a diocesan synod. But while Ricci was endeavoring to regulate his diocese, and watch over its interests, the monks and nuns persisted in contradicting him on all points, and disobeying him in matters which he judged of the highest

importance. They resumed acting plays, and dancing in the convents of the nuns, though he had rigorously forbidden them, from the period of his becoming a bishop.

The next object of Ricci was to reduce the number of monasteries in each diocese to one or two, in order to subject them to the jurisdiction of the bishops. But this was attacking the monks in their strong-holds, and the opposition he met with from them lasted the rest of his life. They particularly did all in their power to withhold from the knowledge of Ricci, their plans of cloister studies, which, says Ricci, were composed of "peripatetic philosophy and *Scottism*, taught in the most barbarous Latin."

Ricci had dispensed licenses of marriage, &c. *gratis*, but he could not please all parties. A family of merchants called Piccioli, wished that the widow of one of them should espouse her late husband's brother, in order that the property should be kept in the family. For this purpose they applied to Ricci; but he, not judging a dispensation proper under the circumstance, refused it. On this, the parties applied to Rome, where, by dint of bribes, they obtained permission to marry; but as the authority did not extend to Tuscany, they could not be acknowledged as married persons there. The Grand Duke, moreover, was enraged at their obstinacy, and exiled them from his territories. In this extremity, they once more addressed themselves to Ricci, who, touched by their submission, obtained their pardon, and married them anew. He was always open to the petitions of those who demanded to be freed from such religious vows as they had taken while under age; and both male and female religious persons found in him an advocate in such cases for their secularization.

The reforms of Ricci met with the most determined opposition; but he waited with patience for the time when men should become enlightened, and endeavored to hasten that time, by furnishing his diocesans with good books. He sent the curates copies of them, per-

suaded that the taste for their perusal would spread from them among their parishioners. The peasants used to purchase those books, to read them in the evening to their families; and in order to propagatè this taste, the Grand Duke banished all the hawkers of the printed indulgences of the Court of Rome.

Among other projects of Ricci, was that of the abolition of the litigious and contentious Ecclesiastical Courts; but though he failed, he succeeded in reforming their practice. He endeavored, but in vain, to have the bishops and other high functionaries of the Church paid by salaries, like the inferior orders of the clergy, as being the only means of preventing the property of the Church from being wasted or expended by a prodigal predecessor. The progress of the French revolution, however, absorbed all the attention of Leopold; and the constant opposition of the bishops to the measure prevented the meritorious designs of Ricci from being carried into execution.

The Dominicans of Maria Novella at Florence, in the mean time, neglected nothing to recover a portion of the influence they had lost in Pistoia. Ricci opposed them, and was seconded by the Grand Duke, who, by an edict, abolished for ever the lotteries for giving dowries to girls, on occasion of the various festivals, accompanied by the promise of indulgences as excessive as they were scandalous and absurd, by which large sums were gained, especially in the country. The laws which existed against the begging clergy in Tuscany, had not been observed. Ricci now enforced their execution; employed the money which had till then been spent in dowries, in a wiser manner; and instituted conservatories for women, who were to be brought up from the age of eight to twenty-four, with the view of becoming industrious and good wives. At the latter age, however, they were obliged to leave the institution, lest, as Ricci apprehended, such places should grow into real nunneries, through the bigotry of the elder members.

In 1785, the Secretary Seratti was created Counsel-

lor of State. He opposed all the plans of Ricci, in which he was warmly seconded by the Civil Lieutenant of Pistoia. This opposition obliged Ricci to look for a co-operator with him in his beneficent projects. He thought of Martini, Secretary for the Rights of the Crown; and in the hope of rendering him an ally, he showed more respect for Martini than he deserved. He seemed at first to have succeeded. Martini required of the bishops an account of their revenues, but they either refused to answer, lest they should lose the Pope's favor, or they replied that their diocesses were poor, and destitute of the resources with which Pistoia and Prato abounded. Ricci unveiled the falsehood of these assertions, pointed out the real sources of the wealth of the clergy, and recommended a more equal distribution of it.

Ricci gives us an account of his vigilant attention to the plan of studies pursued by the monks of Giacherino, the only place of study which the regulars had in his diocess. The monks opposed all his plans of improvement, in which they were supported by the practice of the other bishops: for though Ricci drew up a list of the books which he wished to be employed in the instruction of the youth of his diocess, he was the only bishop who took any vigorous or decided measures. The Grand Duke did not think proper to pass any general law on the subject; so that Ricci only gained by his projects the reputation of an *euthusiast*, and an enemy to the Court of Rome. He was, however, unmoved by these clamors; and, in order to overcome the bishops' resistance to the reforms of Leopold, which he thought had its source in their fidelity to their oath of consecration, he addressed himself to Seratti on the subject. The affair, however, dropped, and no measures were taken to remedy the existing evils.

The Bishop made a new attempt by sending to Leopold some original document proving that the Court of Rome abused the power which the oath taken by the bishops gave it, by "obliging them to resist their

sovereigns," says Ricci, "whenever they touch upon the false rights of the pretended Papal monarchy," Leopold's reforms were not intended to intrench upon the Pope's rights; but he did not go to the root of the evil in all cases. One of the most grievous disorders lay in "cases of conscience," of which the bishops had reserved for their own decision a great number,—and in which they alone had the power of absolution. "They have become the slaves, instead of the brothers of the Pope; and usurp the rights of the priests and curates, as Rome has usurped theirs, by despoiling them of their natural and legitimate authority."

It was with the utmost delicacy towards the bishops that Leopold attacked this abuse; but he was not obeyed in the greater part of the dioceses, or for any length of time. All the bishops were opposed to him, and their advisers still more so. Ricci gives us the character of the latter. "They were," says he, "some ignorant advocate, invested with the character of chancellor, or a serving priest, without any knowledge of ecclesiastical affairs, and puffed up with their Roman vanity." The reserved cases of conscience, which were generally *indecent or absurd*, were decided on, not by a synod, but arbitrarily; and these continued to exist as before.

The list of excommunications and cases still actually reserved for the decision of the Archbishop of Pisa, who can alone grant absolution for them, contains the common absurdity of confounding indecencies and real crimes with actions indifferent in themselves. The eating of meat on days prohibited by the Church, and other offences against its particular ordinances, are placed upon a level with the worst crimes of which men can be guilty, such as seduction and rape, bearing false witness, and wilful murder.

It moreover contains an absurdity peculiar to itself—that of having classed with forgers and assassins, "those who fell trees in the forests of the archiepiscopal *mensæ*, called Tombolo, Tomboletto, Poggio a Padule, and other farms in Migliarino, without the permission

of the Archbishop, or of his procurator." These excommunications and reserved cases are printed at Pisa, at the Archbishop's press, by Rainier Prosperi, with permission of the Superiors. These reserved cases differ in each diocess. A most revolting crime has never been pronounced more than a misdemeanor at Florence. At Fiesole, which is situated at the gates of that city, it becomes a reserved case, and has been there distinguished, by the compiler of the catalogue of these exorbitant sins, into a crime proper, and a crime improper.

The person who carried this senseless absurdity in the distinction of these reserved cases to the greatest length, was one of the last of the Stuarts, Cardinal Henry York, Vice-chancellor of the Roman Church, and Bishop of Tusculum, Frascati. In a diocesan synod, which he held in 1763, assisted by a Jesuit as manager, the acts of which synod he published at Rome, the following year, with the approbation of the Pontifical Government, he specified in the most offensive and absurd manner every species of unnatural crime as requiring his special and personal absolution.

We give the Latin title of the singular book which contains these ridiculous abominations, and which we also preserve in the original for the sake of decency.

"Appendix ad Tusculanam Synodum à celsitudine regia eminentissima Henrici episcopi Tusculani, S. R. E. vice-cancellarii, Cardinalis Ducis Eboracensis, in Tusculano cathedrali templo apostolorum principis S. Petri celebratam, diebus viii. ix. et x. Septembris, A. D. MDCCCLXIII. Excudebat Romæ Generosus Salamoni, anno 1764, superioribus annuentibus."

Num. 12, cap. 10, art. 9, § 9.—"Casus quorum absolutionem sibi reservat regia celsitudo eminentissima dominus Cardinalis Dux Eboracensis episcopus Tusculanis."

The Grand Duke, desirous that the women who devoted themselves to a monastic life, should at least be aware of what they were about, ordained that the *minimum* of the age for pronouncing the vows should

be twenty-two. He also forbade the practice of asking or receiving dowries with the nuns; but in order to prevent that regulation from having the effect of crowding the nunneries, he directed that the parents of each nun should pay, according to their ability, some considerable sum to the Hospital of the place. He allowed those who entered his conservatories to choose, within a certain time, between an ordinary and a cloistered life; if they chose the latter, they were bound to devote themselves to the instruction of poor girls in some manual work, and in the Christian doctrines. His aim, moreover, was to augment the number of good housewives and mothers in his states, and to diminish that of "*the unfortunate victims of a forced celibacy.*"

Ricci endeavored to diminish the number of convents, and proved to the Nuncio Crivelli, who opposed him, that Florence held within its walls more convents than Rome itself, though the population of the former was not much more than half that of the capital of Catholicism. He maintained that the multitude of convents tended only to render some persons rich at the expense of the unhappy nuns; and he proved, through the examination of some of them by confidential priests, that they were generally ignorant of their duties and the force of their vows, "which they observed *judaically.*"

The greater number of the convents was converted into conservatories; and their reformation was of infinite service to Tuscany in general, by the instruction they spread among the poor, and by giving birth to hospitals and other charities. The convent of Marcel, however, was the only one which fully conformed to Leopold's wishes; and in return for spreading so much good around it, it was persecuted by the successors of Ricci, and "the nuns were accused of being as proud as so many Lucifers."

The enemies of Ricci were not yet weary of persecuting him. They ordered him to furnish the sum of 12,000 crowns to the diocese of Pisa. But this endea-

vor to entrap him was eluded, by his addressing himself to the Grand Duke, to whom he proved how inconsistently his enemies acted, in accusing him at one moment of wasting his ecclesiastical patrimony in new buildings, and coming upon him the next with demands to cover expenses with which he had nothing to do. Leopold ordered the Archbishop of Pisa to look elsewhere for the money he required, and never to think of making use of any sum belonging to Ricci without his formal consent. New force was added to the malice of his enemies by a report, which was industriously spread by the Pope, that a synod of Cardinals was assembled at Rome to judge of the conduct and doctrines of Ricci : which had the double effect of destroying any inclination in the other bishops to follow his example, and of exciting still farther the irritation against the Emperor Joseph, which had been already powerfully awakened by the monks.

Ricci speedily experienced the effects of the enmity of his adversaries, when he wished to free the property of his diocesans from the obligation of paying for masses and other religious ceremonies, which had degenerated into a traffic. For this purpose, he published and circulated tracts relative to the sacrifice of the mass, and some writings proving the justice and ability of Leopold's measures, as they regarded ecclesiastical matters. The Grand Duke seconded his Bishop's endeavors to cause the money, which was employed in masses, to be used for the poor, and the education and maintenance of their children : and the good to which this led, encouraged Leopold to attempt the suppression of all benefices which were in the hands of certain families for the benefit of the younger members, and who made them sinecures, paying strangers for services rendered not to the Church, but to themselves.

But the good intentions of the Grand Duke on this head were rendered vain, by want of co-operation in the bishops, who were, for the greater part, violently opposed to all innovation in matters ecclesiastic : the

rest remained neuter, contenting themselves with not opposing or obstructing the intentions of the Prince.

The next step of Leopold was to order all the bishops "to hold a diocesan synod at least once in two years, conjointly with the curates, in order to examine into the abuses in discipline, and to apply the necessary remedies."

CHAPTER IX.

Formation of new Parishes.—Results of this measure in regard to the inhabitants of La Montagna.—Letter of the Grand Duke.—Ecclesiastical Synods.—Riots at Prato.—Retirement of Ricci.—Letters.

AFTER Leopold had succeeded in removing some useless or hurtful members of the clergy, he wished to augment the number of those whose labors, he thought, would instruct the people. For this purpose, he created new parishes wherever it was probable that the presence of the curate would improve civilization. The suppressions which he made had been blamed by his ministers as irreligious; his additions were blamed as impolitic. "The people," said they, "*are the better for being ignorant o matters of religion—a bishop or priest, who should be appointed to bless a nation from the top of a tower is equal to all their wants.*"

The inhabitants of La Montagna were deeply in want of curates, who should not only act the part of faithful pastors, but also that of heads of families, when the men were gone to work at the *Maremma*. This Ricci signified to Leopold: his plan was approved, and immediately acted upon.

On this occasion, Ricci relates an adventure he met with in the course of this diocesan visit, undertaken in order to gain information for the Grand Duke. Some of his enemies had caused to be dug in the stony and narrow roads of La Montagna a deep pit, which

was covered with leaves, into which it was hoped Ricci and his horse would fall and perish there. The curate of the place had discovered this, by means of confession, and hastened to inform the prelate's secretary, who communicated the fact to the magistrate. The latter removed the danger, and Ricci, finding the road in good condition, suspected nothing; nor was he informed of this attempt on his life, till several months afterwards.

How necessary it was to have priests residing at La Montagna, may be guessed from the fact, that the roads are so bad in winter, that twenty-three families, forming a whole village, lived six months of the year without priests or sacraments, until it was changed into a curacy. The priest of the next parish had, till then, been accustomed to officiate till the month of September, and then to bid them adieu till the next Spring.

Ricci's plan, and his zealous execution of it, pleased the Duke so much, that he invited the Bishop to dinner at his villa, with his sister the Queen of Naples, and King Ferdinand, then in Tuscany, to whom he related all the good that Ricci had done in his diocese, particularly in the Mountain of Pistoia: to which Ferdinand listened with attention and interest, and expressed a wish to introduce similar improvements into his own States.

The visit of these royal persons, and Leopold's ill health, seemed to give the ministry a good opportunity of destroying Ricci's plans relative to La Montagna; but their attempts to prejudice Leopold against him were vain. The ministers were provoked to find Ricci's plans succeed so easily, after they had pronounced them impracticable; and the other Tuscan bishops were puzzled how to proceed. They ventured not to follow the example of Ricci, lest they should make enemies of Rome and the monks; and they hated him the more, because he was so disinterested as to provoke perpetual comparisons with them, greatly to their disadvantage.

Ricci was indignant at the Tuscan bishops for their

meanness in compelling the priests, at whose houses they lived while visiting their dioceses, to entertain them magnificently, and to make presents to their secretaries, &c., to their own ruin. He proved to the Grand Duke, who was displeased already at this splendor, which by rendering the prelates inaccessible, made their pastoral visits useless—that these visits ought to be held at the expense of the prelates themselves, and that, made as they ought to be, they ought not to exceed one hundred crowns a year—a sum which every bishop was in a condition to pay.

Ricci's principal aim was uniformly the reformation of his own diocese; and having remarked that the religious ceremonies performed during the night, gave rise to numerous disorders, he forbade them, under severe penalties, during the entire week preceding Christmas.

In the year 1786, the Grand Duke, satisfied with Ricci's examination of Mancini's letter, submitted to him a circular, which he intended to address to all the Tuscan bishops, proposing to them several questions on ecclesiastical points, requesting them to reflect maturely on them before sending him their answers. Ricci altered and retrenched it as he thought best; but his corrections arrived too late, and the greater part of them could not be adopted. At the assembly of the Tuscan bishops at Florence, nevertheless, it was publicly said that Ricci was the author of the *Points*, in order that they might be the more odious to the clergy. The Grand Duke granted six months' delay for answering these questions, declaring it to be his intention to submit them to the national council, and to obtain a perfect unity in doctrinal matters.

The Court of Rome, at this time, absolutely dictated the answers which the bishops were to make to their Government. It had always done so, as Ricci had proved to Leopold, urging the obedience which the bishops owed to the Pope, and to none else.

The reforms which Ricci wished to introduce into the church, were constantly opposed by the ministry,

in spite of the support of Leopold, whose weakness was as remarkable as his benevolence. The bishops and the Court of Rome lent their powerful aid to his enemies, and his plans relative to education were perpetually frustrated by the monks. "Slander and calumny," says he, "the usual arms of Rome, were put in action to overwhelm me." He was accused of having turned to his own profit the property of the suppressed convents—of having destroyed relic-worship—of having profaned images—of having falsified prayers, &c. Pretended priests of his diocese were sent to Rome to beg advice against the dangerous errors of their Bishop, &c. One of the canons of Pistoia wrote a defence of all the pretensions of the Church of Rome. But though these things were known to Leopold, he only punished the secondary actors in them, and never the principal. Rome had now begun the war which she meant to carry on against Ricci and his synod—the convocation of which she dreaded above all things.

The Synod assembled in September, 1786. The celebrated Professor Tamburini, of Pavia, and Palmieri, who were to arrange the subjects of discussion, with several others distinguished for their talents, were present. Ricci endeavored to give his council all the solemnity possible, and the utmost conformity with the most celebrated synods. The clergy of Pistoia had already agreed on the points to be discussed, and were prepared to pass into a law what was already believed and professed. The council was held in the Church of Leopold, and consisted of 234 members. Ricci had not acquainted the Pope with any thing relative to his diocesan synod; but, as he had signified his intention of holding one, it would certainly have been much more honorable in Pius VI. to have *then* declared his displeasure, than to undermine him, and after the death of his protector, Leopold, to persecute him violently.

The council opened with the recitation of Pius the Fourth's Confession of Faith. Some of the members

refused to sign the opinions of the council on grace, predestination, &c. ; and at the head of the opposition was a canon, an emissary of the Court of Rome. The matter most debated was that of the civil contract of marriage, which it was necessary to distinguish from the sacrament and the nuptial benediction ; and the Duke was applied to for his decision on it as a civil act.

Leopold was delighted with the labors of his council. He encouraged the members by his letters ; and having learned that Rome was making efforts and intrigues to disturb the assembly, and sow discord among its members, he took the necessary measures of precaution against them. The nobility of Pistoia, however, were opposed to the council, which was denounced at Rome as a conspiracy, and Ricci was defamed in numberless libels.

About this time arrived the answers to the fifty-seven questions which had been propounded by the Grand Duke to the Tuscan bishops. They were sufficiently contradictory, but they showed a wish to satisfy the Prince. Leopold was deceived by their apparent readiness ; and wishing to carry the same perfect unanimity of sentiment into the details, as he thought he saw in the principal views, he determined on convoking a general council at Florence, which he believed was to put an end to the intrigues of Rome. Ricci endeavored to persuade the Duke that this meeting would have fatal consequences, especially if it took place in the capital.

The enemies of Ricci had already obtained the suppression of the acts of his synod until after the close of that of Florence. Having succeeded in this, they whispered that the publication of them had been forbidden by the Government, and the Grand Duke himself. The Bishop of Pistoia, hearing of this, urged Leopold to change his resolution, and to allow the acts of the assembly to appear, as his best protection against the intrigues of Rome and the calumnies of its creatures.

Leopold objected to this, that it was reported that the acts themselves were to be severely examined in an assembly of Cardinals ; therefore, fearing their publication would only serve as a pretext for farther opposition, he contented himself with writing a letter to Ricci, expressive of his entire satisfaction, and his approbation of his synod.

The council of Florence was convoked, by order of the Grand Duke, in April, 1787. From the very beginning of its sittings, the bishops imposed silence on the Duke's theologians, by saying, *Nos magistri, vos discipuli*: "We are the masters, ye are but the scholars." They engaged the assistance of the advocate Lampredi, a man of talents and eloquence; and believing themselves wholly assembled for the purpose of deciding on the fate of Ricci, his synod, and his reforms, they soon changed the council into a mere conspiracy against the latter, and all innovation whatever.

All this opposition did not discourage Ricci. His enemies had, therefore, but one expedient left; this was to excite the people to a riot, and, by intimidating the Grand Duke, remove Ricci's principal support.

At Pistoia it soon became known that the great body of the bishops were decidedly opposed to the reforms of Ricci. Several curates petitioned the Secretary to the Crown, and their metropolitan, the Archbishop of Florence, to abolish the innovations made at Pistoia and Prato, and to restore every thing on its former footing. The Archbishop Martini, and the Secretary of the same name, were the principal movers in this plot; but as the Grand Duke opposed these plans, they found that a revolt would be the only method likely to produce the destruction of reform in Tuscany.

At that time the question of the worship of images, &c. was in agitation at Florence. Ricci was said, by his enemies, to entertain erroneous ideas on that head; and it was whispered that he intended to pull down the altar where the Girdle of the Virgin was preserved, and to attempt other innovations equally dreaded by the people.

It had been intimated to the Grand Duke that his support of Ricci and his reforms might have fatal political consequences ; but he refused to yield, and the riots were resolved upon. On the 20th of May, the tumult of Prato took place. In the evening, the mob, armed with sticks and hatchets, proceeded to the principal church to prevent the demolition of the Altar of the Girdle. They mounted the tower, rang the alarm-bell for several hours, tore down the Bishop's chair and arms, and burnt them in the market place, with several books which they found. The church was illuminated during the night, by order of the rioters, and the Holy Girdle was exposed to the reverence of the devout.

From the church they proceeded to the spot where the images were placed, which had been removed from the suppressed monasteries, and carried them in procession to the cathedral, holding in one hand a torch, and in the other a bottle of wine. They paid the same honors to the saints whose worship Ricci had abolished, and tore from the missal the masses for those whose worship he had introduced, which they burnt, together with the books he had distributed among his clergy. They pulled down the new baptisteries—threatened the heads of the seminary and the curates who were known to favor Ricci—made the priests get out of their beds and accompany them in their shirts to the different churches, to replace before the images the little curtains which Ricci had removed. The churches were soon all lighted up like the cathedral, and each went to pray or sing in them, as he pleased.

The next morning all the peasants of the neighborhood arrived in the town, and ran from church to church, to pay their devotions to the images of the suppressed saints, and the images which, now that they were covered with a veil, had become, in their eyes, far more respectable. Pistoia would soon have followed the example of Prato, had not Leopold sent a detachment of soldiers from Florence, who soon restored order. The gates of Prato were closed, the

streets barricadoed, the houses and shops shut, and a number of persons were arrested and sent to the capital. The Grand Duke gave orders that every thing should be restored to the footing on which it was before the revolt.

On hearing this distressing news, Ricci was deeply grieved. Nevertheless, he went to the assembly of the bishops, where, though he was warmly received by the few partisans and friends he had, he was greeted only with insulting murmurs by the bishops, his adversaries, who did not even speak to him.

Prato had now returned to a sense of its evil conduct. The town and the clergy sent a deputation to Leopold, who received them with kindness, stating, that he knew the root of the evil existed in Florence itself, though the revolt had been fomented by evil-designing priests at Prato; that this formed only a part of a general rising, which had failed in consequence of their declaring themselves too soon; and that Rome was mainly interested in the affair, and was in the confidence of the conspirators.

But it was only in consequence of the reiterated requests of Ricci that the Grand Duke consented to forgive his undutiful subjects. The Bishop not only obtained the liberation of the chief actors in the revolt, but at his own expense supported the families of those of the poorer classes who were imprisoned. He then seriously resolved to abdicate; and in a long letter which he wrote to the Grand Duke, after defending himself against the misrepresentations of which his conduct had been made the subject, and begging the Prince to pardon the insurgents, and to publish the acts of his synod, he tendered his resignation. To this he received a very affectionate answer the same day, sympathizing with him, and granting pardon to the revolters, but refusing to accept his resignation, as being a step likely to produce consequences quite different from those contemplated by Ricci.

Leopold next resolved upon dismissing the assembly. In June, 1787, he convoked the bishops, and told them

in a severe tone how much he was displeased at their conduct; exhorted them to show an example of submission, instead of revolt, to their flocks; and warned them, that if they did not choose to reform abuses, he would use his right of doing it himself.

The fifty-seven articles had been discussed, but the latter ones in great haste, on account of pressing circumstances. The Grand Duke submitted them to Ricci, who refuted all the memorials which the bishops had contrived to insert in the acts. Leopold caused the whole to be printed in spite of the wish of Ricci, that for the sake of the honor of the Tuscan bishops, they should not be made public.

The Grand Duke, irritated by the opposition of the clergy to his reforms, determined to wait no longer, and to begin them himself. Ricci, at his desire, furnished the plan; but they were not proceeded in, on account of the revolutions which then began to agitate Europe.

Several interesting letters are found in Ricci's memoirs, illustrative of the state of the Continent at that period.

July, 1787, the Abbé de Bellegarde wrote from Paris to Ricci:

“The public newspapers will have informed you of the seditious movements in the Austrian Low Countries. The principal instigators of them are, without doubt, the ex-jesuits, and the fanatical partisans of the Court of Rome. For many years they have been preparing the way for them by their discourses, their intrigues, and above all, by their alarm-cries, and the seditious writings with which they have inundated, and still continue to inundate the country. They endeavored to persuade the public, that the Emperor's object was to overturn religion and the constitution of the state; and unfortunately the changes in the affairs of government have served as a pretext to this latter calumny.”

In November, he announced the flight of the Austrians, and the report of the taking of Brussels by the

insurgents. "If this last intelligence be true, the rebels are now masters of the country.....In the mean time, till they are dispossessed of it, Jesuitism and curialism will triumph there; for it is in their favor that this revolution is chiefly made. It is evidently a religious war, the principal pretext of which is all that the sovereign has done to deliver the country from it; this is what the fanatics call wishing to destroy religion."

M. l'Abbé Y. at that time entrusted with an important mission at Rome, wrote to the Bishop of Pistoia, October, 1790:

"You will probably have learnt the late events in Brabant. Scapularies and Capuchins' cords form part of the booty made by the conquerors, the Imperialists. I figure to myself the fine exploits of the bearded gen-try; and this idea alone would excite my laughter, did not humanity and religion make me weep for the effusion of the blood of so many unfortunates, so strangely seduced and led to the slaughter by these villains of furious Papists—*Papalini*. Shall I tell you a very singular circumstance? The same Abbé de Tongerloo, who had promised invulnerability to the Flemish crusaders, had been, previously to this period, abbé of the church of Norbert des Brabançons at Rome, and at this moment still keeps up a regular correspondence with people of the same stamp."

CHAPTER X.

Ricci's Apology and Retirement.

THE priests of Ricci's own diocese sent petitions to Florence, entreating the abolition of the reforms introduced into Pistoia and Prato. Secretary Martini was the instigator of these attempts, as Ricci proved to Leopold, who threatened Martini with the loss of his

place in case of their continuance. The Court of Rome had its emissaries at all the Catholic courts, endeavoring to excite a revolt of the people against their princes in its favor; and the revolt of Prato was evidently a part of this vast plan. The people of Pistoia first petitioned for the restoration of the ancient order of things; from supplications they proceeded to acts, and insisted upon having the ceremonies of the Church performed according to their pleasure.

In October, 1787, Ricci published his eloquent "Apology." The Court of Rome was more irritated than ever at the success of this piece; and its emissaries, by their continued charges of heresy and innovation against Ricci, even succeeded for a moment in leading Leopold to doubt him, though these doubts were soon effaced. Ricci had the courage to return to Prato, in spite of being menaced with assassination; and his mildness had the effect of restoring a momentary calm in that city.

The publication of the Acts of the Assembly of Florence and of the Synod of Pistoia, produced a great effect throughout Catholic Europe; and Ricci received from all parts the most flattering letters and sincere compliments relative to the Council of Pistoia. Amongst other acts of adherence to this council, Ricci received that of the Jansenist Archbishop of Utrecht, of the bishops his suffrages, and of all his metropolitan chapter,—an act which was officially transmitted to him by the Abbé de Bellegrade, accompanied by a letter dated Utrecht, November, 1789.

A letter, equally remarkable, upon the same subject, is that of Le Bret, professor at Tubingen, written August, 1789.

After having given Ricci every possible assurance of esteem and veneration, and testified the sincere interest he took in the persecutions to which that prelate had been exposed, the professor says that he has annexed to his letter, an academical dissertation composed by his pupils, relative to the affairs of the diocess of Pistoia, "in order to convince the Bishop of the

lively interest with which Protestants themselves are inspired by the unworthy treatment to which malice had subjected him."

The Abbé wrote from Rome, December, 1790 :

"The Spanish envoy, of the order of Augustin, having been questioned respecting the synod, whether he found heresies in it, and what was thought of it in Spain, candidly answered, that the Collection of its Acts was a holy book, and that in Spain it displeased none but the monks ; that the ministers considered it excellent, and that, in spite of monkish intrigues, the reprint of it in the Spanish language has been allowed ; but that, notwithstanding all this, the book will be prohibited at Rome, because the Pope listens to none but the Molinists.

Leopold suppressed the residence of the Nuncio at his Court ; ordered that the monks, &c. of his states should be subject only to their bishops ; banished foreign monks from Tuscany ; recalled the absentee ecclesiastics ; and removed from Rome his minister Fei, who had been completely gained over by that Court. Rome was astonished at these proofs of firmness ; but, not daring to attempt any thing against him, directed all its endeavors to the destruction of Ricci.

With this view, a congregation of Cardinals was called, for the examination of the Synod of Pistoia. Nothing reprehensible was found in its acts : and a second, more severe, was assembled. This congregation found some unimportant scruples only, relating to the meaning of terms, which they were ashamed to allege as complaints against it to the Tuscan Government. A third congregation was convoked ; but though the Pope had promised to communicate the opinions of the assembly privately to Leopold, before taking any public steps, this was never done, and the congregation continued to sit, merely for the purpose of spreading a belief that there was something reprehensible in Ricci's synod, and of keeping the Bishop and his friends in perpetual fear of his arrest.

Ricci continued to be calumniated ; and the intrigues

of the Archbishop of Florence, his enemy, succeeded in obtaining his abandonment by the priests of his own diocese, and their recantation of the decisions of the synod, which they had themselves signed. The people began to be persuaded that the sacraments administered by Ricci and his partisans were null : and most of his diocesans sent their children to Florence to be baptized or confirmed. Ricci could not help making complaints of the way in which he was persecuted ; so that he passed for a turbulent and violent person.

In the pontifical states, and still more at Rome, the old examples of clerical immorality were renewed.

“ I do not recollect whether I have already told you of the bad conduct of the Bishop of Foligno, who is publicly accused of being a sharper and unclean ! He is a *worthy* protégé of Cardinal Buoncompagni.”

Cardinal Busca, at that time one of the chief and favored lovers of the Princess Santa Croce, former mistress of the French Ambassador, Cardinal de Bernis, dined at that lady's, in company with Pierre Paul de Medicis, son of Alverardo de Medicis, of Florence.

“ The partiality of that old Polixena for the charming young man, excited the jealousy of the overgrown Cardinal, who gave way to the most indecent excesses. He abused his own footman at the table, for pouring out wine for Medici, saying, ‘ Are you also in the plot for *cornuting* me ? ’ Shortly after this, he threw a glass of wine in Medici's face, who immediately started up with a menacing air, brandishing a plate in his hand ; he, however, repressed his rage, and spoke with much prudence. The Roman Helen interposed, as the Sabines did after their ravishment.”

Public opinion, a circumstance worthy of reflection, which since the long occupation of the states of his Holiness by the French, was much more severe at Rome than formerly, had forced a young prelate to leave that city, to whom a husband had made over his wife *by contract*.

Shortly afterwards, the prelate who was governor of Rome, was obliged to fly in order to escape the punish-

ment due to his dilapidations, the forgeries he had committed to a considerable amount, and his unbridled libertinism, backed by every species of violence.

A third prelate, the relation of one Cardinal, and confidential agent in the affairs of another, was taken by some gendarmes, at the moment he was about to commit the most detestable of vices, under the colonnade of a palace.

The method now resorted to for the purpose of diminishing these disorders, is the same which was employed thirty years ago, with such little success.

Under these circumstances, Ricci lost all the little authority which he formerly possessed in his diocess. The people abolished all his reforms, and restored the ancient splendor of the worship; while the ministers of the Grand Duke endeavored to remove from Ricci his only partisans, the curates of his diocess, by depriving them of their salaries.

In February, 1790, the news of Joseph's death arrived. The certainty of the departure of Leopold awakened, on all hands, the spirit of revolt; and the populace, in a state of sedition, clamored loudly against their Bishop. The canons, whose pretensions he had diminished, exclaimed against the illegality of his reforms, and gradually made all traces of them disappear.

Leopold, however, did not yield. He renewed his orders for the observance of all that Ricci had done, and assured him of the protection of the Regency. But it was not probable that those who had opposed him while in power, should now obey him. The new regents sowed fresh disorders in Pistoia. They said that the popular feeling should be left to its natural course, and declared all interference of the Government on Church matters not only dangerous, but illegal.

Matters were still worse when Leopold quitted Tuscany. Pistoia then became the prey of the fanatics. The Regency, through crafty motives, exceeded the intentions of Leopold, in order to irritate the people. Leopold had ordered the suppression of all splendor

in the Church ceremonies, which they interpreted to mean the abolition even of the cross and tapers at burials. The priests were forced, by the clamors of the people, to replace these, and the Government seized that pretext for punishing them severely. This absurd and ill-timed rigor increased the general irritation.

Count Louis Gianni, brother of the Minister of Tuscany, thus wrote to Ricci from Rome, August, 1789 :

“The French strike at the root of the evil, and give us a strong and prompt example for imitation. By depriving the clergy of their riches, they prepare them for the acquirement of knowledge and the reformation of morals; the pensioning of monks and nuns will ensure the destruction of the orders. Rome is silent, and will ever continue so, when opposed by vigorous and well digested measures. Would to God that other sovereigns would imitate so salutary a reform !”

There soon was but one party,—that of the enemies of the Bishop. People began to talk of his approaching condemnation at Rome, and of the sentence he was to undergo—a sentence which would have caused him to be called before the Inquisition, and imprisoned in a fortress for the rest of his days.

In order to hasten the explosion, Fabroni, the principal magistrate of Pistoia, caused one of the altars which had been rebuilt at the wish of the people, to be thrown down in the night. This measure was attributed to Ricci, whose personal safety was now menaced by a furious populace, on account of an event of which the Bishop knew nothing. The Emperor consented, at that time, to the abolition of the greater part of the reforms which been effected during his reign. But this was not sufficient for his adversaries. They hated even the person of the reformer, and left no means untried to make him abandon his diocess, and deprive him of his title.

At Prato a report had been circulated that the Bishop intended to make a pastoral visit, for no other purpose but that of the altar of the Holy Girdle.

At Pistoia, similar means produced similar effects.

It was said that the Bishop wished to whiten the image of the *Virgin of Humility*, whose pretended miracles, closing of the eyes, tears, &c., raised the public fanaticism into fury. In April, 1790, the revolution broke out. The magistrate who had removed the altar was one of its directors, and so managed the ferment as to produce what was ardently desired, the departure of Ricci, who quitted Pistoia.

Scarcely was he gone, when the people had, in a few days, abolished many years' work of reformation. The altars which had been demolished were rebuilt, the images were replaced and veiled, the abolished ceremonies were resumed, with all the pomp of the church festivals and ceremonies, the books recommended by Ricci were burnt, the monasteries re-established, &c. The few partisans of the Bishop who remained, were styled *Scipionists*, and pointed out to the popular fury, and forced to retire from the town. Every thing was replaced on the old footing.

Ricci, on his retirement, preserved all his firmness, which was joined with resignation. His curates testified their admiration of and regard for their Bishop, and informed him of the evils under which they were suffering. Some of them, who had recanted the principles they professed under Ricci, again confessed their belief in them, as publicly as they had once retracted them.

But the retreat of Ricci had not the effect of restoring order in the diocess of Pistoia. His adversaries were supported by the Regency and the local magistrates, who even refused him permission to publish a circular addressed to his curates, because he therein called them *his brethren*. This culpable condescension on the part of the Government to the wishes of the mob, speedily rendered the revolt general throughout Tuscany. It broke out at Florence, June, 1790, and the people found no difficulty in procuring, with other privileges which they demanded, the abolition of all the ecclesiastical reforms.

At that time, an English Roman Catholic lady, be-

lieving Ricci's life in danger, offered him letters and money to enable him to seek protection elsewhere. He retired, however, to his villa when he received intelligence that the Emperor Leopold had given up the Grand-duchy to his son Ferdinand, and that he had no longer any hope of suppressing the disorders.

As soon as the new Grand Duke's arrival was announced in Tuscany, the enemies of Ricci siezed the opportunity of demanding that Ricci should be deposed. But as the Emperor had signified his order for the re-installation of the Bishop before he should arrive in Tuscany with his son, the Regency thought this would be a good opportunity to raise anew the popular discontents, by publishing that fact. Instead of doing any thing to quell them, they sent orders to Ricci desiring him to return to Pistoia.

The prelate replied, that before he decided on exposing himself to new affronts, the Government ought to punish the rebels, and calm the spirits of the populace; that his departure from his diocess had been forced, and that his return, in like manner, depended on their acts, and not on himself.

Ricci had no wish to return to his diocess; but he wished, if this were insisted on, that his residence there might at least be rendered *possible*. He refused to do any thing that might dishonor himself, or consent to make any confession which should hurt his conscience; and though strongly pressed by Leopold, he remained firm in his ancient opinions, and "continued to hold fast the doctrines which he had always professed."

The Emperor reiterated his orders to the Regency in the most formal terms; but no steps were taken to put an end to the troubles. The Government gave orders a second time, however, for Ricci to return to Pistoia, as Leopold and his son were daily expected; and this order created a great effervescence throughout the whole of Ricci's diocess.

The Emperor arrived in April, 1791. The malcontents of Pistoia presented a request to his Majesty, that he would deliver them from their Bishop; but they

were very coolly received. The Bishop was received in a very different manner by Leopold, as well as by the Prince, who gave him a public audience, in which he assured him of his support. This encouraged his adherents in the two diocesses, who earnestly demanded the return of their pastor. But it was already determined that the repose of the country should be purchased by the dismissal of Ricci, and Leopold hinted this to him distinctly in their last interview.

The moment for accomplishing his utter ruin was not yet come. His enemies, however, continued to keep up the cry against him, and repeated till they fancied they understood their own meaning, *that Ricci did not believe in the Pope.*

The Grand Duke addressed himself to the persecuted prelate, and desired to know what it was his intention to do. Ricci left the decision of the question entirely to Ferdinand, and wrote to him to that effect. The Grand Duke sent him a form of resignation, which Ricci only modified so far as to render it canonical, and signed it the same day.

When Ricci was about to leave his diocess for ever, all those who were not quite his enemies expressed their regret at losing him, either in person or by letter; and this was the only consolation now left to him. In vain he retired from public life. While a public man, only his system and his enterprises had been attacked: now, the attacks were turned upon him personally. The first attempt made on him was in the shape of a long lawsuit, to deprive him of the pension which had been promised him. He refused, however, to plead the cause, and preferred renouncing the salary.

Another source of regret was, to see his successor, Falchi, confirm all that had been perpetrated by the ignorant and turbulent persons of his diocess; the banishment of all attached to his person or opinions; and the desolation of the ecclesiastical patrimony raised for the payment of the clergy.

The ex-Bishop, amidst all these events, led a retired life, forgetting the promises which had been held out

to him by the Government, as a compensation for the loss of his bishopric, as easily as those promises had been forgotten.

The death of the Emperor, in March, 1792, removed all restraint upon the enemies of Ricci, and especially from Falchi, who immediately invented a report, that the late diocesans of Ricci, whom Falchi had banished, had kept up a correspondence with their late Bishop, on the best means of poisoning Falchi; and he drew up an absurd declaration, which only published to the world the folly of his atrocious suspicions.

The Court of Rome now determined to interfere in these persecutions of Ricci, especially when it discovered that the Synod of Pistoia had served as a model for the civil constitution of the clergy, recommended by the French Constituent Assembly. Pius VI. began by fulminating the most outrageous declarations against the French. Afterwards he attacked the Bishop of Pistoia; and it was determined, at one time, to cite Ricci before the Papal Court. The success of the French arms, however, and the indignation they felt at the interference of the Pope, stopped this for a time.

Of the extravagancies and horrors then perpetrated at Rome, Ricci received the following account:

“The principal efforts were directed against the *Ghetto*, the quarter of the Jews, whose pillage had been promised to the Roman mob, as a reward for the murder of the Republicans, and whom fanaticism held forth to the blood-thirsty Catholics as the enemies of their God. M. Y. informs us, that it required all the efforts of several thousands of soldiers to prevent all Jews, who had shut themselves up in their houses, from being burnt to death. The Romans demanded, with loud cries, permission to “burn them in honor of Peter and Paul, of religion and his Holiness:” the shouts of *hatred and death* to the French were mingled with these transports of ferocious devotion. “The outcries commenced in the midst of gangs of barbers and postilions, among whom were also some Abbés of respectable families. To satisfy the people,

Pius VI. subjected the Jews again to all the restrictions, duties, penalties, exactions, and to the distinguishing and infamous marks to which Pius V. had condemned them, and which the progress of civilization, of knowledge, of justice, and of humanity, had abolished."

Ricci now resolved to live altogether in private, in order to avoid giving his enemies any pretences for farther persecution. His buildings and his occupations were devoted to the benefit of the poor; and while he employed himself in furthering the welfare of his fellow creatures, he could not help being grieved at the conduct of those whose duty it was to meliorate their condition, instead of rendering it more perilous and painful.

It was in this light that he regarded the conduct of the Roman Court, which was then preaching up a crusade against the French, and inflaming the people by noisy and turbulent missions. This produced the massacre of Basseville, and the popular tumult which was excited by the priests, who determined, "in the name of the Virgin, the Apostles, and the Pope," to murder all the French, and burn all the Jews who were to be found in Rome. Such infamous policy as this only rendered the situation of the Pope more critical, and tended to hasten the fall of the Papal throne.

While the French conquests were threatening the temporal monarchy of the Pope, the Spanish ministry was menacing its spiritual despotism, by announcing the publication of the Acts of the Council of Pistoia.

"The reprinting of the Synod of Pistoia, which was about to be published in Spain, has decided the issuing of the brief, *Auctorem Fidei*, in order to prevent it. The non-publication of the acts of Ricci's synod was in consequence of the fears with which Rome still inspired Spain at that period. The germs, however, of a reform, similar to the one effected by the Grand Duke Leopold, did not on that account spring up the less; and, when the change of circumstances had operated a total revolution in ideas, when it had emboldened the old Governments of Europe by humbling the

Court of Rome, their ancient enemy, the courage of the Spanish bishops appeared to revive, the Minister resumed his former plans, and the Concordat he was then desirous of concluding, seemed to be entirely conformable to the principles of modern canonists. The Pope trembled, and the Jansenists mutually communicated their hopes."

"It consoles me to see that good principles begin to find their way into Spain, where several bishops think of reforming many abuses."

"It is not the Synod of Pistoia which raises its voice, but men who are at length aroused from their profound sleep, lashed by the tyrannical despotism of the cursed Babylon, Rome! I hope that the synod thus severely treated, will become the model for this portion of Spanish Catholicism."

"The arrival at Rome of the Spanish ministers, causes as much alarm there, as, a short time ago, did the approach of the French army. The latter, at the worst, only exacted a temporary contribution. The former threaten the fixed funds and revenues from which that court draws wherewithal to support its luxury and splendor."

The Papal Court, as usual, tried to operate a diversion in its favor, by ordaining a final examination of the Council of Pistoia, intending to issue a formal condemnation of it.

Accordingly, in April, 1794, Ricci received an intimation from Rome, that the Pope would be graciously pleased to hear a defence of his synod, if he should appear at Rome before the Bull was issued against him. This letter Ricci communicated to Ferdinand, representing that the Pope had violated his promise towards Leopold; but Ferdinand, who was unwilling to give up Ricci on the one hand, and on the other dreaded the vengeance of Rome, recommended Ricci to refuse going to Rome, on the ground of his ill health. He was enjoined to declare his devotion to the Pope, and to insinuate that it was surely unnecessary for his

Holiness to occupy himself with the acts of a synod, which were now no where in force.

The object of the Spanish Government, in wishing to publish the Acts of the Synod of Pistoia, was, that they might serve as a basis to the reforms which it contemplated ; and this was the cause of the anxiety of the Papal Court for their suppression. With this view, the Pope caused his Nuncio to give the Spanish Court notice of the approaching condemnation of the assembly of Pistoia, and this sufficed to stop the projected printing of them. Without replying farther to Ricci, the Pope issued, August, 1794, the famous Bull *Auctorem Fidei*, of which none of the articles were communicated to Ricci, notwithstanding the Pope's promise to that effect, given to Leopold. Ricci, who had received no notice of his own condemnation, was resolved not to reply to what he was not supposed to know. Ferdinand approved of his conduct, and the Bull was forbidden to be sold or published in any of the Tuscan States, though the Pope's Nuncio contrived to circulate it surreptitiously among the people.

The Bull did not, however, produce all the effects which the Papal Court expected. It was suppressed at Naples, Turin, Venice, Milan, in Spain, Portugal, and France ; and even at Rome it was despised.

“ At Rome, this affair, the condemnation of the Synod of Pistoia by the Bull *Auctorem*, is spoken of still less than at Florence ; that is to say, it is not spoken of at all.”

But Rome, though deprived of the triumph she expected, contrived, by her intrigues, to excite against Ricci the envy and hatred of all his old colleagues, particularly Falchi ; and however retired the ex-bishop lived, he could not but feel the effects of them. The people dispersed when he mounted the altar, even his confessor refused him absolution, and he was very near passing for one of the most dangerous heretics.

It was at that time sufficient to bear the name of Jansenist, to be overwhelmed with all the implacable hatred of Rome, which saw in the Jansenists its most

dangerous enemies; and to be exposed to all the persecutions and vexations which fanatics, bigots, fools, and hypocrites are capable of inflicting. The success of the French revolution, which was regarded as the completion of Jansenism, whilst both of them were but the result of the greater or less extension of knowledge, had rendered this religious furor much more ardent than it had been before this epoch.

Sciarelli wrote from Colle, September, 1794 :

“I find several propositions condemned, which previously to this Bull my limited understanding had considered Catholic ones. The Bishop of Pistoia and his followers condemned the propositions condemned by the Roman Court, in the very sense of the Bull—a sense which never had been either theirs, or that of the diocesan synod. Did not those sectaries themselves, like the primitive Jansenists, know what they believed, or what they ought to believe? Or rather, did their greater or less degree of faith depend, not upon their more or less share of piety or knowledge, but upon the greater or less strength of their character for resisting the caresses and the menaces of the Court of Rome?”

Camillo Albergotti Pezzoni wrote from Arezzo, September, 1794 :

“The mania for universal dominion always renders the Court of Rome more and more obstinate in the profession of her pernicious, lax and *Loiistical* maxims; puffed up with papal infallibility, she declares war against the defenders of the wholesome doctrine of the Church, which is that of Augustin. In the present situation of Europe, the Pope excites pity, when he is seen hurling forth decrees of condemnation one after another, which wound the sovereign authority. He speaks of the Bull *Auctorem*, and guarantees maxims of laxity. This is the work of the Bolegni, Cuccagni, Marchetti, Zaccharia, &c. This slow surprise made upon the Pope by the shameless Molinists, against the Augustinian doctrine, is a fresh infallible argument of the fallibility of his Holiness.”

The Abbé D. sent Ricci the decree of the Inquisition

of Genoa, printed at Genoa, and bearing the following date: *Ex edibus S. Inquisitionis Genuæ, die 19 Septembris, 1794*, from the Palace of the Holy Inquisition of Genoa, 19th Sept. 1794. That decree was directed against the acts of the Synod of Pistoia, which had been proscribed, as it was expressed by the Pontifical Bull. The Abbé adds to this document, so remarkable for the period, the copy of a letter written by *Frà Benedetto*, brother Benedict Solari, Bishop of Noli, to the Senate of Genoa, to disprove and combat the said decree, and the condemnation of the acts of the Council of Pistoia, which he declared he would not receive.

In the mean time, the influence of the French was daily more and more felt in Italy, by means of the Republican arms.

It was in Italy as in Spain. The new opinions, equally favorable to the governments and the national clergy, no longer finding the same resistance on the part of Rome, which was reduced to defend its own existence, were rapidly propagated, and received with welcome, especially by those who had hitherto been denominated the lower clergy. The French Constitutionals seconded with all their energy this moral revolution, by disseminating their opinions and maxims, in proportion as they extended their communications, with their correspondence, the only method of at length rendering their Church, if not more respectable in the opinion of the Roman court, at least more formidable, which produced the same results.

The character of cannibals had been generally given to the French in Italy, by all the weak and timid Governments, who hoped to inspire the people with the courage of despair against pretended kinds of monsters whom they had held up as objects of terror in the tales of the nursery. The Papal Government particularly distinguished itself by those puerile follies. It caused it to be reported throughout all its States, that the French Republicans were impious men, and barbarians; that they married several wives, and adored several gods, amongst others the idol called

the Tree of Liberty; that they violated women and young girls, and devoured children. This is asserted in a pamphlet published by Annibal Mariotti, who, upon the entrance of the brigands of Arezzo into Perugia, was arrested, for having refuted these absurd Papal calumnies. He was one of the twenty individuals detained for *Jacobinism*, whom the regency of Perugia selected from among a thousand victims which crowded their prison, and whom it granted to the *Aretins*, who had only asked for ten, to grace their triumphal return to Arezzo.

As the civil constitution of the French clergy had been modelled upon the reforms of Leopold, it was neither judged proper to condemn them at Florence, nor to persecute their partisans. Ricci, therefore, thought he might now come and inhabit the capital.

The Court of Rome seemed driven to its fate by a kind of insanity. It issued new Bulls against the French Directory more furious than the first. Another method it adopted was, to excite the mob, by the exhibition of pretended miracles, to renew the Sicilian Vespers throughout Italy. The shutting and opening of the eyes of the Madonnas in the churches and streets were tricks principally resorted to, and were interpreted by the priests as irrefragable proof of the victory which the soldiers of the Roman Court would infallibly gain over the troops of the Republic.

We shall notice the miracle of the famous Madonna of Ancona. From a work published a few years ago, we can see the spirit of those who governed at the period connected with this history, and the nature of that which they are endeavoring to establish in the present day. This work is entitled:—"A moral and historical picture of the invasion of Italy in 1796, and of the miraculous and simultaneous opening of the eyes of the holy image of the most blessed Maria, revered in the Cathedral of Ancona: Assisi, 1820: With license."

The author is the Abbé Vincent Albertini, professor of eloquence at Fermo. After his portrait, which is

immediately followed by that of the Madonna, is the author's Dedication to the most blessed Virgin. Then comes the introduction. "Modern policy, it is said, is wholly occupied with the most moderate plans and systems, with the most salutary amnesties, and with a most sincere and unreserved oblivion of the past, with the conviction that this will be found not a momentary, but a lasting panacea for all the evils which have so long afflicted Europe."

Albertini commences his subject by a long dissertation upon the eyes so full of tenderness of the Virgin. "Hitherto nothing had been so common as to see those eyes turn towards us, but then it was only from the summit of the Heaven where she dwells." It was for Ancona that the rare happiness was reserved of possessing the first image of the Virgin which visibly opened and shut eyes painted upon the cloth, and this at a time when the presence of the French kept up the violent agitation of men's minds.

He attributes that agitation, which he calls a convulsion, to "the abominable race of anti-social misanthropes, self-styled philosophic regenerators;" and maintains that history will confound them with the Ravailleurs, the Cromwells, the Mirabeaus, the Marats, and the Robespierres.

He speaks of the miracle of Ancona, which took place June, 1796; at the very time when the news, which had been spread about, of the defeat of the French in Germany and Upper Italy, had made the subjects of his Holiness believe that all that was wanted to effect a complete riddance of the presence of the Republicans was a small quantity of popular fanaticism, very easy to be aroused by means of some pretended prodigies. "The angels," says the author, "who, upon their heavenly throne, worship with profound veneration their mighty sovereign—the angels, whose countenances we are not permitted to behold, envy, in some degree, your lot."

All the inhabitants of Ancona flocked to this image of the miraculous Virgin, and manifested the most

sincere signs of penitence, joy, and devotion. Cardinal Ranuzzi showed himself among the foremost.

There was a plausible motive for the Virgin performing her miracle at Ancona, in preference to any other place; which Albertini thus explains:—

“Ancona, placed in the centre of Italy, is a sea-port; vessels might, therefore, carry in a short time the news of this miracle from the Adriatic Gulf to the most distant nations of the two hemispheres.” Our author assures us that Jesus Christ conceived the first idea of this anti-republican miracle; and spake to his Mother in the following strange manner: “Go, O conciliating and mediating between God and man, whom thou hast conquered! In thee have I placed the seat of my power. By thy means I grant the favors asked at my hands. As thou gavest to me the essence of man, so will I give to thee that of God, my omnipotence, with which thou canst assist all who recommend themselves to thee!”

Albertini desires, he says, not the death, but the conversion of the sinner. He would even have wished that the Emperor Julian, whom Christian historians have named the *Apostate*, and whom he calls the *impious iconoclast*, could have seen only once the miracle which the most noble city of Ancona enjoyed for several months together.

The famous *restoration* of the absolute Governments, which is also a miracle, could not be passed over in silence by the historian of the miraculous image. “All the Italian princes, with the exception of the overthrown Republics, are stupified, as after a long sleep, in seeing themselves reinstated in their feudal dominions,—an event which no human power could have calculated.”

Then follows the history of the miraculous image placed in a magnificent chapel of Cyriac at Ancona:

“So unheard-of a prodigy was attested by more than eighty thousand ocular witnesses, and by legal inquiries. A true account of it was published, by order of Cardinal Ranuzzi. Besides this, the deputy Betti made

it a duty to transmit this fact to posterity, by means of an inscription engraven upon stone, and which, for the purpose of preserving the recollection of it for ever, was placed in the cathedral.

“In November, 1796, was finished the *procès verbal* which had been drawn up of the proofs of this miracle, under the strictest regulations.

“The Pope, by his brief of November, had just instituted a pious brotherhood in honor of this image, under the name of the Sons and Daughters of Maria. After this miracle, it was found impossible to close the church for twelve successive nights, so great was the concourse of people attracted by the prodigy.”

“In July, three painters, the Vicar Pacifici, the notary François Vallaca, and the attorney Bonavia, accompanied by several witnesses taken from the canons, by many noblemen and some foreigners, went to examine the manner in which the holy image was painted, in order to ascertain with certainty whether some imposture, the work of human malice, had not been introduced by means of the change of colors, &c. Scarcely had they taken off the glass which covered it, when the image opened its ever blessed eyes twice successively, to a greater extent than it had ever before done, and then closed them again, as a still farther proof of the truth of the first miracle.”

It is not exactly clear whence arose the incredulity of the examining commissioners, since at the time of the solemn procession of June, the day after the miracle, the Virgin did nothing but open, shut, and turn her eyes on all sides, to the great delight of the inhabitants, who wept tears of joy. In June 1800, and August, 1817, this same procession took place, by way of thanksgiving; but the Virgin did not vouchsafe to open her eyes. It appears she had seen enough!

Pius VII. crowned the miraculous image in May, 1814, an event which was commemorated by an inscription. He fixed its anniversary on the second Sunday of the same month, and attached to it the benefit of a plenary indulgence. Albertini says, that it would

require too much time to make a catalogue of the plenary and partial indulgences granted by the Popes Pius VI. and Pius VII., in favor of this image.

Bonaparte, who arrived at Ancona a short time after the pretended miracle had been worked, caused the miraculous image to be brought by the canons of the Cathedral to the Palace Trionfi, where he was lodged ; and to be stripped of all its rich ornaments and jewels, which he gave over into the hand of the President of the Municipality, in aid of the poorest hospital in the city. The lawyer Bonavia, a partisan of the French, then related to the General all that had taken place, and corroborated his account by the testimony of one hundred thousand persons, all present at the performance of the miracle. Bonaparte took the image, and looked at it with the greatest attention for a long time.

"It cannot be precisely asserted," says Albertini, "*that the Virgin opened her eyes in his presence, but one cannot help at least supposing so.*" That great man continued looking at the image steadfastly, and suddenly was seen to change color. He also made gestures indicative of trouble and surprise. "He finished by restoring to it all its jewels and ornaments—to the great detriment of the hospitals and the poor, whom this new miracle again plunged into misery—and had it replaced upon its accustomed altar, where, for greater awe, he ordered it to be covered with a veil."

The Memoirs of Antommarchi prove to us, that in his last moments, the Emperor spoke with very little reverence of the Italian Madonnas.

"The miracle was afterwards attested by persons of all classes, by rich and poor, by magistrates and private citizens, by ecclesiastics and laymen, by the devout and the incredulous, by Catholics and Protestants, by Infidels and Jews, by all nations, by all climes, by all ranks, as is stated in the certificate which is preserved among the archives of the venerable church of Ancona." The incredulous, Protestants, Turks, and Jews, as little expected to figure among the witnesses of a miracle,

operated by and for the profit of the Court of Rome, as Napoleon himself.

In September, the miracle continuing to be regularly shown to the curious, the Emperor of Germany caused a solemn procession to be made, offered a rich gift in wax-lights, and appropriated a large sum of money for the celebration of masses. Amelia, Duchess of Parma, embroidered with her own hands some valuable tissues, and sent them to the Holy Virgin.

“The miracles of the images of Ancona, Rome, Civita Vecchia, Maurata, and Ascoli, occupy every person’s attention to such a degree, that the French are no longer spoken of.”

The wish to see prodigies naturally terminates in the belief of them, and the report of the Madonna miracles soon reached Florence. Some withered lilies, placed before an image of the Virgin, were found next day blown; and the Archbishop Martini, thinking this a favorable occasion to give himself importance with the multitude, went in procession to transport the pretended miraculous image to the metropolitan church.

From that time, the Archbishop Martini became the apologist for, and propagator of, all the miracles; in which *he reposed not the least faith!* but it was a certain method of keeping up the ignorance and superstition of the people, and of enabling him, by this means, to let loose their fanaticism, which it was very easy for him to direct according to his interests or desires of vengeance.

Of two of these pretended miracles, we give the titles. It is remarkable that it was always before the entrance, or after the departure of the French troops, that the miracles took place. While Tuscany was in the possession of the Republicans, the laws of nature were carefully respected by the saints, and by the souls of the other world.

1. “An apologetic letter respecting the apparition of a Spirit, which happened in the month of August, 1800, near the Hills of Rosan, not far from the city of Florence, written by the curate of Villamagna, with

the approbation of the Archbishop Antoine Martini. Florence, 1800, with licence." This was the spirit of a female peasant, who appeared, we are assured, in a meadow to a shepherdess to ask her for some *paters* and *aves*, which she said she was in want of, in order to get out of purgatory. As many as ten thousand persons at a time repaired to the spot to find the shepherdess, who maintained that she had ~~seen~~ the spirit.

2. "A succinct account of the miraculous production of oil, which took place, or was discovered, May, 1806, in the monastery of Maria degli Angeli and Maria Maddalena de Pazzi, at the intercession of Maria Bartolommea Bagnesi, a Florentine virgin of the third order of Dominic, authentically confirmed by a decree of the Archiepiscopal Court of Florence, December, 1806. Florence, 1807, with approbation." The eager devotion of the Florentines, who were all desirous of procuring the oil of the lamps of Bagnesi, exhausted the convent. Santa Pazzi, its abbess, *created* seven barrels at a time. The Queen Regent of Etruria hastened, at the first intelligence, and got herself anointed. Martini guaranteed the miracle, and the faithful prostrated themselves.

These unworthy means, however, did not succeed; and Rome, theocratic as it was, found herself, after all her efforts, forced to become a democracy. Ricci sincerely lamented the fate of the Pope; but not wishing to range himself with either party, he retired to his villa, occupying his leisure only with pious books, and in the composition of others, up to the time when the French took possession of Tuscany, March, 1799.

Ricci, speaking of the changes which had taken place at Rome, recently become a democratic Republic, says, that he never doubted "that this great good, of which we are now spectators, would happen to the Church. The opprobrious name of Court is at length abolished; the haughty monarchy is now annihilated. Would to God that all the old despots of the Vatican lived contemporaries with Pius VI., because, chastised in their own pride, they might prepare them-

selves better than they have done for their passage into eternity!"

He gives an account of the fanatical tumult of the Roman populace, especially that part of it on the other side of the Tiber, against the Republicans, to the cries of "*Long live Mary, religion, and the Pope!*" Many lives were lost in it. "What most astonishes me is, that this revolt has been entirely the work of monks and priests. A Capuchin, the ringleader of rebels! These are terms that fanaticism alone is capable of reconciling."

In a pamphlet by Joseph Giusti, July, 1801, is the following picture of the situation of Tuscany :

"The irruption of the barbarians brought along with it the triumph of ignorance, superstition, anarchy, and crime. The priests taught to cover every crime with the veil of religion. The vilest wretches planned the fatal plot, the object of which was the annihilation of religion and virtue; and a usurping Senate brought back into our country the dreadful time of Tiberius—nothing was witnessed but scenes of horror.

"The most irreproachable men of all classes and conditions, honorable and peaceable citizens, virtuous patricians, upright magistrates, brave soldiers, respectable ecclesiastics, all men of a superior talent, the glory of their country, and who in numberless instances had merited well of their country, perished wretchedly either by the blow of the assassin, or at the stake planted by fanaticism. Others were arbitrarily arrested and dragged before a tribunal of cannibals: there, without the least shadow of justice, without proofs against them, without the means of defence, they were subjected to the most infamous penalties, to the galleys, to imprisonment in fortresses, and to banishment. Others, finally, who had with the utmost difficulty and danger escaped from their ferocious persecutors, took refuge in foreign countries, there to lead a wandering and wretched life, carrying with them the cruel recollection of the tyranny of an iniquitous government, and of the ingratitude of their fellow citizens. Above thirty

thousand families were victims of these proscriptions ; and Ferdinand saw with complacency, from the centre of Germany, the ruin, despair, and extermination of the best of his subjects.

“ All idea of morality was overturned ; the public instruction was poisoned at its fountain-head, and every idea of humanity and justice was annihilated. Insurrection, anarchy, and massacre, were openly preached by the ministers of the sanctuary, were represented as conscientious duties by a thousand inflammatory writers, and were authorized and encouraged by the Government itself.

“ Such was the state of Tuscany, in October, 1800, on which day the approach of the Republicans forced the most notorious authors of these excesses, cowardly to take to flight, leaving Tuscany to be governed by their own sub-delegates, the only instructions given to them being, to endeavor as much as possible to keep up the system which they had themselves established.

“ Those creatures of a fugitive General and Regency — creatures, whose authority was contrary to all the rules of policy respected by the conqueror after the occupation of Tuscany, continued to foment the popular fanaticism, and to prepare the country for a general rising. But French generosity was at length exhausted, and it was resolved, if necessary, to join to the old governors three persons more worthy of confidence.”

After having seen the crimes of the *insurgents of faith and legitimacy*, it will be well to observe the solicitude of the Government to reward their horrible services.

“ Circular instruction to all the commissioners created by the decree, *Motu proprio*, of February, 1800.” The decree of last February declares, that his Royal Highness has established a commission, charged with examining the merit of the individuals who have, during the insurrection of the Aretines, or after they had exhibited this great example, given proofs either of military valor or of political prudence, by giving birth to, fomenting and exciting the rising against the

enemy in any of the provinces of the Grand Duchy. The said commission will draw up an account of the deeds which have rendered illustrious, during this period, not only the town of Arezzo, but also all the other towns, boroughs, and villages of Tuscany, pointing out the names of persons the most deserving of reward, as well as those who have lost their lives during that interval.

Ricci happened to be at Florence at the time of the entrance of the French troops, and therefore could not retire to his villa, as the new Government had directed that no one should be allowed to leave the city, in order to prevent emigration. This compelled him to be a witness of the fanaticism of Leopold's Government. The insurrection of Arezzo was a grand event for that party. Religious enthusiasm made the rebels elect the *pretended miraculous Madonna their generalissimo*; and under her standard, they followed the Republican stragglers, whom these wandering hordes massacred without mercy, and plundered with safe consciences. *The image of the Virgin was the standard of assassination, and robbery!*

The band directed their steps towards Florence, where Ricci's name was already at the head of a list of victims to the monks, the priests, and the grandees, formed before the arrival of the hordes of Arezzo. The *Leopoldists* were especially in danger; and the insurgents came twice to the villa of the prelate, where they hoped to find him. They failed, however, in their search at that place, but the unfortunate Bishop was arrested at his house in Florence, in July, 1799, and next day transferred to the prison da Basso, where the French prisoners were confined, and where they were treated by the Aretines with so much inhumanity, that the prelate, in their mutinies, often ran the risk of being massacred.

The Aretines had no sentiments of hatred towards Ricci, of whom they had perhaps never heard; and he thought he might probably obtain his release by writing to the Archbishop of Florence and the Bishop

of Fiesole, to explain his situation, appealing to them as one of their brethren. The dark counsellors of Martini advised the Archbishop to pay a visit to Ricci, and to try by threats, promises, or reproaches, to engage him to a recantation of his opinions, and thus to remove from him all that was left him—his honor.

Martini followed this advice; and after describing to Ricci the dangerous feeling in the public mind, he recommended him to accept the Bull *Auctorem Fidei*; and concluded by reproaching him with the sanction he had given to the civil constitution of the French clergy, &c.

Ricci began to be intimidated, and asked counsel of Martini himself, who, seeing what might be made of the prisoner, paid him a second visit, in which, with extreme mildness, he urged the same arguments, which gained over the unfortunate prelate so far, as to lead him to consent to write a letter declaratory of his coincidence with Martini's opinions.

This document, however important to the defenders of the old abuses, was not regarded as strong enough. Martini took it upon him to say to Ricci in what it was deficient; and the Bishop had the weakness not only to yield, but to request that Martini would correct the letter in his own way. *After this was obtained, Martini refused to take any concern in Ricci's affairs: he even refused to send Ricci's letter to the Pope, and altogether ceased his visits to him!* The ex-Bishop was detained nearly a month at the fortress da Basso.

The excesses committed by the Aretines had roused even the indignation of the Germans, for whose advantage they committed them. General Klenau ordered them to quit Florence, under the pretence that they were required to raise the siege of Perugia, which was still in the power of the French. But they liked better to pillage the Jews, and to remain in excellent garrisons; accordingly they said openly, that as they had fulfilled what they styled their glorious mission, they had no reason to march farther. They soon however

dissolved, as it was likely, from their want of discipline, they would.

The commandant of the fort where Ricci was confined, finding no charge against him, ordered his liberation; but the Senate of Tuscany seemed to have aroused all the fury of the brigands of Arezzo; for when Ricci, after recovering from his prison malady, went to visit the Archbishop of Florence, the latter, after cruelly boasting of the absolute authority which had been granted him over the arrested ecclesiastics, told him that the people were not well pleased to see him at liberty, and recommended him to retire to any convent of the capital which he might choose. Ricci proposed to go to the Fathers of the Mission; but they were cowardly enough to refuse him. He next chose the Convent of the Dominicans, at Mark.

Here Ricci was treated exactly like a prisoner of the Inquisition. He had only a miserable cell allowed him; all the comforts of life were refused him; the monks fled from his presence, and he could scarcely obtain the privilege of saying mass in one of their private oratories. This was an inner chapel, which the Dominicans of Mark had caused to be magnificently constructed and embellished, in honor of Savonarola, close to the little rooms which had formerly been his cells. Over the entrance-door is still to be read this Latin inscription: "*Has cellulas Ven. P. P. Hieronymus Savonarola, vir apostolicus, inhabitavit.*"—"*These cells were inhabited by the apostolic Hieronymus Savonarola.*"

During his stay at the Convent of Mark, the Bishop of Pistoia made some extracts from the manuscripts which he found in the library, relative to that *heretic saint!*

Amongst others, is a letter written March, 1495, by the magistrates of the Republic of Florence, to Richard Becchi, its ambassador at the Court of Pope Alexander VI., to thank him for the pains he had taken to procure permission that Savonarola might continue to preach in their capital. Mention is therein made of

“falsities and calumnies which envious and wicked men are continually inventing and disseminating abroad, respecting Brother Jerome Savonarola. Not only, add the magistrates, has this brother been attacked, but we ourselves have been strongly suspected, as you write us, of suffering Brother Jerome, in his sermons, to speak to us in no very honorable terms, and without any respect in public, of the Church, and of our Lord, the Pope. Wherefore it appears to us just, as it is necessary, to let you clearly understand, that Brother Savonarola, in his sermons, has never to this day overstepped the limits traced by propriety, and which a kind of tacit convention generally opposes to the boldness of preachers. This, however, does not prevent these orators from condemning vices in general, pointing out the errors of the great, and making sinners tremble, by a lively and seasonable description of the Divine punishments which threaten them. If Brother Jerome had, in the least degree, exceeded the limits of which we have just spoken, in all which concerns the sanctity of our Lord, we would not have permitted him on any account to have preached in future.”

In April of the same year, the magistrates wrote to the Neapolitan Cardinal, the patron of the order of Dominic, that they had so great a veneration for the Prior of Mark, Brother Savonarola, that they thought they could do no good thing, unless exhorted to it by that monk. “For the piety of this man is admirable, his life spotless, his doctrine excellent. But what is above all that can be said, a still rarer merit, and one which we equally acknowledge in him, is, that he is inspired by a Divine spirit. He has not only predicted the common and ordinary things which have hitherto happened to us, but has forewarned us, in his sermons, of the most extraordinary events, such as we could have least expected, long before they took place. It is impossible to express how useful his sermons are to us, as much for the salvation of our souls, as for the tranquillity of our Republic.”

A third letter from the Florentine magistrates is addressed to Pope Alexander VI. himself, entreating him to allow Savonarola to reside among them. It is the most honorable testimony of the piety, learning, purity of morals, and holiness of life of Brother Jerome, and a refutation of the calumnies invented for his destruction. This letter is dated September, 1495.

Then follow the fragments of some letters from Anthony Magliabechi to Theophilus Spizelius, a Protestant minister of the Church of Augsburg :

“With respect to the accusations against Savonarola, they are futile, and without the least foundation. As a man, as a Christian, as a monk, as a preacher, he was compelled to take part in public affairs; for all was hastening on to ruin; and not only were the morals much relaxed, but even atheism triumphed so audaciously, that many writings, whose sole object was to turn the Holy Scriptures into ridicule, were printed over and over again, such as the Sonnets of the Canon Pulci and others. Thousands of holy men have done the same thing, in times much less demanding their interference than those in which Savonarola lived.

“To say that he was desirous of courting interest and favor, is one of the greatest falsehoods ever heard. Had he desired honors, he would have flattered the House of Medicis, and the Sovereign Pontiff Alexander VI., who had promised him, if he retracted, a cardinal's hat.

“The trial of Savonarola now in circulation, is falsified and garbled. That was the reason why it was not read in Savonarola's presence—a circumstance which scandalized the people much, but in which his judges took not the least concern. I have made every possible effort to get a sight of the genuine trial, but always in vain. Patriarca, who was employed in the fiscal chamber, and who had all these documents in his trust, told me he had seen in some old memoirs, that this trial had been immediately taken away, and that the enemies of the monk had either torn it in pieces, or burnt it. *They then published an interpo-*

lated and altered trial ; and in order to prevent their fraud from being discovered, they destroyed the real one, in order to remove every possibility of comparing the two trials, and discovering their iniquity !"

In the midst of the Bishop's sufferings, Pius VI. died. Martini advised Ricci to write to his successor ; and one of the Dominicans engaged the Nuncio to visit him, in order to procure a dishonorable recantation of all his opinions. Ricci refused the Nuncio's interference : the latter withdrew in anger. Martini was jealous of the Nuncio, and refused any longer to interest himself in the fate of his colleague.

The health of Ricci was visibly injured, owing to the suspense in which he was held, and the perfidy of his pretended friends. He also heard that it was at the Archbishop's instigation that the Dominicans refused to allow him to officiate in their Church, thus authorizing the Florentines to regard him as a dangerous heretic, a person to be shunned. However, he bore all patiently, and passed the greater part of his time in the library or his cloister, in perusing the works of those fathers who most coincided with his opinions.

Under these circumstances, instead of receiving any assistance or consolation from his family, he was persecuted even by his own brother, the Senator Ricci, who finally succeeded in suspending the payment of the pension assigned to him by the Grand-ducal Government till after the decision of his trial. All these vexations had such an effect on the spirits of Ricci, that his physicians, dreading a long and dangerous malady, applied to the Senate for permission to have Ricci transported to his country-house, as good air and quiet were the only remedies for his disorder.

The Senate declared that they had never given any orders for the arrest of Ricci. The physicians then addressed themselves to the Archbishop, who had always pleaded orders from Government to that effect ; but he referred them again to the Senate, as Ricci's affair regarded a prisoner accused of revolutionary

opinions. This was the first time such an accusation had been made; for Martini had assured the Bishop, when detained at Basso, that he was only suspected of erroneous opinions on religion.

But the difficulties made by Martini to Ricci's enlargement, were not the only ones he had to encounter; for his brother required that, before allowing him to quit Mark, all the examinations should be gone through of all the persons suspected, about 32,000, in order to be sure that the Bishop was not implicated with some of them. This delay must have occasioned the death of Ricci, had not some senators, less cruel, taken advantage of the temporary absence of Martini, to set the Bishop at liberty on the following conditions, and allow him to return to his villa:—

That he should leave the convent in the night.—That he should only stay a few hours at his house at Florence.—That he should not keep up any correspondence whatever.—That he should promise to yield himself prisoner, whenever he should be required by the Senate.

The extensive correspondence of Ricci would naturally alarm the tyrants, who could only work in that darkness to which they are indebted for their existence.

The following singular letters bear testimony to the truth of what we advance.

Isacarus, a Bethlehemite, wrote to Ricci from Rome, March, 1798.

He requests Ricci's answers to Marchetti's *Annotations Pacifiques*. He then complains of the persecutions to which he is himself exposed at Rome, from priests who were there called *good Christians*, but who were in reality only Freethinkers, *esprits forts*.

From Caietan Victorin de Faria, a Paulist monk, at Lisbon; 1798. Faria was a Brahmin, and was converted to Catholicism. His wife being dead, he and his two sons entered into the priesthood at Genoa; his third son was made Deacon. All four went over to Lisbon, where they lived in the convent of the Paulists.

"The regular clergy in India," says he, "have become, towards the end of the 18th century, what the bonzes were at Japan: the nuns were the disciples of Diana, and their nunneries seraglios for the monks; as I have proved to be the case in Lisbon, by facts which I have produced respecting those nuns, who were more often in the family-way than the common women."

"The Jesuits made themselves Brachmans in the Indies, in order to enjoy the privileges of that caste, whose idolatrous rites and superstitious practices they had also adopted." He then explains in what consisted the principal privileges which the *religious members* of that society had acquired by this means; namely, "of having free ingress to all the Indian Courts; of being never put to death for any crime whatever; and of *enjoying the favors of every woman who pleased them*, it being commonly received, that a *Brachman priest sanctifies the woman whom he honors with his attentions.*" The Paulist monk speaks from experience, for he had himself been a Brachman before embracing the Christian religion.

Ricci had scarcely arrived in the country when he recovered his health. He wrote to Martini, who replied only by a few lines, requiring a recantation. Ricci replied, that he was still of the same opinion he had expressed to him and in the letter he had written to the Pope; and concluded by professing the purity of his intention in all his reforms, and expressing his regret if they should have been premature or the cause of scandal.

Martini replied, that he had not had time to read the long letter of Ricci, but urged him to write to the new Pope. Ricci was grieved at the way in which he was treated by his former colleague, but promised to follow his advice as soon as the new Pontiff should be elected.

After this, for several months he continued an isolated being, shunned by every one, and persecuted by his enemies, who wished to deny him even the consolation of performing his devotions in the church. This

tyranny lasted a year; and then they began to prepare false documents, and bribe false witnesses, to support their accusations and justify their ill-treatment of Ricci, on his approaching trial at Florence. The Archbishop wished to have Ricci condemned as a person guilty of holding antimonarchical opinions; but if this should fail as was likely, he reserved to himself the right of sending him to Rome to be punished by his natural enemies. On his trial, *impunity was promised to the guilty of all descriptions who should make any accusation against Ricci!* He was to be found guilty, in some way or other; but in spite of these infamous and illegal proceedings, the Chancellor was obliged to acknowledge that there was no crime proved against R. His persecutors were not yet satisfied: he was not yet set at liberty; for they adjourned the trial in order that their victim might not escape them; and this proof of their malignity gave a shock both to the health and mind of Ricci, which he did not recover for the remaining ten years of his life.

The wretched intrigues employed to disturb the last moments of Abbé Mengoni, who spontaneously and publicly declared his orthodoxy and unalterable attachment to the unity of the Church, proves to demonstration that *the spirit of the Court of Rome and its agents, is the same in all times and in all places*, and that it avails itself of the most trifling circumstances, as well as of the most important events, to extend the fatal influence of that ignorance and fanaticism, upon which is founded the Papal power.

Canon Joseph Mancini, now Bishop of Massa, and at that time Vicar-general of the Archbishop of Florence, commissioned a priest named Mirri, a speculating theologian, to avail himself of the weakness of the sick man in order to obtain a recantation.

The formula he was required to sign, contained the acceptance of all that had been determined upon at the Council of Trent; of all that the Church had decided upon respecting grace and free will; the Bulls of Pius V., Gregory XIII., Urban VIII., Alexander VII., &c.,

and especially those known by the names of *Unigenitus super Soliditate* and *Auctorem Fidei*; the confession of the belief that *the Pope has the precedency in honor and jurisdiction over all the Church*, and that the Roman Church is the mother and mistress of all the others; finally, the condemnation of the errors of the incredulous and licentious in matters of religion, in the same manner as they are condemned by the Church, as well as that of the propositions anathematized by the said Bulls, in the same plain and natural sense as has hitherto dictated anathemas of the Sovereign Pontiffs.

Abbé Mengoni resisted; and having learnt, by the reports spread among the people at the instigation of his vindictive colleague, that he was made to pass for an excommunicated person, to whom the Archbishop even intended to deny the administration of the *viaticum*, he wrote to that same Archbishop, October, 1815, and said, that he not only had always been, and still was a good Catholic, but that his most earnest wish was to die in the communion of the faithful, in which he had always lived.

He wrote the same day to the Vicar Mancini, and asked him "if he required him to disgrace himself by a falsehood, by confessing himself guilty of a crime, of which indeed he was accused, but which he was convinced he had not committed: a circumstance which no one could know better than himself."

Morali, the then existing Archbishop, insisted upon obtaining the required retraction, *which it was hoped might be coupled with that of Bishop Ricci*, in order to complete the victory gained by the Court of Rome. Seeing, at length, that all his efforts were useless, he dared not take farther advantage of the restoration of legitimacy in his country. The Abbé Mengoni received the *viaticum* from the hands of his confessor, the Curate of Gervais. The Prior of Marco Vecchio alleged many frivolous excuses to avoid performing this office, and requested the curate to be his substitute on the occasion.

Another retraction took place; that of an Abbé Panieri, a canon of the cathedral of Pistoia, who condemned and reproved the doctrine which he had taught under Ricci, concerning the sacrament of marriage and the dispensations from ecclesiastical hindrances.

This retraction, written by the canon's own hand, March, 1820, was addressed by him with a letter to Marchetti d'Empoli, the apologist for the miracles at the close of the last century, which were both immediately printed at Rome, by De Romain, *with permission of the higher powers*; and several hundred copies were sent to Florence. It did not, however, succeed in stirring up ancient feuds for a long time forgotten. The Government, aware of its turbulent intentions, ordered the packet to be seized on the frontiers, and committed to the flames.

As soon as he heard of the election of Pius VII. as Pope, Ricci, who knew the moderation of his disposition as Cardinal, conceived some hope of a termination to his sufferings. He wrote a letter to the Pontiff, in which he expressed his entire submission to the Apostolic Chair, and the Pope occupying it, and justified his opinions as orthodox. His letter was dated March, 1800.

Gonsalvi, the Pro-secretary of State, acknowledged the receipt of this letter, but made no reply to its contents. The answer was deferred for ten whole months,—an interval which was not unemployed by the enemies of the Tuscan prelate, who did every thing in their power to render Ricci odious to the new Pope. The Florentine Senate was equally active in preparing contradictory evidence of all kinds against Ricci; and the Nuncio, thinking the opportunity favorable, insisted that the Government should send him to Rome. It was precisely at this time, that the “menacing letter” of Gonsalvi arrived. It required of Ricci a recantation of his errors, and those of his Synod—his acknowledgment of the Bull *Auctorem Fidei*—of profound submission to the Pope, and a confession of his repentance. The Nuncio's secretary, who delivered

the letter, was to add to it *verbally*, that the contents were known to the Tuscan Regency, who urged the ex-Bishop to comply with its demands, under pain of being given up to the Nuncio, and shut up for life in the Castle of Angelo.

Ricci was unwilling to declare all the acts of his episcopacy improper, seeing that they had all been sanctioned by the Grand Duke. He communicated his scruples to the Government, but no answer was ever given; so that he must have been betrayed into the snare laid for him, had not the victorious French re-entered Italy, and saved him from the danger. This was the more imminent, as Ricci was now rather disposed to diminish the concessions he had made, than to make others.

Eleven days before the French entered Florence, he received a copy of the political accusations made against him: to which he replied immediately by a letter, in which he protested his attachment to his Prince, and complained of the sufferings he had endured so long.

On the entrance of the French into Florence, October, 1800, all the persecutors fled, together with the Pontifical Nuncio, who was at their head. That emissary had been charged to extort from Ricci, with the aid of the Tuscan Government, a dishonorable recantation of all his acts and opinions; but times had now changed, and fear of the victorious French led him to write a very mild letter to Ricci, requesting merely a simple assurance of his submission to the Pope. This he immediately complied with, adding his acknowledgments of entire accordance with the Roman Church in matters of faith, and his abhorrence of schism. He occupied his time during his respite from persecution, in preparing a reply to the Bull *Auctorem Fidei*, in which he proved, that this Bull only condemns what was condemned by the Synod of Pistoia.

The weak Austrian Government of *four* was, about that time, replaced by a French triumvirate; who, as soon as they discovered the 32,000 processes and accu-

sations, condemned them to be publicly burnt. Ricci's was sent to him, and "from it," says he, "I discovered that I had been detained at Mark's by means of the Archbishop of Florence. *Nihil tam occultum quod non revelabitur.*—*Nothing is so hidden that it shall not be revealed!*" The French Government expressed the utmost esteem for the person of Ricci, and regrets for the unworthy persecutions of which he had been the victim. Ricci demanded an acknowledgment of the falsehood of the accusations against him, which the Secretary of the Crown could not refuse. He then retired to his villa, where he employed himself in his usual occupations, with country amusements, and in the improvement both of the face of the country, and the indigent laborers on his land.

CHAPTER XI.

Louis I., King of Etruria.—Treaty with the Pope for Ricci.—Their Reconciliation.

RICCI had formed the best opinion of Louis I. of Etruria; but that King, entirely governed by his courtiers, Ventura and Salvatico, instead of showing the philosophical virtues which had been ascribed to him, appeared from the time of his entry into Florence a bigoted fanatic and tyrant, whose character soon revived the popular murmurs which had before disturbed the capital.

The public was menaced with all the dangers which could result from the evil influence of the Capuchin Turchi, a prelate as violent and ambitious in his exalted station, as he had been mild and reasonable as a priest. He had signalized his episcopacy by seditious homilies, which had been published at Parma, against the ecclesiastical reforms of the Grand Duke Leopold,

and Ricci. The new Court, on entering Tuscany, appeared to take no step without expressing its wrath against this devoted land. The ancient Bishop of Pistoia had no reason, therefore, to be astonished, on finding himself refused, by the Counts Ventura and Salvatico, the audience which he had requested them to obtain for him from the King their master. The latter, on hearing the name of Ricci pronounced, had already, with some degree of *naïveté*, asked his courtiers if it was Ricci the *heretic*.

Scarcely had the reign of ignorance and impotence thus commenced, when Rome boldly preferred all her former pretensions to authority. The Nuncio Morozzo imperiously demanded of Ricci the accustomed recantation. The Government produced a plan for an Inquisition of the Faith, on the same footing as the ferocious Inquisition of Spain; it was proposed that the reading of controversial works should be forbidden, and that the partisans of the ancient reforms should be driven into exile. Happily for Tuscany, the French Minister at Florence never ceased exclaiming against the absurd measures of this unenlightened and imprudent Government. The fear which his influence occasioned, prevented the monks from precipitating their designs, and raised an insurmountable obstacle to the machinations of the Nuncio against the ex-Bishop of Pistoia.

This, however, could not prevent the publication of the law of April, 1802, which the fanatical party had taken care to keep secret, in order to avoid opposition. This law had for its end the destruction of all useful reforms and the ruin of all reformers. It abolished at one blow the ecclesiastical rules, of whatever kind they were, which had been published since the time of the Emperor Francis I. They loaded the Governments which had shown any inclination to religious reform, with the most injurious epithets. They deprived the Prince for ever of all power and influence over the persons and possessions of the clergy; they took from the bishops their legitimate and inalienable

spiritual authority, to give them a temporal authority which they can and ought never to possess; they exposed the Tuscans to the twofold despotism of the Roman Court; they declared the reforms which had been made in Tuscany to be illegal and heretical; and lastly, the Inquisition of the Nuncio's jurisdiction was established on a firm and indestructible base.

It is difficult to describe the alarm which the unexpected publication of such a law occasioned. The ministers of France and Spain, however, firmly resisted measures which, as well as the principles which had dictated them, were so opposed to the treaty recently concluded between the French Republic and the Court of Rome. But the blow was struck; the only thing which was gained by the public disapprobation, was the universal contempt of the law, and the proof which was given, in the eyes of all Europe, of the weakness of the Prince who had introduced it. The law of April was not revoked, nevertheless, the ancient ecclesiastical laws of the Grand Duchy, although abrogated by the new disposition of the Sovereign, remained in full vigor and activity; and the Minister, who sought to restore the deplorable times of Cosmo III., was unable to resist them.

Fanaticism lost about that time her two principal supports in Italy, the Duke of Parma, and Turchi, the Bishop of that city. Louis of Etruria survived them but a short time; he died March, 1803.

The Queen Maria Louisa was declared Regent during the minority of her son. "Without experience, vain and bigoted, and above all, entirely dependent on the former ministry, and on the intriguing and ignorant Morozzo, the Nuncio, she desired nothing so much as to form a close alliance with them, in order to found at Florence a Catholic Academy, the design of which was to maintain what they called the purity of the faith in the capital and throughout Tuscany, and which took for its rules those of the Holy office itself. It was composed entirely of the enemies of Leopold's reforms.

Their first endeavors were to abolish the decrees

and the laws relating to discipline and education, which had been established by that Prince, and for which they substituted superstition with all its attendant follies.

This frightful commencement gave notice of operations still more disastrous, and of a destructive activity which nothing seemed able to resist. France and Spain hastened to publish an order for its being abolished; and on their proclamation the Catholic Academy was dissolved. The ministers of those two powers were at the same time directed to represent to the Queen that she must moderate a zeal as pernicious as it was ill advised.

Ricci, who again saw himself delivered from the evils which menaced him, regarded his safety as a miracle, which he attributed to the manifest protection of Catherine, his relative; and to testify his gratitude, he associated her as patron with the tutelary Saint of the Church of Rignana, which he repaired on the occasion, and greatly beautified! Not content with these external signs of his personal devotion to Saint Catherine de Ricci, he endeavored to animate the devotion of the people, and composed hymns in her honor, which were sung by the superstitious.

Scarcely had the Queen learnt this, when she conceived a better opinion of the ex-Bishop of Pistoia than if she had been really convinced of his being the most enlightened and the most virtuous of men. She began by suspecting that he was not irrevocably lost; that it was yet, perhaps, possible for him to be reconciled with the Pope, for till that period she had thought, with the generality of her subjects, that he was an infidel. To form this hope, and the wish to succeed in the project of mediation, was the same thing with Maria Louisa. And she prepared her way by a measure as strange as the project itself. She ordered prayers to be made in several convents, that Heaven would soften the heretical heart of the prelate: lastly, she persuaded the Pope to come to Florence, as he returned from his journey into France to crown Napoleon.

This circumstance gave rise to another, which completed the comedy. Pius VII. was in close league with the Arch Duchess of Austria, the foundress of a conservatory of girls called *Paccanaristes*, in Rome ; and having spoken of the invitation he had received from the Queen of Etruria, and of the desire which that Princess manifested of having Ricci received into his good graces, the mystical Arch Duchess conceived a wish to play a part in this pious enterprise.

“The Arch Duchess was by nature ingenuous, but was seduced by those who surrounded her. She was under the spiritual direction of Paccanari, an ex-Jesuit, a man immoral, intriguing and unenlightened.” The proof of these assertions has been furnished by Pius himself, who was obliged to suppress the conservatory of girls which Paccanari had instituted and supported at the expense of the Austrian Princess, while Paccanari was confined to a convent for the rest of his days. The Arch Duchess addressed a letter to Ricci, October, 1804. In this she accuses him of having led Leopold to do many things inimical to the interests of true religion. She assures him that he had occasioned the eternal destruction of many ; and exhorts him to seek his safety by throwing himself at the feet of the Pope, with her letter in his hand. Ricci replied by a letter full of dignity and respect, in which he endeavored to undeceive her with regard to Leopold. “The intentions of that great Prince, your father,” said he, “were as pure as the greater part of his actions were visibly and eminently directed towards the good of religion.” With regard to that which personally concerned him, Ricci contented himself with saying that he had constantly lived in unity with the Church, before which he had often protested, and should again be willing to offer, his submission !

The Pope returned no answer. He had formed the resolution of terminating this affair by a personal interview with Ricci. The Queen of Etruria assured the latter of the pleasure his reconciliation with the Pontiff would give her. Ricci immediately

proceeded to the Queen, thanked her for the interest she took in his affairs, and promised to present himself before the Pope, as soon as he should arrive at Florence.

Ricci had great confidence in the Pope, especially after what had occurred in France. He reflected not that it is precisely when the Court of Rome is obliged to yield to the powerful, she increases her oppressions of the weak, to compensate in some measure, by her excessive despotism on the one side, the sacrifices she is obliged to make on the other.

The Pope, well prepared for the character he intended to play, arrived at Florence, May, 1805. Three days after, on the eve of his departure for Rome, he sent the Vicegerent to Ricci's residence to assure him of his desire to embrace him, which, however, he gave him to understand, could not take place unless Ricci signed the declaration which the Vicegerent presented. This formula required him to declare that he accepted from his heart and soul the apostolical constitutions passed against Baius, Jansenius, and Quesnel, from the Pontificate of Pius V. to the present time; that he especially accepted the Bull *Auctorem Fidei*, and that he desired this declaration to be made public.

It is impossible to describe the trouble into which Ricci was thrown by this unforeseen circumstance. He had time neither for private reflection, nor for consultation with his friends. All his representations to the Vicegerent were of no avail. The only reply that he could obtain was, that there was no longer any room for discussion; that he must at once submit himself to the Pope, or never after expect a reconciliation.

Some hours passed in the inexpressible misery of deliberations, hesitation, and anxiety, till at length Ricci decided, at the instigation of his friends Palmieri and the Abbé Fontani, the only persons present at this deplorable scene, that he would yield to the unfortunate necessity of the times. He mournfully obeyed those persuasions so foreign to the dictates of his own heart, and gave, for the love of peace and unity, a proof

of feebleness, the dishonor of which had been concealed as much as possible; he gave it to free himself for ever from the persecutions of ignorance and fanaticism, which were every day gaining an increase of power in Tuscany.

The following are some of Ricci's reflections written after the event, October, 1805, and which prove that his energy failed not on this occasion through any of the motives which generally render the inconstancy of men in their language or conduct culpable. The opinions of the ex-Bishop remained throughout the same; his apparent change, and it is his best excuse, procured him neither places nor honors, for which he had no desire. He lost by this conduct the esteem of the men whose regard he most valued, and he did violence to his own conscience; but this same conscience, which never spoke to him in vain, persuaded him that he ought, at the price of any sacrifice, to cease to be the cause of discord in the Church and of scandal to simple believers. It was a false idea of Christian humility, a virtue productive of the most amiable graces, but compatible with and favorable to the highest virtues of fortitude and resolution, which had the greatest influence in leading him to this step.

The two friends of Ricci had also considerable influence in bringing him to his decision. "They persuaded me," says the Prelate, "that the Pope had determined to conduct me to Rome as an obstinate rebel, if the affair were not brought to an immediate conclusion. They knew the character of the Cardinals who exercised the chief influence over the Pontiff; and they saw me exposed to the most imminent peril, without protection or support."

Ricci, having signed the deed, which was immediately carried to the Pope, was directly conducted by his order to the palace, where he was then residing. Pius VII. received him with considerable tenderness. Ricci hastened to protest the unalterable purity of his intentions and his views, especially those which regarded the assembly of his Synod, in which he intended

to support those propositions in an orthodox and Catholic sense, which had been condemned as taken in a heretical one by the Bull *Auctorem*; and he then presented the Pope a declaration which he had written and signed in testimony of the truth of these assertions. The Pope read it attentively; and in returning it to him said, that it was not at all necessary, and that he was convinced of all that the Bishop had said. "He added, that, since no one could know my internal feelings, and since I had declared that my opinions had always been Catholic, the subject ought no longer to admit of a doubt: and that he should himself be in future the defender of Ricci's orthodoxy and honor, and that he should support them at all times, and wherever he might be."

During this conversation, the Queen of Etruria and the Confessor Menocchio entered the apartment where Ricci and the Pope had met. Both of them complimented Ricci on his reconciliation with the Holy See, which gave occasion to the Pope's Confessor to observe, that the Synod of Pistoia was the sole cause of all the revolutions which agitated Europe, and that the Bishop had done well in agreeing to its condemnation. Ricci thought it right not to make any answer to a proposition as ridiculous as it was misplaced.

That Confessor of Pius VII. passed for a saint, and even for a saint endowed with the power of working miracles. It had been reported, that, on his first journey to Florence, in his way to Paris for the coronation of the Emperor, he had performed a miracle on a man afflicted with an hitherto incurable malady; but this prodigy having had only a momentary effect, the importance which had been given to it vanished with the influence he had on the disease.

The Pope showed himself very sensible of the pains which Ricci had taken to clear himself from having supported the obnoxious articles in the sense in which they had been condemned by the Bull *Auctorem*; and appeared inclined to change the words, *for a remedy of the scandal*, into these, *for general edification*. But

Menocchio, abusing the influence which he possessed over the Pope as his spiritual director, prevented this change; "because," said he, "the Synod of Pistoia was guilty of the total overthrow of discipline, and of the opposition which was then made to religion."

Of the motives which determined Ricci to sign the declaration, it is said: "he was firmly resolved to exculpate himself from the accusation of his not believing in the Pope, which his refusal to visit him, would have confirmed beyond doubt. Besides which, Ricci was pressed by the Queen Regent, who ardently desired to effect, through any means, a reconciliation between them. He considered that, had he refused, he should have every thing to fear, and that he could only expect either a new imprisonment, or a perpetual exile, as the consequence of persevering in what was called schism, or of his wounding the pride of the Princess, by making her negotiation useless. On the other hand, the Pope had manifested his determination to cut short all disputes, and he had the declaration drawn up as the only method of terminating the difficulties. Ricci, who was an ardent lover of peace and unity, believed it to be his duty to sacrifice his self-love in an act of submission and obedience, which would not in any way wrong the depot of faith.

"He reflected, that, if he yielded on some points of discipline, he did but accommodate himself to circumstances. These had totally changed; it was necessary that a man should change with them, and that, still desiring to effect good, he should be willing to seek it by other means more adapted at the time to effect his purpose.

"He reflected, above all, that, being reduced to the station of a private man, he ought to give up the innovations and reforms which he had made as a Bishop, without the consent of the Pope. It had been told him that the whole Church was in opposition to him, and he therefore submitted his will to the decisions of the Bull *Auctorem*, that he might not appear an ambitious and obstinate innovator."

The news of his reconciliation with Pius VII., procured him a great number of visits and complimentary letters from all the prelates of Tuscany. The public, from that period, showed him the most distinguished esteem and veneration. But he hastened from that universal attention, which had no charms for him, to the solitude of his country-house.

There he learnt the judgment which was pronounced on the decision he had taken. Some saw in it only a proof of inconstancy and feebleness; others regarded it as a true recantation and abjuration of his errors. Ricci cared for neither: but considered that he ought to be judged more according to his intentions than his actions. It was with the same feeling that he wrote to the Pope, May 1805, to compliment him on his return to his capital, to ratify anew his declaration, and to protest his sincere submission and gratitude.

His part was irrevocably taken; nothing could make him recall a determination of this kind. Since *he had sacrificed his conscience*, it was a proof that he believed the resolution indispensable. He was blamed for it by those who considered his recantation as the unworthy price of a few years' inglorious repose: he was praised for it by those who considered it a true and praise-worthy conversion. He merited neither the praise nor the blame; he knew that he had no want of conversion, and he expected not any worldly peace on the part of those who had troubled his tranquillity and happiness. Deceived with regard to the true state of the Church, Ricci sincerely desired to serve the cause of religion, but he perceived not that the Court of Rome made use of him only for its own purposes. The ex-Bishop of Pistoia, without doing any good, was the cause of much evil which his adversaries did in his name, and he lost the reputation of that firmness and strength of soul, of which he had given many brilliant proofs during his career. In a moment he destroyed his own work. His enemies, freed from all fear, had now only to mention Ricci as the submitted and repentant child of Rome.— Ricci the courageous and enlightened reformer of Tus-

cany! After having been the scourge of the intriguing, and terror of the hypocrites, he finished by becoming their sport and their dupe, and by furnishing them with arms which he had so often broken in their hands.

CHAPTER XII.

Ricci's Recantation—Illness—and Death.

DIFFERENT was the conduct of the Pontiff from that of the persecutors of Ricci, and, among others, of the Cardinal Gonsalvi, who repaid the efforts of the prelate to confirm the reconciliation, with harsh and severe treatment. Pius VII., when Bishop of Imola, and "when Tuscany labored for the reorganization of its ecclesiastical regime, through the care of the indefatigable and sage Leopold,—Pius VII., who, as is generally known, did not see with an evil eye the spirit of the new legislation of the Grand Duke," would not expose himself by condemning in others, what he had formerly approved in himself.

Scarcely had the Pontiff received the letter from Ricci, than he charged Fenaja to thank him in his name, and to promise him an answer from his own hand.

The letter of the Pontiff contained expressions of joy, which their reconciliation had caused him, in consequence of the sincere adherence of the prelate to all the sentences emanating from Rome against Jansenism and the Synod of Pistoia, and, above all, the spontaneous confirmation of the declaration which he had signed at Florence. In speaking to Ricci of this, the Pope added malignantly: "By which act you declare that you condemn all the evil you have done."

The consistory was held in June. Pius VII., after having given an account to the Cardinals of the affairs

of France, passed to that of the ex-Bishop of Pistoia. He related what had taken place at Florence, during his last abode there, and reported the precise terms of the declaration which the ex-Bishop had signed: but the Pontiff, in relating the protestations which Ricci had made at their first interview, said that the prelate had assured him that, "*even in the midst of his errors*, his mind had always remained attached to the orthodox faith and to the apostolic see;" and since his return to Rome, Ricci had written to him to ratify "the recantation made at Florence."

Ricci openly accused the Cardinal Gonsalvi of the base design of having wished to persecute him, even after his entire defeat.

"Cardinal Gonsalvi," says the unfortunate Bishop, "was very much piqued at my affair having terminated without his interposition or approbation; and habituated as he is to treat the Pope with a superiority which does not belong to him, I do not doubt but he has made known his vexation."

The Pope's answer to Ricci's letter was sent from Rome, to the Pontifical Nuncio in Tuscany. The Nuncio paid the ex-Bishop of Pistoia a visit, "and by order of the Cardinal Secretary of state, he wished," said Ricci, "to make me feel the general disapprobation caused by my letter to the Pope, as if it had been a proof of my dissimulation in regard to the signature of the formula. He added, that the Pope was very discontented with it; that he wished to make me feel his indignation; that the reconciliation had been on the point of being destroyed, but for the observations which the Pope had made on my letter in his address to the consistory. Finally, he told me, always however, in the name of the Secretary of state, that the Pope was kind, and that he had been surprised; but that I must pay attention and regulate my conduct with circumspection for the future."

Ricci answered these vain menaces with a smile. He proved to the Nuncio that Pius VII. was perfectly satisfied with what had taken place, and he proved it

even by the letter of the Pontiff, which was written in the most obliging and flattering terms.

"At length," says Ricci, "having taken a more serious and decided tone, I informed him that M. the Cardinal offended me; that my rank, the education I had received as a Christian and a citizen, and above all, the character which I possessed, made me abhor with detestation, every kind of dissimulation and falsehood. I made him understand that the affair had been begun and completed by the Holy Father himself, with the intervention of the Queen, and that he had not been surprised into it."

Having thus succeeded in proving that the Pope fully approved his conduct and sentiments, and that he had clearly made this known by his letter, as he had also done to the whole Church by his address to the consistory of Cardinals, notwithstanding the expressions by which a hostile hand had found the means of disfiguring those two convincing proofs, Ricci requested the Nuncio to give particular attention to a passage in the letter of Pius VII. thus worded:—

"Would to Heaven you had long ago put us in a situation to afford you this consolation. If we ourselves had been alone personally concerned, it would have been afforded you long before. We have been always disposed not only to press you to our heart, and to receive you with all possible tenderness into our favor, but we have always most ardently desired it, and we only waited for that one indispensable requisite to our reconciliation, which you have at length decided to afford us."

"I might say," continues the ex-Bishop, after having read this passage to the Nuncio, "that my first letter to the Pope, written March 1800, to compliment him on his elevation, was never presented; I might add, that the uncivil reply which the Cardinal Gonsalvi made me in the name of the Pope, was given unknown to the Pontiff, and was conceived in opposition to his maxims and sentiments; that it was fabricated by a person who produced a false letter from me, en-

tirely different to that I had written, that he might address me an injurious reply, and one full of all the animosity and abuse which a base mind and an ignorant man is capable of conceiving."

Ricci contented himself with answering the Nuncio in this dignified manner. Silence and resignation were now the only arms he could oppose to his enemies; for had he used others, he would have aided their designs, and at once produced a fatal rupture with the Roman Court.

The direct correspondence between the ex-Bishop of Pistoia and the Pope, rendered all the endeavors of his intriguing persecutors vain.

When the prelate received the last letter from the Pope, he called on the Nuncio. "He told me," says Ricci, "with much politeness, that he did not doubt my sincerity, and that he could not conceive why the Cardinal Secretary of State continued to insist upon the necessity of watching my conduct. I answered by a smile; and I asked if it was very warm at Rome? This indifferent question disconcerted the Nuncio a little, who, from that time, never entered into a similar conversation."

Religious studies became Ricci's chief occupation. He composed some theological works; among which were, "*Des Considérations sur les Epîtres de Paul, sur l'Oraison Dominicale,*" &c. &c. The interest which he took in promoting the worship of Catherine de Ricci, who, says he, had so ardently contemplated the mysteries of our Saviour's passion, induced him to ask of the Pope himself a plenary indulgence for the festival of that Saint. Ricci's letter was written January, 1806; and he received an answer from the Pope in February following, granting him all he had asked.

He thought of nothing from that time, but of celebrating, with the greatest pomp, the feast of the Saint, his relative. He had prayers printed for the people to address to her, and he added instructions for the devout, to merit the pontifical indulgence; he had medals struck with the image of Catherine, and pious inscrip-

tions and prayers upon them, to be distributed among the faithful.

It is scarcely possible to recognise in this idolatrous conduct the enlightened co-operator of Leopold, and the eloquent author of the discourse against the abuse of indulgences, pronounced at the assembly of the Tuscan Bishops.

Those superstitious triflings of Ricci had not stifled his virtues. He conducted himself with much greatness of soul towards the family of Senator Ricci, ever since the death of his brother, who had for a long time shown himself the most fanatical of his persecutors.

He was very bountiful to the poor; but his fortune was considerably decreased by the union of Tuscany with the French empire in 1806.

Ricci felt his end approaching. He wished again to enjoy the country; and lest he should be taken ill un-awares, he arranged his affairs, and made his will, before quitting Florence.

He was scarcely settled at his villa, before he had two severe attacks of epilepsy, which caused so much fear for his life, that he returned to Florence. There he appeared to regain his health and strength, when suddenly his malady returned with more violence than before. Humors, which at first covered the whole of his body, at length fixed in his legs, and made him suffer severely.

His patience, resignation, and gentleness, during a long illness, and dreadful sufferings, edified every one who approached him.

The religious feelings which he evinced during his last moments, convinced those, who had hitherto doubted it, of the sincerity of his belief. But he showed no remorse for his past actions, he never spoke of his reforms, and he was only heard to implore the pardon of God, for having mixed any human motives with the maxims which had guided him during his episcopacy.

The author of the life of Ricci answers those who accused the prelate of being alone in his reformatations,

and appropriating rights to himself, which belong exclusively to the Holy See. He proves that the reforms which had been undertaken, related to certain abuses existing in Pistoia and Prato, which kept the people in ignorance, superstition, and fanaticism, and nurtured the ambition, avarice, and dissipation, of both the high and inferior clergy,—abuses indeed, which, when Ricci had lost all influence, were extirpated for the most part, to the great contentment of pious and rational people, the rest seeming to take no interest in the affair. “In these latter times,” says the writer, “we applaud the opinions and maxims which were received with horror as the actions of the Synod of Pistoia; and we now pursue in tranquillity, and even with zeal, a considerable number of those same reforms which were detested at the epoch of that assembly.”

CHAPTER XIII.

Survey of the Life and Prelacy of Ricci.

THE education which Scipio de Ricci received in childhood gave his mind a devotional character; but the cultivation of his reason and temper would not allow him to become either fanatical or grossly superstitious! He was born a Roman Catholic, and destined for an ecclesiastic.

His reflections upon the Pontifical Court, which he visited,—a servile, intriguing, and egotistical court—are precious from the mouth of so sincerely obsequious a priest; his refusal to make a fortune through it, when he entered on the career of the prelacy, shows the disinterestedness of his noble mind. He wished to remain an honest man.

Ricci assisted in the destruction of the Jesuits, whom he detested as a political body, whose existence threat-

ened governments and kings, corrupted the morality of the people, and prostituted religion. He beheld among them the falsifiers of holy doctrines, the satellites of the monstrous Papal monarchy, the enemies of every one whom they could not make subservient to their ends, and the poisoners of Ganganelli.

From the time he was named Vicar-general of Florence, he manifested his firm intention to be a patriot priest, ever ready to second the Prince who then reigned for the happiness of Tuscany. The first proof which he gave of it, was by co-operating in the republication of books which unveiled the ambition, lusts, infamy, and crimes of several Popes,—books which Rome had condemned, as irreligious and impious.

When he became Bishop of Pistoia and Prato, he traced out with severity the line of his duties; and remained constantly and courageously attached to it, till the fury of his enemies obliged him to quit the diocese.

The commencement of his episcopal government was the origin of all the evils which he suffered towards the close of his life, and of the persecutions under which he sank. He had irritated the powerful and dangerous body of monks; and by attacking their privileges, and unveiling their turpitude, he threatened the Court of Rome with the loss of the greatest number, and the most zealous, of her emissaries: from that time his ruin was decided.

A philosopher would have tolerated the superstitious worship of the *sacre cœur*, added by the Jesuits to preceding superstitions, till human reason complaining of it, should confound it with the mummeries already consecrated to ridicule. A philosopher, if he had known the cloisters to conceal individuals of both sexes, who had vowed to *violate the laws of Nature, and not to fulfil the duties of society*, would have considered it of very little importance, whether these persons lived according to the strange rules of their order or not, or whether they preserved the chastity they believed to be agreeable to God.

But Ricci was a Catholic from his infancy, and his office as pastor obliged him to inspect the religious opinions of his sect. The worship of the *sacre cœur* was an abominable idolatry in his eyes, so much the more dangerous, because it was introduced by the authors of every error, those destroyers of morality, the Jesuits; to whom it was destined to give credit and power.

He could not behold, without horror, the dissoluteness of manners in the convents of the Dominican nuns, where the monks of that order openly taught atheism, encouraged the most disgraceful libertinism, and filled them with impurity, sacrilege, and debauchery of every kind. He could not help expressing his indignation at the indifference of the superiors, of the chief of the order at the Court of Rome, and against the Pope, who, though they had been for a long time instructed with regard to those turpitudes, refused to take any step towards putting an end to them. Had he not every reason to conclude that those people must be of a different religion to himself, and to despise them, because they pretended to persecute him on account of his zeal for that religion?"

What religious soul would not shudder at seeing immorality thus added to profanation, and corruption bringing forth impiety? By tolerating these crimes, the Pope plainly announced his indulgence of them; but by encouraging their commission, he made himself an accomplice.

The hatred of the numerous party, whose interest it was to keep up these abuses, did not prevent Ricci's continuing steadily in the route he had marked. Doing away with several pernicious practices, he labored constantly to make the language of religion more respectable, and his priests, men of exemplary conduct, fathers of the people. He intended to instruct them in their conduct, and to console them under their misfortunes. Animated by these holy views, he banished itinerant missionaries, and improved the catechism enjoined by the Court of Rome, which increased the

favor of the multitude for the absurd prerogatives of the Papacy.

Ricci was tolerant, because he was a just and reasonable man, rather than a blind reformer. This was to contradict himself as a Roman Catholic, but the time was come when such inconsistency was inevitable.

Ricci, who detested the conduct and opinions of the two perverted nuns of his diocess, detested still more the cruelty of the Archbishop Martini, who had used violence to convert them.

The decree of Leopold for abolishing even the Inquisition in Tuscany, was attributed at the time to the Bishop of Pistoia—the greatest praise which could have been given to that philanthropic pastor. Public instruction was a great object with Leopold and Ricci, as it is with all true friends of humanity. The Bishop labored more particularly in forming enlightened and wise ecclesiastics; because through them the people would gain knowledge, and the peace and prosperity of the State would be ensured as the natural result of good management.

Pistoia had its ecclesiastical academy; and if the studies of the regular monks had been reformable, the activity of Ricci, excited by the exhortations of Leopold, would have introduced a better method of instruction. But the monks, were only ignorant, and inclined to evil, and attached by interest to the Court of Rome, which supported them by numerous sacrifices, as being its most devoted and redoubtable soldiery. Having endeavored to correct them, to make them useful priests, and good citizens, was a great crime in the Bishop of Pistoia; and in order to destroy this dangerous enemy to error, efforts were made by the Court of Rome, and by the monks, to assassinate him.

The establishment of the ecclesiastical patrimony caused no little uneasiness at Rome. Some of the ministers, whose salaries were thus made entirely independent of its influence, began to lose sight of its interests in their desire to diffuse the principles of morality and religion. This revolution, as desirable for

Tuscany, as it was inimical to Rome, whose grandeur and elevation were established on the servility and blind adulation of all around her, seemed by the unremitting care and exertions of Ricci, about to produce a speedy and important improvement.

Not content with merely instructing his clergy on the inalienable rights of the civil power, on those of the clergy, and on the usurpations by which Rome had weakened both the one and the other; he showed them still farther by his example, how those rights should be restored to their legitimate possessors, more especially as the Prince who then reigned in Tuscany, made it an imperative duty. Authorized by the Government, which Ricci recognized as the only power possessing the right of regulating the civil contract of marriage, Ricci dispensed with many points deemed essential by his diocesans; and no longer permitted the Roman Datary to possess any authority in Tuscany.

The priests, deprived of their ecclesiastical perquisites, were thus also divested of all their temporal jurisdiction, of all authority in secular affairs; and were obliged to submit with resignation, by the example of the Bishop himself, who voluntarily renounced privileges which had been accorded to the clergy in ages of barbarism and ignorance.

The object nearest Ricci's heart, was the deliverance of the clergy from the influence of the Court of Rome; and he exposed to the Prince the abuses of the oath of fidelity, which the Pope requires of every Bishop when he grants his Bulls. With regard to most of them, this oath is a fatal bond: it retains them in the most deadly opposition to all legislative measures, which, having no other object than the happiness of the people, would diminish the overgrown authority of the Holy See. With these designs constantly in view, Ricci used every endeavor to enlighten his diocess by the diffusion of such books as seemed most calculated to produce this effect. Many of these taught them to controvert the idea of an infallible authority; and demonstrated to

them the absurdity as well as the injustice of the greater part of its boasted procedures.

The reforms in the diocess of Pistoia alarmed not only the Court of Rome, but the Tuscan ministry ; it was incessantly employed in alleging difficulties, and inventing obstacles to disgust the Grand Duke with the idea of innovation ; but it saw all its attempts overthrown by the skill and attention of the Bishop. They feared, at the same time, the penetrating observation of their master, and that of the public, which the new legislation had awakened to reflection. This was to sap the very foundations of despotism and ignorance ; but, notwithstanding the efforts of the Prince, they continued perseveringly in their machinations.

The similarity of interests between the Tuscan Ministry and the Court of Rome, formed the band of an alliance, the principal effect of which was to prolong the evils of humanity, by perpetuating the darkness in which its enemy stood protected. The vain and haughty aristocracy hastened to take part in a league, which promised them the preservation of all the prejudices on which their exorbitant privileges were established ; and Ricci, thus in open war with the Pope and his monks, the nobility and the Government, had no support but the esteem of Leopold and a good conscience.

But the projects of the Grand Duke and the Bishop, induced the natural enemies of reform to concentrate their means of attack and defence, and dispose them to the best advantage against their courageous and indefatigable adversary ; whilst the latter, by incessantly unveiling their chicanery and incapacity, exposed them to the anger of the Prince, and to the irreparable destruction of themselves and their evil influence. Ricci was not deceived by the majority of the priests, to whom he restored their dignity and their rights, while he resumed his own. The populace alone remained exposed to the intrigues, and to the powerful means of corruption, which the ministers, the nobles, and the emissaries of the Pope brought into action. Ricci's

success deceived Leopold. He committed the inexcusable error of inviting to his councils the dignified clergy of Tuscany; a body necessarily interested in resisting the intentions which he had manifested to effect their good; and he imprudently furnished that dangerous party with an occasion of making their opposition popular, and of openly professing themselves to be the support and guide of the wandering multitude.

The issue of the ecclesiastical assembly of Florence was the signal of a tumult at Prato. This popular rising was repressed without trouble; but the example was given; the multitude of hypocrites and fanatics had seen how easily superstition inflames a people long subdued by despotism. Rome dared to conceive the vast plan of arming the people against all sovereign reformers of abuses. Already had her projects been made manifest in the affairs of Belgium, where she preached the sovereignty of the people, to the great profit of avaricious monks and imbecile nobles, as well as her own.

The revolt of several Tuscan cities was fomented in the same manner, and by the same agents. That of Prato was followed by another at Pistoia, which was only appeased by the flight of Ricci, by the abolition of the religious reforms which he had established, and by the restoration of all the abuses of superstition and servility towards Rome. The same spirit extended to Florence, where the minister lost no time in completing his work of darkness. He effected his design without trouble. Fanaticism everywhere obtained a complete victory, and brought back in triumph her usual companions, Ignorance and Superstition.

During these events, the French revolution took place; and from its commencement the eyes of all Europe were riveted too closely on the spectacle it presented, to be diverted by any object of minor interest. Rome seized the opportunity for persecuting Ricci, who was enjoying the repose he had obtained by the resignation of his diocess. A Bull, *a monument of bad*

faith, was issued against him. But, although far from the world and its storms, Ricci conceived himself equally obliged to assist his brethren who were exposed to their fury, and all his decisions were a new homage to sincerity. Thus, in answer to some questions from France, he replied, that the clergy ought to take the national oath prescribed by the representatives of the people; and that the people should regard the priests so obeying, as their legitimate spiritual guides.

Rome and Tuscany were, at that time, under the power of the Republican arms, which they had brought against them by their crooked policy. Ricci lived in voluntary exile, but was forced from his retreat in the most unjustifiable manner. Some brigands took possession of the Tuscan capital in the name of the Emperor of Austria, and the pretended miraculous Virgin of the city. They committed every excess, and every crime, of which the fanaticism of priests, or the folly of an imbecile government could be guilty. The ex-Bishop of Pistoia was thrown into prison, with all the partisans of Leopold, and with every Jansenist who had not sacrificed the interests of his country to the despotism of Rome. The long list of persecutions which Ricci had suffered, show the infamy of his persecutors, their intrigues, their machinations, and cruelties. Nothing was neglected to satisfy the implacable vengeance of Rome and its partisans, and to sooth the vanity of the nobles whom Leopold had driven into the obscurity to which nature had condemned them. Whilst the persecutions were at their greatest height; Ricci, by turns flattered and menaced, wearied by measures the most adapted to exhaust the patience and courage of an isolated old man, attacked on the most feeble side, which his unsuspecting soul offered to his cunning and malignant enemies—Ricci was by degrees prepared for an act of condescension, to which he would never have consented, had he been able to see it under the same light in which it appeared to his best friends.

The victories of the French in Italy had snatched

the unfortunate Bishop from the Court of Rome, which regarded him as its prey ; but soon after, the Tuscans, sacrificed to a deplorable policy, became by the most illegal measures, the allies of a weak and superstitious despot, of a wild and extravagant woman, and of a minister equally devoid of talents and virtue. Rome, *existing but by evil, and only triumphing in darkness*, hoped to regain in Tuscany all the ground she had lost. The abolition of the liberal institutions of Leopold and the French, and the establishment of the abuses which had been extirpated, preceded the fall of Ricci. Overwhelmed with evils without end, terrified by preceding atrocities, seduced by every thing which could make him mistake a feeble for a virtuous action ; he signed an instrument, which he believed was but consigning the past to forgetfulness, but which his dissembling enemies took care to convert into a condemnation of his whole previous conduct, and of the motives which had directed it.

The humiliation of Ricci was the only thing of which Pius VII. could boast, on his return to Rome after the coronation of Napoleon. After this circumstance, the ex-Bishop led a languishing life, till death put an end to his sorrows and his misfortunes.

The entire life of Ricci was a continued series of attacks against the Court of Rome, whose pretensions to the inprescriptible rights of governments and of people, and its spiritual despotism over the clergy, he never ceased to combat. He unmasked its hypocrisy, he exposed its ambition, cupidity, intrigues, and cabals, and citing it before the bar of the civilized world, in the name of reason, justice, and religion, he menaced it with near and inevitable destruction. It was utterly impossible, however, that any agreement could exist between a power which flattered, caressed, and exalted the Jesuits, by every means it possessed, and a prelate, who exposed their pernicious system of morality, their principles subversive of society, and their dangerous practices of superstitious devotion.

The zeal of Ricci, while only Vicar-general of Flo-

rence, for the re-establishment of ecclesiastical studies, according to a more rational plan than that in vogue, was another vexation, which the Court of Rome was not more ready to pardon than his contempt of the Jesuits. All the doctrines which they received were favorable to a system of that universal priesthood they had contributed to establish, and to the power of the Popes, which they sustained. Every attempt against the scholastics and the modern casuists, was an act of hostility against the Court of Rome. Every attempt to direct the attention of the clergy to the Holy Scriptures, and to give some authority to the canons and the fathers of the primitive Church, was a breach made in the temporal authority of the Pope. It was a victory over those pretensions to spiritual infallibility, which are continually contradicting the words of those fathers who lived before the invention of this absurd dogma.

The same observation may be made in respect to Ricci's activity in circulating good books, "which," said this enlightened Bishop, "all the world ought to be acquainted with, as the province of truth is the patrimony of all men without exception." His whole episcopacy was a train of operations to exalt learning, and to furnish materials proper for its successful pursuit.

But that which most of all tended to confirm the enmity of the Roman Court against Ricci, was the affair of the Dominicans of his diocese. Having proved to the whole world that the false or forced virtues of the monks and nuns are but a tissue of hypocrisy, and most frequently become a stimulant to the most odious vices; having shown that the institutions called *Virginales* were generally schools of corruption and libertinism; having at length brought to light the infamous viciousness of the *soi-distant* tribunal of penitence; these were unpardonable crimes in the eyes of one, whose existence as well as authority depended on the blindness of men who yielded themselves to the impudent jugglers that surrounded his throne. But how

much was this enmity increased, when the activity of Ricci made it appear that the nuns, the monks, their superiors, even the chief of the order, and the Pope himself, not only tolerated these disorders, but took no measures to arrest the Dominicans in their incredulity, impiety, and atheism, or to prevent their every day adding new victims to those they had been making for nearly a century and a half!

Ricci openly assumed the ensigns of opposition to the Roman Court. He frankly entered into a league, the ranks of which were soon filled by all who considered the existence of Rome incompatible with the actual state of society, and even with the existence of the religion on which the Popes founded their authority.

Ricci was in public correspondence with this party, scattered through France, Spain, Germany, and Italy. He was nominally so with the Church which the Jansenists had established in Holland, and which, by offering its friendship to Rome, amply revenged the anathemas hurled against it. Now Rome could not refuse this offer, from any other motive than because she was determined to trouble every State in which the Roman clergy were recognised as the spiritual guides of the people, and the Pope as the absolute chief of the clergy.

All the exertions of Ricci seemed to render him odious to the bigoted Papists. The reclaiming of his Episcopal rights, which had been usurped by Rome, and the restoration of those of the Curés, were dangerous examples to the other prelates, who had any idea of the democratic organization of the principles it inculcated, menaced the Popes with a revolution which would make them, the brothers of Bishops, the brothers of their curés; and which, by depriving them of the power of riches they had so long enjoyed, would render it necessary for them to obtain virtues and talents, which could alone make them the first among their equals.

The project of making the monks useful as priests

and honest citizens, as also that of reforming the catechism, tended to deprive the Popes of their most fanatical emissaries, and to free religious persons from the danger of being deceived by their glosses and artifices. The plan of an ecclesiastical academy completed Ricci's system ; and that of the patrimony of the clergy delivered the pastors and their flocks for ever from all foreign interference. The purifying of public worship from superstitious practices, was a consequence of this system, and was not less disagreeable to Rome than the other reforms ; for the mummeries with which the worship of the Church had been debased, formed a fruitful source of gain.

Rome had not only to reproach Ricci with what he had thus done. She saw him voluntarily resign the excessive and abused authority which had been given to the bishops, as the heads of the ecclesiastical tribunals, called *officialités*, which were entirely under the control of the Popes, to whom the former were *bound by an oath*, as anti-religious as it was anti-national. Ricci, to extirpate the evil, root and branch, boldly exclaimed against this oath, "by which," said he, "bishops *oblige themselves to obey a foreign prince !*"

But the grievance which Rome made a reason for the most violent persecutions of its author, was his having reduced all his principles, maxims, and plans, into one entire system, which he got sanctioned by a synodal assembly of his diocess, and had formed into canons after the usage, recognised as regular and legal, of the primitive Church.

This bold enterprise brought down upon Ricci's head the thunders of the Vatican, and persecutions which were directed sometimes by cunning, at others, by perfidy, violence, and cruelty. The superior clergy of Tuscany were united against him from the time that Leopold had convoked the ecclesiastical assembly. That prince, called to the imperial throne, only lived long enough to see his cherished work of Tuscan reformation overthrown ; and Ricci exposed, without

defence, to the hatred of his enemies, who triumphed in the name of superstition and fanaticism.

From that period, the ex-Bishop remained without authority, and in voluntary exile. When, worn out by long suffering, terrified by frightful menaces, and deceived by false promises, he was induced to condemn his past conduct, and sacrifice his reputation ;—when even the Pope himself felt touched at his humble resignation and self denial, even then his chief persecutors, the zealots of the party, would not leave their prey ; and the unfortunate Prelate, yielding at length to the maladies which had been brought on by the persecutions he had suffered, expired, after having experienced most of the evils which Popish vengeance could invent.

The concurrence of circumstances which abolished the reforms of Leopold, and brought on the destruction of Ricci, produced important consequences in favor of Roman despotism, to which great credit was given in the eyes of the people, who seldom judge of enterprises but by their issues. The bark of Peter again floated into Tuscany on the waves of fanaticism, superstition, and ignorance. By an avaricious aristocracy, and a vain ministry, that bark—the sails of which were spread wider than ever ; thanks to those who too incautiously endeavored to sink it, and to the military chief who made use of it to help him out of the stormy sea of revolutions—appeared sustained on the waters by a supernatural power ; and it began again to inspire respect for every species of abuse.

Liberty, who had shown herself for an instant, was soon banished, and the extraordinary man who, without chaining her entirely, had fettered her as much as his designs required, himself soon disappeared. Again the sacerdotal power obtained its full authority ; but what opprobrium too great can be cast upon men, who, united to their fellow-creatures neither by sentiments, principles, interest, nor natural ties, seem to have only one object, that of deceiving them to despoil them ; that of terrifying them with a false character of the Divinity, that they may be venerated as his inter-

preters, and of abusing them with an affectation of humility, that they may make them their servile followers!

Ricci is a proof of this. His memoir teaches us, not to regard the monastic life and the Roman Court as distinguished by the ordinary vices of men, but as rendered odious by the worst of crimes; as not merely affording much to excite regret, and rouse the bold hand of reform, but as a vast and terrifying system of the lowest debauchery and infamy. We see monks employing the name and authority of God to seduce the young females under their care, and their own nominally most sacred rites polluted by their attempts. Those priests stand before us as atheists; not even regarding, for a moment, any one of the natural movements of the heart in favor of virtue.

The General of the order of Dominic, an order by whom so much innocent blood has been spilt, and which has precipitated so many estimable men into the flames, for venturing to declare they thought not as the Dominicans—the General of that order, in Ricci's time, was fully aware of the wickedness of which the latter complained. His indifference to them is sufficient evidence, that his opinions were in conformity with the worst abuses, against which Ricci invoked the assistance of the civil power, whose first duty is to watch over the morals of the people. But the General and his Dominicans professed, *in toto, la croyance au Pope*—subjection to the Pope; that *they would commit any crime* publicly, to support the dogmas on which the pontifical authority rested, and *the depraved instruments of which they in secret were*. Ricci, by exposing the iniquities of the order, scandalized, but could not injure the Court of Rome; and having been accused of *not believing the Pope*, his destruction followed as the consequence.

The Pope himself was at the head of that dark conspiracy against a bishop, whose greatest crime was his sincerity. Knowing, as well as the General of the Dominicans, the infidelity of the order, and its fatal

effects ; notwithstanding, he showed no feeling of horror, and was equally enraged against the prelate, who sacrificed all human respect, honors, and advantages, to the interests of virtue.

Such is the Papacy, which is again suffered to establish itself ; which men fortify again with its ancient and pernicious errors ; which is still surrounded with its fanatical and yet most dangerous adherents, the Jesuits ; and which is permitted once more to arm itself with the scourges, that have for so many ages degraded men, and devastated the world—the scourge of the ferocious and frightful tribunal of the Inquisition. This fatal blindness of several European governments to their true interests, this false policy, this spirit of baseness, which makes them prefer the passive submission of a people, degraded by superstition, to the acquiescence of a free people in the policy of a prince, can hardly be conceived possible at such a period as this—a period which has been preceded by half a century, during which the examination of every question interesting to humanity and nations has been debated in the most profound manner.

For the honor of humanity, we trust that the people at least will recoil from the chains of superstition again forged for their minds. Every species of liberty is fallacious, that is not founded on the basis of truth and knowledge ; for no human power can preserve men in a state of slavery, but when the belief is current, that some of their fellow-creatures are destined by Providence to render the rest of mankind miserable.

Let us suppose for an instant, that we could annihilate the rising spirit of the times ; let us suppose infancy subjected to the *Ignorantins*, youth to the Jesuits, mature age to the Inquisitors,—what horrors would not follow ! How many steps would not civilization retrograde !

Who will deny, that the people have made immense progress in solid improvement, since the year 1789 ? Who does not believe, that the French at the end of the eighteenth century, were as much above those of

the age of Louis XIV., as the wise and just Leopold was superior to the degraded Cosmo III. ?

Why does not reform continue to proceed from the throne ? It was the duty of kings to continue the brilliant reforms of the philosophical Joseph and Leopold. Unfortunately, in their time, the people were not prepared to receive their excellent systems ; but now, that they are so, will kings refuse to establish their freedom and happiness on the immovable basis of humanity and truth ?

It was a Roman Catholic Bishop, who called for reform in the time of Leopold, who confessed that this reform was absolutely necessary, because society was menaced with evils which demanded a sure and immediate remedy. His predictions have been verified. The people have been driven to extremity ; their governments have resisted their just desires, and confusion has been the consequence. But the struggle is not at an end ; and whatever be the obstacles, the cause of justice and humanity must at length prevail.

Why are there no more Riccis ?—why are the men who are moved by a like spirit, without power or influence ? They would give new force to the benevolent religion of Christ ; a religion which a false zeal, a base superstition, and the intolerance of the priesthood, have tended so materially to debase.

A party which labors for the restoration of darkness and superstition, carries the germ of its own destruction ; for the only base on which it could establish itself is wanting—the ignorance of the people. That change will take place ; but it has on the one side many obstacles to overcome, combats to sustain, and sacrifices to make ; on the other, there are many interests to destroy ! But the whole subject resolves itself into a simple question : Is any government authorized by a divine law, to debase its subjects into ignorant slaves ; or any priesthood to convert them into imbecile monsters ?

A P P E N D I X.

A.—Page 13.

“The history of monastics, “ observes Mr. Mackray, “ exhibits in full view the melancholy truth, that their hearts were corrupted with the worst passions that disgrace humanity, and that the discipline of the convent is seldom productive of a single virtue. The prelates exceeded the inferior clergy in every kind of profligacy, as much as in opulence and power; and, of course, their superintending and visitatorial authority was not exerted to lessen or restrain the prevalence of those vices, which their evil example contributed so largely to increase. If a really pious, vigilant, and austere prelate arose amidst the general dissoluteness of the age, his single efforts to reclaim those solitary ecclesiastics were seldom attended with success.

“Boccace, by his witty and ingenious tales, very severely satirized the licentiousness and immorality which prevailed during his time, in the Italian monasteries; but, by exposing the scandalous lives, and lashing the vices of the monks, nuns, and other orders of the Roman priesthood, he has been decried as a contemner of religion, and as an enemy to true piety. Contemporary historians have also delivered the most disgusting accounts of their intemperance and debauchery. The frailty, indeed, of the female monastics, was even an article of regular taxation; and the Pope did not disdain to fill his coffers with the price of their impurities. The frail nun, whether she had become immured within a convent, or still resided without its walls, might redeem her lost honor, and be reinstated in her former dignity and virtue, for a few ducats. This scandalous traffic was carried to an extent that soon destroyed all sense of morality, and heightened the hue of vice. Ambrosius of Canadoli, a prelate of extraordinary virtue, visited various convents in his diocese; but, on inspecting their proceedings, he found no traces even of decency remaining in any one of them; nor was he able, with all the sagacity he exercised on the subject, to refuse the smallest particle of these qualities into the degenerated minds of the sisterhood. The reform of the nunneries was the first step that distinguished the government of Sixtus IV., after he ascended the Papal throne, at the close of the fifteenth century. Bossus, a celebrated canon, of the strictest principles, and a most inflexible disposition, was the agent selected by the Pontiff for that arduous achievement. The Genoese convents, where the nuns lived in open defiance of all the rules of decency and the precepts of religion, were

the first objects of his attention. The orations which he publicly uttered from the pulpit, as well as the private lectures and exhortations which he delivered to the nuns from the confessional chair, were fine models, not only of his zeal and probity, but of his literature and eloquence. They breathed, in the most impressive manner, the true spirit of Christian purity; but his glowing representations of the bright beauties of virtue and the dark deformities of vice, made little impression upon their corrupted hearts. Despising the open calumnies of the envious, and the secret hostilities of the guilty, he proceeded, in spite of all discouragement and opposition, in his highly honorable pursuit; and, at length, by his wisdom and assiduity, beheld the fairest prospects of success daily opening to his view. The arm of magistracy, which he had called upon to aid the accomplishment of his design, was enervated by the venality of its hand; and the incorrigible objects of his solicitude having freed themselves, by bribery, from the terror of the civil power, contemned the reformer's denunciations of eternal vengeance hereafter, and relapsed into their former licentiousness and depravity. A few, indeed, among the great number of nuns who inhabited these guilty convents, were converted by the force of his eloquent remonstrances, and became afterwards highly exemplary by their virtue, but the rest abandoned themselves to their impious courses; and, though more vigorous methods were, in a short time, adopted against the refractory monastics, they set all attempts to reform them at defiance. The modes, perhaps, in which their vices were indulged, have changed with the character of the age; and, as manners grew more refined, the gross and shameful indulgences of the monks and nuns have been changed into a more elegant and decent style of enjoyment. Fashion has rendered them more prudent and reserved in their intrigues, but their passions are not less vicious, nor their dispositions less corrupt."

Such is the record of monastic profligacy and corruption; and, when we think how the monks were regarded by the people with the profoundest reverence, and, moreover, with what swarms of them Europe was filled—"friars, white, black, and gray; canons regular, and of St. Anthony; Carmelites, Carthusians, Cordeliers, Dominicans, Franciscans Conventual and Observantines, Jacobines, Remonstrantsians, Monks of Tyronne and of Vallis Caulium, Hospitallers, or Knights of John of Jerusalem; Nuns of Austin, Clare, Scholastica, Catherine of Sienna; with Canonesses of various clans,"—we cannot entertain a doubt, that the contagion of their example operated with most debasing and corrupting effect upon the character of mankind. What must have been the condition of morality, when its professed teachers were so immoral? What, in the view of the God of truth and purity, must be the turpitude of that system, or of that widely extended institution, which, for more than a thousand years, spread its unhallowed influence over a great portion of the world, and triumphed in the overthrow of all that is virtuous and noble in the character of man?

B.—Page 14.

At the period of the Reformation, learning had ceased to dwell in the solitudes of monachism. The age of darkness had passed away, never more to return; the art of printing had unlocked the storehouses of ancient literature, and sent abroad their treasures for the good of

mankind; and thus there was not left the shadow of reason for the longer endurance of these incumbrances on the states of Europe;—and, pregnant as they palpably were with many very serious evils, there was the most urgent necessity for their removal. This the progress of knowledge effected. These institutions, the birth of an ignorant and superstitious age, fell before the brightness of the light of truth; and, at their dismemberment, was unfolded more strikingly than ever had been done before their incorrigible depravity.

Great have been the lamentations respecting the alleged outrages of the Reformation; that literature will never recover from the disaster which it sustained by the loss of the thousands of precious volumes, which, with the monasteries that contained them, were, by the barbarous fury of the Reformers, consigned to destruction; and that the demolition—occasioned by the Reformation—of the splendid edifices appropriated to monachism, inflicted a misfortune on the fine arts which is absolutely irretrievable. Those stately fabrics, it is said, the illustrious produce of immense labor and expense—on which all the taste and genius of the world were lavished, and which seemed destined to perpetuate through all time the triumphs of art, are now in ruins; and the superb arches, the lofty columns, the mouldering walls, of those once glorious structures—the melancholy remains of such a magnificent creation of art and genius—present to the eye of the scientific observer, a scene of devastation, for which all the benefits of the Reformation will never atone!

Now, much of this expression of regret is groundless, and with it we cannot sympathize. That the monastic libraries, at the time of the Reformation, were furnished with many—or, indeed, with any very valuable works, is a mere unwarranted assumption. For more than half a century had the press been in vigorous operation, and, during that period, all in literature that was really valuable had been drawn from obscurity; nor, distinguished as the Reformers were for their regard to learning, and, in several very splendid instances, for their literary acquirements above all their contemporaries, is there the smallest ground to doubt, that, if any of these literary monuments remained, they would have been the objects of their search and careful preservation. We have positive information respecting the state of some of the monastic libraries, which, in the absence of contrary evidence, may be regarded as a specimen of the condition of the rest. “In the life of Knox, the Scottish Reformer, we have an enumeration of the contents of several of these pretended receptacles of learning, which appear to have been despicable in the extreme. Legends of saints, pastorales, graduales, missals, breviaries, and other writings of a similar description, were the precious stores, for destroying which the Reformation has been branded with epithets of the most odious kind.”

C.

AWFUL CONSEQUENCES OF PAPAL INFLUENCE AND PAPAL DOMINION.

*Proh Dolor! hos tolerare potest Ecclesia Porcos
Duntaxat Ventri, Veneri, Somnoque, vacantes?*

It is amazing that the Christian religion, whose characteristic is love and humility, should be so far debased, as to carry no other

marks than those of cruelty and pride ; that vows of poverty should entitle men to the riches of the whole world ; that professions of chastity should fill countries with uncleanness ; that solitary anchorites should engross the pomps of the city ; and that the *servant of servants* should become the king of kings ; but what contradictions are not designing men capable of, when the enlargement of their power is in view ? For this end, auricular confession was introduced ; a new hell of purgatory was invented ; and the power of creating even their own God, was blasphemously assumed. By these arts, came the secrets of families into the hands of the priests ; by these arts, they seized on the purses of whole nations ; and by these arts, they arrived to be idols of the people, who were glad to part with their estates, with their liberties, and their senses also, to these spiritual usurpers.

Not to mention the follies of other nations. British chronicles inform us to what a degree bigotry once prevailed, of which let this instance suffice. John Bab, an author of unquestioned fidelity, who was himself a Carmelite friar, informs us, in his acts of English Votaries, that in the year 1017, King Canute, by the superstitious counsel of Achelnotus, then Archbishop of Canterbury, was prevailed upon to believe that monks' bastards were his own children, and that Fulbertus, the old Bishop of Carnote in France, was even then suckled by the Virgin Mary : nor did he stop here, but after having burdened the land with the payment of that Romish tribute called Peter's pence, he went to Winchester, where, by the aforementioned Bishop's advice, he formally resigned his regal crown to an image, constituting it then king of England !

Thus was a mighty king converted to be the tool of his priests, and thereby became the darling of the Church, whose practice then was, not only to feed upon the spoils of the people, but even to make their monarch a prey to their ambition. And in those times a prince acquired the title of good or bad, not from his conduct in the secular government of his subjects, but according as he was either more or less, a promoter of the grandeur of his clergy. Thus Canute, though an usurper and a tyrant could merit a canonization ; whilst John, from whom was received that great security of their liberties, the Statute of Magna Charta, merely for not encouraging the corruptions and spiritual tyranny of the Romish Church, was branded with the name of Apostate, and forced at length, by an usurping priesthood, to hold his crown as tributary to the see of Rome. When the kings were thus managed, it is no wonder that the laity followed their example submitting their necks to the same priestly yoke.

The reader will be curious to know, how the spiritual societies came to possess such prodigious temporal estates : for the amount of the property owned by the monks prior to the Reformation included from fourteen to seventeen parts out of twenty of the whole land of the different nations. The first monks we read of were in the middle of the third century ; men whom the persecution of the heathen emperors compelled to live in deserts, and who being by a long course of solitude, rendered unfit for human society, chose to continue in their monastic way, even after the true cause of it ceased.

The example of these men was soon followed by a number of crazy devotees, who were so ignorant of true religion, as to think that their way to heaven lay through wild and uninhabited deserts, and who, finding that they had not charity enough to observe the precept of Christ, of "loving their neighbor as themselves," were resolved to

have no neighbors at all ; thereby frustrating the design of Christianity, which was to establish the good of society.

The next monks were a set of worthless, but ambitious wretches, who, having no way of making themselves famous in the world, retired out of it ; where they revered idle ceremonies of their own institution, where they pretended conference with angels, with the Virgin Mary, and even with God Almighty ; not unlike Numa, the high-priest of the heathen Romish Church, who abused the people with stories of his nightly interviews in a cave with the goddess *Ægeria*. At length, these holy cheats, to gain yet more veneration, began to practice on their bodies the most cruel severities, till at last they were worshipped by the thoughtless mob as saints : imitating, in some measure, the example of that heathen monk, *Empedocles*, who, to be thought a God, leapt into the burning mount *Ætna*.

After this, designing men, who saw how great an influence these pretended saints had over mankind, took upon themselves the same exterior form of godliness, thereby not only to raise an empty name, as the former had done, but to enrich themselves at the expense of the deluded multitude. Hence flowed those many profitable religious maxims :—"that to give to the Church, was charity towards God, and as such, would atone for a multitude of sins, were they ever so heinous,—that the Church was not the congregation of the faithful, as Paul fancied it to be, but the body of the priests :—that the priest, though ever so like the devil, was God's representative, and ought to be honored as such :—that there was such a place as purgatory, and that the prayers of monks like *Orpheus'* harp, was the only music that could mollify the tyrant of that place, who, being their very good friend, would release a poor soul at any time for their sake : that whispering all secrets in the ear of a priest, was the only cure for a sick soul :—that every priest had the power of pardoning all sins, except those only which were committed against himself :—that indulgences purchased in fee, could entitle a man and his heirs to merit heaven by sinning :—and lastly, that the priest could by virtue of a *hocus pocus*, quit scores with his Creator by creating him." These, and such like money-catching tenets, soon drew the whole wealth of the laity into the hands of these contemners of the world, and all its pomps and vanities ; who not only flourished in Egypt and Italy, where they first sprang up, but were spread through all Christendom, and began quickly to vie in power and riches with the greatest monarchs, even in their own territories, till, at last, kings and princes themselves, were proud of becoming monks and abbots.

A minute detail of the divers religious orders which swarmed in all parts of Europe is unnecessary. The portraiture of those who devoured and consumed Britain will exhibit a correct specimen of the whole fraternity.

Benedictines.—The first of these that prevailed, was the order of the *Benedictines*, whose rule was introduced into Britain by *Augustin* the monk, in the year 596. The founder of this order was *Bennet*, who in his own life time erected twelve monasteries. The rules that he left behind him, although the papists affirm that they were dictated to him by the Holy Ghost, are stuffed with the most trifling and superstitious ceremonies ; and his whole seventy-three chapters contain but four wholesome precepts, two of which only, that relate to eating and drinking, his followers observe ; neglecting the other two, which are the fundamentals of their order, enjoining humility and poverty ;

for in his seventh chapter, Bennet assigns twelve degrees of humility for his monks to practice: which how well they comply with, you may find by the humble titles of the abbots of Mount Cassin, the head monastery of his order, of which himself was first abbot! "Patriarch of the Sacred Religion, Abbot of the Sacred Monastery of Mount Cassin, Duke and Prince of all Abbots and Religions, Vice Chancellor of the kingdom of both the Sicilies, of Jerusalem, of Hungaria, Count and Governor of Campania, and Terra de Lavoro, and of the Maritime Province, Vice Emperor, and Prince of Peace." In his fifty-ninth chapter, he enjoins poverty to all his disciples; and in obedience to this rule, the above mentioned monastery of Mount Cassin have so renounced the world, as to be possessed but of "four bishopricks, two dukedoms, twenty counties, thirty-six cities, two hundred castles, three hundred territories, four hundred and forty villages, three hundred and six farms, twenty-three sea ports, thirty-three islands, two hundred mills, and one thousand six hundred and sixty-two churches." This was their holy poverty; and thus you may see how religiously these ten rules have been observed, and how spiritually the followers of Bennet retreated from the world in Italy; who were soon imitated in some of these kinds of holy self-denials, by their pious brethren in England, as you may learn from the vast numbers of rich abbeyes which the Benedictines possessed. These were the humble priests from whom King Henry II. received the discipline of eighty lashes, for having like an undutiful son of the Church, dared to contend in power with their patron Thomas-a-Becket, whose stirrup he had been obliged to hold, whilst that meek prelate mounted.

As these monks began to be notorious to the world for their obscenities and luxury; in the year 912, Oden Abbot of Cluny, took upon him to correct their abuses, and gave rise to the Cluniacs; who were the same year translated by Alphreda, Queen of England; for who more proper to promote superstition than a zealous ignorant woman! However, to show how thoroughly these men reformed upon Bennet's followers, especially in point of humility, they were not settled one whole century, before the Abbot of Cluny contested the title of Abbot of Abbots, with those of Mount Cassin.

Carthusians.—The next order was that of the Carthusians, first established in the year 1086, in the desert of Chartreuse in Grenoble, by one Bruno, who was thereunto moved by hearing a dead man cry out three times, "That he was condemned by the just judgment of God;" which was a very plain precept for building monasteries! This man professed to follow the rule of Bennet, adding thereunto many great austerities by way of reformation; amongst others he ordained, that they ought to be satisfied with a very little space of ground about their cells, after which, let the whole world be offered unto them, they ought not to desire a foot more. This, they have construed to signify a foot more than the whole world: for their cells even in Bernard's time, became stately palaces, and their little spaces of ground, stretched themselves into great tracts of land. They first settled themselves in England in the year 1180, and in a very short time had gained as much wealth by their vows of poverty as any other order.

Cistercians.—They were so called from Citeaux, where they first assembled; and soon after admitted Bernard for their head, whence they are styled Bernardines, who were another reformation upon the Benedictines.

Bernard himself founded one hundred and sixty monasteries; who

at first would have no possessions, but lived by alms, and the labor of their own hands; which being too apostolic a life for monks, they soon grew as weary of poverty and industry as their neighbors; and in a little time rivalled those, upon whom they pretended to reform, in wealth, luxury, wantonness, and such like monkish virtues. At their first institution, they wore black monkish habits, till the Virgin Mary, out of her great love to these *fat* friars, came down from heaven on purpose to reform their dress, as being the most essential part of their order. She appeared herself to their second abbot, bringing a white cowl in her hand, which she put upon his head, and at the same instant, the cowls of all the monks, then singing in the choir, were miraculously turned to the same color. Thus did the Virgin change the habits of the Cistercians from black to white, as they had before altered their lives, from a sad, melancholy retirement, to a merry, jovial society—black being no more fit for a jolly priest, than white is for a mournful penitent. Besides, the "*old monk Satan*" being represented as black, the Virgin was unwilling that her friends should be like him in dress, though they resembled him in every thing else. These locusts swarmed first in England, about the year 1132, and continued there in the exercise of their *sanctity*; a remarkable instance of which was their poisoning of King John at Swineshead, in Lincolnshire, an abbey of the Cistercian order.

Canons.—There was another sort of religious order in the Church of Rome, who were called Canons. These were to live in common, and to have but one table, one purse, and one dormitory. But as many of them began to abate of the strictness of their first rules, a new sect sprang up, that pretended to reform upon the rest, and these were called Regular, whereas the others, by way of reproach, were styled Secular. When Canons began, is not certain; but the first Regulars we read of, are those whom Pope Alexander II. sent from Lucca to John Lateran. The Regular Canons were so irregular, and guilty of such abominable crimes, that even Pope Boniface VIII, was forced to drive them away, and for the peace of the Church, to place Secular Canons in their room. Beriners, in the year 636, first introduced those Augustinians into England, who strictly followed the example of their brethren of John Lateran.

Præmonstratenses.—They followed the same rule with the former, were founded by Norbert, about the year 1120, at a place which the Virgin pointed out to him, and which therefore was pre-monstre, or foreshown. These monks, to get a greater esteem in the world after the death of their founder, published that he had received his rule, curiously bound in gold, from the hands of Austin himself, who appeared to him one night, and said thus: "Here is the rule that I have written, and if my brethren observe it, they, like my children, need to fear nothing at all in the day of judgment." Indeed, those fathers, for their great security in the last day, have firmly adhered to one of his precepts, that commands them to love one another. What confirms this suspicion is, their declaration in the year 1273; in which, after having acknowledged that women are worse than the most venomous aspics and dragons, they resolved never to have any more to do with them.

Gilbertines.—The next order is that of Gilbert, a little crooked schoolmaster, born in Lincolnshire, who, by reason of his deformity, despairing to bring the women to answer his lewd inclinations in a secular manner, was resolved to make religion subservient to his

purposes; and to this end he founded thirteen monasteries, containing both sexes together, to the number of seven hundred men, and fifteen hundred women. This order of the Gilbertines, was established at Sempringham, in 1148, and was thence called the Sempringham order; but their disgusting characteristics exhibit such an outrage on common decency, that delicacy compels us to suppress further particulars.

Mathurines.—They were so called from their founder John Matha, were likewise styled Trinitarians, because they lay under an obligation of dedicating all their churches to the Holy Trinity; they professed the rules of Austin, and added to them several others; among which is that remarkable one of riding upon an ass, the only thing in which I can find that those fathers imitated Christ. They were instituted in the year 1257. The professed original design of their establishment, was for the enlargement of captives; and whatsoever substance fell into their hands, was to be divided into three equal parts; one of which was to be remitted to Christian slaves for their redemption, whilst the other two were to remain in possession of these charitable bankers, as a satisfaction for their great pains in making such a return, which a merciful Jew would have done more faithfully, and for a tenth part of the reward. But, two parts in three being too scanty a recompence for the great toil of a lazy friar, those Mathurines, having no other God but money, to approve themselves true Trinitarians to that deity, often cheated the poor captive of his third part, rather than they would divide the substance.

This was the ceremony of the Ass. In several churches in France, in early ages, they celebrated a festival in commemoration of the Virgin Mary's flight into Egypt. It was called the Feast of the Ass. A young girl richly dressed, with a child in her arms, was set upon an ass superbly caparisoned; the ass was led to the altar in solemn procession; High Mass was said in great pomp; the ass was taught to kneel in proper places; a hymn, no less childish than impious, was sung in his praise; and when the ceremony was ended, the priest, instead of the usual words with which he dismissed the people, brayed three times like an ass; and the people, instead of their usual response, we bless the Lord, brayed three times in the same manner.

This ridiculous ceremony was not, like the festival of fools and some other pageants of those ages, a mere farcical entertainment exhibited in a church, and mingled, as was then the custom, with an imitation of some religious rites. It was an act of devotion performed by the ministers of Romanism, and by the authority of the Church.

Those eight religious orders grasped the greater part of the property in England. Four other monkish tribes held no possessions of their own, but being like the frogs in Egypt in numbers and ubiquity, virtually were masters of the island, as it was deemed a crime equal to sacrilege, to deny them admission to any place which they condescended to honor with their presence.

Franciscans.—The Franciscans, or Gray Friars, were instituted in the year 1206, by Francis, whose first prank of holiness was robbing his father, for which pious act being disinherited, he, like a true ranter, stript himself stark naked, and ran away towards a chapel near Assisy in Umbria, where being a beggar himself, he began a begging order; which being founded on sloth and idleness, drew in so many convents, that Francis, even in his life time, saw two thou-

sand convents of his own monks, all mumpers, gypsies, vagrants, and such like persons, taking upon him his profession of sanctity, which agreed so well with their own inclinations. It were endless here to enumerate those many ridiculous and blasphemous miracles, with which his lying legend is filled; such as the bearing the marks of Christ upon his body, which were imprinted there by Christ himself; such as his conversing intimately with the Virgin Mary; such as his healing the lame and blind, nay, and even raising the dead to life. - Miracles, upon the strength of which, his blind followers have not hesitated to publish him greater than John the Baptist, and to all the apostles, and to affirm that a roll from heaven declared him to be the "Gracc of God." Nay, they have not been ashamed to call him "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." Relying upon the sincerity of the author of his legend, I mean Lucifer, whose seat this great saint fills in heaven, who being once abjured by a priest, answered, that "there were only two men marked alike, Christ and Francis."

Dominicans or Black Friars.—They took their rise in the year 1216, from that godly butcher, Dominick, whose catholic zeal was first manifested in the barbarous crusade which he set on foot against those innocent people, the Albigenses, of whom above one hundred thousand were massacred at once, by that saint's instigation; for at a smaller price of blood he could not hope to purchase a canonization in a Church, which was so well stocked with such kind of saints before. To give yet a farther instance of his Christian charity, when he saw how the number of heretics were diminished by his wholesome severities, like a true high-church champion, he listed into his order a set of merciless ruffians, whom he styled the militia of Jesus Christ; whose employment was to cut the throats of all those who were so schismatical as to dissent from him in opinion. It was he also who founded that merciful court of justice, called the Inquisition, nor did he want for miracles any more than his brother Francis: for though he had no such bodily marks, yet he received the Holy Ghost with the same glory of a flaming tongue as the apostles did; and whereas Christ being *Verbum Dei*, only proceeded from the mouth of God, Dominick was seen to come from his breast. Nay farther, he like Paul was ravished into the third heaven, where seeing none of his own order he complained to Jesus Christ of it; who exhibited his mother, the Virgin Mary, cherishing vast numbers of his followers in a manner that delicacy compels us to conceal. This diabolical sect pretended to follow the rule of Austin, and multiplied so fast, that in the space of two hundred and seventy years, they had one thousand one hundred and forty-three convents.

Carmelites, or White Friars.—They pretend that the prophet Elias was the first Carmelite, who obtained of our Saviour at the time of his transfiguration on Mount Carmel, this grand privilege, that his order should remain till the end of the world. The true time of their foundation, was in the year 1122, by Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem, who gathered together a few Hermites, that lived on Mount Carmel, and gave them the pretended rule of Basil. When Palestine was taken by the Saracens, they flocked into Europe, where Pope Honorius IV. altered their habits, and for an indication of their humility, dubbed them Christ's Uncles, ordering them to be called Brothers of the Virgin Mary. Innocent IV. upon their parting with that heretical clause in one of their rules, "that they only ought to hope for salvation from our Saviour," like a true Pope, granted them many immu-

nities and privileges ; whose example was followed by Pope John XXII. he being thereunto moved by a vision of the Blessed Virgin, who according to his pretended usual familiarity, accosted him in these words : "By express command of Me and my Son, thou shalt grant this privilege, that whosoever enters this my order shall be free from guilt and punishment of their sins, and eternally saved." Urban IV. was likewise favorable unto them : as was Eugenius VI. who mitigated their rule, and permitted them to eat flesh, as a reward for their having burned alive one Thomas, brother of their own order, for blasphemously affirming, that the abominations of the Church of Rome needed a reformation.

This successive friendship of Popes to them, increased their convents to a number not inferior to that of any other order. And they made such good use of the Virgin Mary's favor in exempting them from the guilt of sin, that Nicholas of Narbona, general of their order, after having reproached them with their hypocrisy and abominations, in the year 1270, retired from their society, being no longer able to bear with their scandalous lives. They passed over into England about the year 1265, and had for their general Symon Stock, so called from his living in a hollow tree.

Austin Friars.—They derive their original from the same person with the Regular Canons, and by the same forgery. Their beginning was founded on this ridiculous story, from their own legends. It happened on a certain occasion, as Pope Alexander IV. lay half asleep and half awake, that the great Augustin, though dead and rotten some hundred years before, appeared to him under a dreadful figure, having a head as big as a tun, and the rest of his body as small as a reed ; by which mysterious form, the Pope immediately knew the saint, and concluded that he ought to found an order to this Holy Father, whose head could not be at rest in the grave for want of a body. And this gave rise to these mendicant Augustinian Friars, who being confirmed by following popes, increased so prodigiously as to have in a few years above two thousand convents of men, and three hundred of women. They passed from Italy into England, in the year 1252 ; and at their arrival a raging sickness broke out in London, and spread over the whole kingdom, as a presage of the destruction and plague, which these vermin would in time bring upon the nation.

Hospitallers of John of Jerusalem, and Knight Templars.—They followed the rule of Augustin in many points, but were wholly excluded from the exercise of the canonical office : their vow was to receive, to treat and defend pilgrims, and also to maintain with force of arms the Christian religion in their country ; none were admitted amongst them, but those who were of noble extraction, whilst the religious societies were for the most part composed of the dregs of the earth ; and they acquired to themselves such immense treasure, as procured them the envy and hatred of all orders ; which was the true cause of the total extirpation of the Templars, and contributed to the diminution of the power and revenue of the Hospitallers, who are now called Knights of Malta.

Not inserting therefore these two military societies, we shall find that the number of religious orders amounted exactly to twelve ; two plagues more than ever Egypt felt, and of a much more dreadful nature. For Moses only turned their rivers into blood ; whereas the monks, by their persecutions converted the whole nation into a sea of

blood : he sent frogs, lice, and flies into all their quarters, much less troublesome vermin than those mendicant friars, who swarmed in all the private families : he called for murrain upon the Egyptian cattle, and for boils upon the flesh of their inhabitants ; and what were the religious orders less, than the consumers of the substance, and the corruption of the people ? He commanded hail and locusts, which destroyed only one season's crop ; but those sanctified caterpillars devoured the land for ages together. He caused a darkness which soon passed away ; but the eclipse which these men brought upon the light of the Gospel, endured for more than twelve hundred years. And lastly, the first-born only, in that unhappy land were slain by the angel of God ; whereas in that, then much more miserable country, those messengers of the devil sacrificed whole families to their covetousness and lust. That men should desire the onions of Egypt is no wonder ; but that they should long for its very plagues, is a folly peculiar only to superstition.

The rules of the Nuns were exactly the same with those of their brethren, the Friars, in each respective order, to whom they served only as an appendix or house of ease. All that may be truly affirmed of them is, that they were a set of silly, superstitious women, who thought it to be a piece of spiritual devotion to be subservient to the monks, *in gratifying the lusts of the flesh* ; and bore to the world the face of chaste Christian sisters, whilst, like a Turkish seraglio, they carried in private the teeming marks of the labor of their ghostly fathers.

JESUITS.—A plague exceeding all the rest succeeded the Reformation, and was contrived by the Mother of Abominations of the earth to overthrow the consequences of that glorious event. The Jesuits sprang up in the year of our Lord 1540. Their first founder was Ignatius Loyola, a Spanish soldier, who collecting together all the different monastic rules of preceding orders, added thereunto some extraordinary ones of his own, particularly this : “ that the general, provincials, and superiors, of this order, may *dispense* with all laws, human and *divine*, dissolve all oaths and vows, and free men from the obligation of all rules and decrees.” They were called Jesuits, from a pretended vision of God the Father, who appeared visibly to Ignatius Loyola, and desired his Son Jesus Christ, who stood by laden with a heavy cross, to take a special care both of him and his companions, which Christ promised he would not fail to do at Rome. This pestiferous sect multiplied so fast, that in the year 1608, Ribadiniera reckons that they possessed thirty-one provinces, twenty-one professed houses, thirty-three noviciates, ninety-six residential houses, and two hundred and ninety-three colleges, besides their first college, which they pretend was in the womb of the Virgin Mary. These Jesuits are much the most dangerous vermin of all those who pretend to the name of Religious, inasmuch as they declare, *no villainy, no treachery nor cruelty, to be criminal, provided it tends to the benefit of their society.* And by this means, whenever a nation is so unfortunate as to be overrun with this diabolical crew, no one member of the community can promise to himself security either to his life, honor, or estate. Nay, the person of a monarch is not exempted from danger, when he is once become an object of Jesuistical spleen ; as was notoriously manifested in the whole series of the reign of King Henry IV. of France, whose life was many times attempted by these ghostly fathers, before they accomplished their wicked ends. I shall

only mention three of their most remarkable conspiracies. The first was that of Peter Barriere, a soldier, engaged to commit the murder by Christopher Abre, curate of Andre des Ares, and by Varade, the rector of the Jesuits' College. The former told him, "that by such an act, he would gain great glory, and paradise." The latter, "that enterprise was most holy, and that with good constancy and courage, he ought to confess himself, and receive the blessed sacrament," which he accordingly did; and being thus Jesuistically prepared, he embarked in the attempt, but, whilst he was watching an opportunity to put his bloody design in execution, was timely discovered, and received the due reward of his villainy.

The second conspirator was Jean Chastel, son to a draper in Paris, and by his own confession, bred up among the Jesuits in their king-killing doctrine; and being persuaded by them, that the murder of king Henry IV. would atone for all his past sins, and merit heaven, he attempted it by stabbing that monarch in the mouth with a knife; which occasioned this remarkable saying of the king's—"It seems then, that it is not enough that the mouths of so many good men have testified against the Jesuits as my enemies, if they be not also condemned by my own mouth." It was for this fact that these ghostly fathers were banished France, and a column was erected on the very place where the parricide's house stood, in memory of them, and of their assassin disciples.

The last and most effectual regicide, whom these fathers employed, was the bold and bloody villain Ravaiillac, who gave Henry IV. his mortal stab, on May 14, 1610, after he had escaped above fifty conspiracies, most of them contrived by priests against his life. That the Jesuits employed this murderer, we have the testimony of Father Paul, who lived at that time; and, as he was counsellor of state to the republic of Venice, was perfectly well acquainted with the intrigues of all the courts of Europe. He tells us that the Jesuits were the trainers up of Ravaiillacs and king killers, and that they were the authors of the death of that great prince.

It were tedious to enumerate the murders, treasons, rebellions, blasphemies, and such like crimes, for which that society has been banished out of France, from Dantzic, from the Venetian territories, out of Thorn and Cracovia, and Bohemia; not to mention that inhuman contrivance of theirs in England, to blow up both a king and parliament at once.

The following is the Jesuits' manner of consecrating both the persons and weapons employed for the murdering of kings and princes, by them accounted heretics.

"The person whose silly reasons the Jesuits have overcome with their more potent argument, is immediately conducted into their Sanctum Sanctorum, designed for prayer and meditation. There the dagger is produced, carefully wrapt up in a linen safeguard, inclosed in an ivory sheath, engraven with several enigmatical characters, and accompanied with an Agnus Dei; certainly a most monstrous copulation, so unadvisedly to intermix the height of murderous villainy, and the most sacred emblem of meekness, together.

"The dagger being unsheathed, is hypocritically bedewed with holy water; and the handle, adorned with a certain number of coral beads, put into his hand; thereby assuring the credulous fool, that as many effectual stabs as he gives the assassinated prince, so many souls he should redeem out of purgatory on his own account. Then

they deliver the dagger into the parricide's hands, with a solemn recommendation in these words:—

“Elected son of God, receive the sword of Jephthah, the sword of Samson, *which was the jaw-bone of an ass*, the sword of David wherewith he smote off the head of Goliath, the sword of Gideon, the sword of Judith, the sword of the Maccabees, the sword of Pope Julius II., wherewith he cut off the lives of several princes, his enemies, filling whole cities with slaughter and blood: go prosper, prudently courageous; and the Lord strengthen thy arm.” Which being pronounced, they all fall upon their knees, and the superior of the Jesuits pronounces the following exorcism: “Attend, O ye cherubims; descend and be present, O seraphims; you thrones, you powers, you holy angels, come down and fill this blessed vessel, *the parricide*, with eternal glory, and daily offer to him, for it is but a small reward, the crown of the blessed Virgin Mary, and of all the holy patriarchs and martyrs. He is no more concerned among us, he is now of your celestial fraternity. And thou, O God most terrible and inaccessible, who yet has revealed to this instrument of thine in thy dedicated place of our prayer and meditation, that such a prince is to be cut off as a tyrant and a heretic, and his dominions to be translated to another line; confirm and strengthen, we beseech thee, this instrument of thine, whom we have consecrated and dedicated to that sacred office, that he may be able to accomplish thy will. Grant him the habergeon of thy divine omnipotency, that he may be enabled to escape the hands of his pursuers. Give him wings, that he may avoid the designs of all that lie in wait for his destruction. Infuse into his soul the beams of thy consolation, to uphold and sustain the weak fabric of his body; that contemning all fears, he may be able to show a cheerful and lively countenance in the midst of present torments or prolonged imprisonments; and that he may sing and rejoice with a more than ordinary exultation, whatever death he undergoes.”

“This exorcism being finished, the parricide is brought to the altar, over which at that time hangs a picture containing the story of James Clement, a Dominican Friar, with the figures of several angels protecting and conducting him to heaven. This Clement was accounted a blessed martyr for his barbarous murder of Henry III., king of France. This picture the Jesuits show their cully; and, at the same time presenting him with a celestial coronet, rehearse these words—‘Lord, look down and behold this arm of thine, the executioner of thy justice; let all thy saints arise, and give place to him:’ which ceremonies being ended, there are only five Jesuits deputed to converse with, and keep the parricide company; who, in their common discourse, make it their business, upon all occasions, to fill his ears with their divine wheedles; making him believe that a certain celestial splendor shines in his countenance, by the beams whereof they are so overawed, as to throw themselves down before him and kiss his feet; that he appears no more a mortal, but is transfigured into a deity; and lastly, in a deep dissimulation, they bewail themselves, and feign a kind of envy at the happiness and eternal glory which he is so suddenly to enjoy; exclaiming thus before the credulous wretch—‘Would to God, the Lord had chosen me in thy stead, and had so ordained it by these means, that, being freed from the pains of purgatory, I might go directly without let to paradise!’ but if the persons whom they imagined proper to attempt the parricide, prove any thing squeamish, or reluctant to their exhortations, then, by nocturnal scarecrows and

affrighting apparitions; or by the suborned appearances of the Holy Virgin, or some other of the saints, even of Ignatius Loyala himself, or some of his most celebrated associates, they terrify the soon retrieved misbeliever, into a compliance, with a ready prepared oath, which they force him to take, and thereby they animate and encourage his staggering resolution. Thus these villainous and-impious *doctors in the arts of murder and parricide*, sometimes by the terrors of punishment, sometimes by the allurements of merit, inflame the courage of the unwary, and, having entangled them in the nooses of sacrilegious and bloody attempts, precipitate both soul and body into eternal damnation."

This is the method by which the Jesuits clear themselves from their enemies ; how happy then must that nation be where Loyalists flourish !

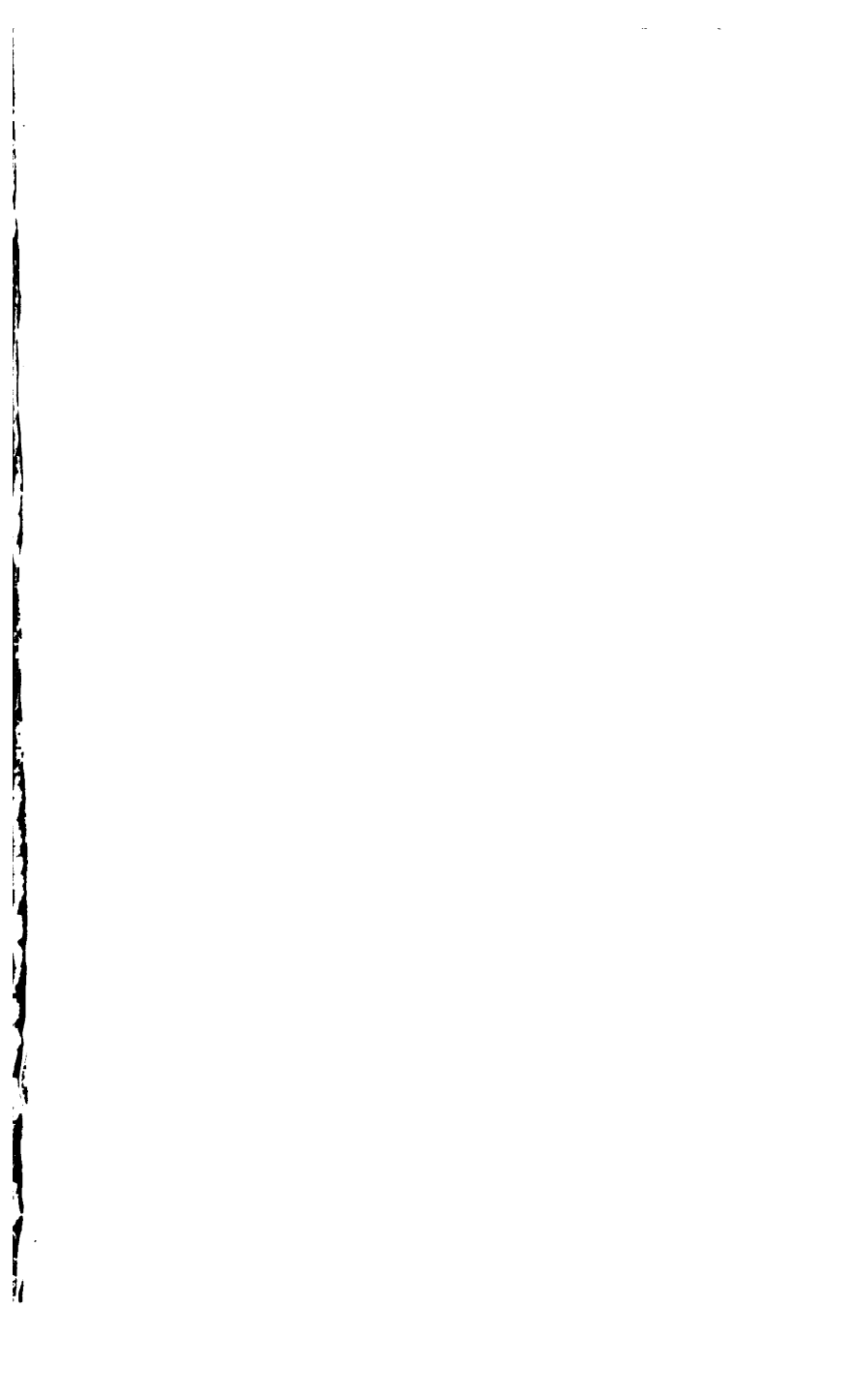
This account of the religious orders in the Papal Hierarchy, is compiled from statements which the monks themselves have recorded, and for the truth of which they are witnesses and vouchers ; and if so ridiculous a scene of superstition, falsehood and blasphemy, as that which appears in the original and progress of every order, be not sufficient to create an aversion from Popery, even in its most zealous advocates, they must have lost all sense both of Liberty and Religion.

INDEX.

Abuses of the Church,	55	Decretals,	159
Alexander VI. Pope,	166	Despotism of Rome,	127
Altars privileged,	134	Devotion to the heart of Jesus,	77
Anna Merlini, Nun,	87	Diminution of Convents,	175
Anniversary Masses,	134	Dispensations,	153
Apparition of a Spirit,	206	Dominican Monks,	80, 261
Assembly of Florence,	118	Ecclesiastical Courts,	171
Asylums,	64	Ecclesiastical jurisdiction,	148
Auctorem Fidei, Bull,	196	English Universities,	13
Augustin's doctrine,	128	False decretals,	127
Austin Friars,	262	Faria, Monk,	216
Bellarmino,	161	Festival of Ricci's Saint Ca-	
Benedictines,	257	tharine,	235
Benediction of Bells,	77	Festivals,	132
Bishop's oath to the Popes,	157	Flavia Peraccine, Nun,	84
Bonaparte,	205	Florence, Council,	118, 182
Books in the Monasteries,	111	Franciscan Monks,	113, 260
Books prohibited,	136	Galileo,	15
Borghigiani, Priest,	94	Genoese Convents,	253
Bribes for perjury,	218	Gilbertines,	259
Bull, Auctorem Fidei,	196	Girdle of the Virgin,	136
Bull, In Cœna Domini,	44	Gregory VII. Pope,	163
Buzzacherini, Priest,	93	Hospitallers,	262
Cambridge,	13	Ignorance of Priests,	113, 240
Canon Law,	158	Ignorance of the people,	177
Canons,	259	Image crowned,	204
Cardinal Busca,	189	Impurity of Nuns,	253
Cardinal Ruffo,	51	In Cœna Domini, Bull,	44
Carmelites,	261	Inconstancy of Ricci,	239
Carthusians,	258	Index expurgatorius,	143
Cases of conscience,	173	Indulgences,	134
Catharine Irene Buonanichi,		Indulgences for the dead,	135
Nun,	90	Infidel Priests,	215
Cistercians,	258	Influence of Monachism upon	
Clement XIV. Pope,	20	society,	14
Clerical immorality,	189	Inquisition,	109
Clodesia de Spighi, Nun,	90	Inquisition in Tuscany,	223
Coachman Priests,	57	Insurrection of Arezzo,	210
Confessor of Pope Pius,	229	Interdicts,	164
Consequences of papal domi-		Jerome Savonarola, Martyr,	212
nion,	254	Jesuitism,	101
CONVENTS—		Jesuit logic,	27
Castiglion Fiorentino,	58	Jesuits,	160, 238, 263
Catharino,	80	Jesuits turned Brachmans,	217
Lucia,	75	Knox, the Reformer,	255
Santa Croce,	60	Letter of Villensi,	55
Convents suppressed,	56	Lillies withered,	206
Council of Florence,	182	Literature of the dark ages,	13
Crudzli, Professor,	109	Louis I. of Etruria,	222
Dancing Nuns,	170	Lucia, Convent,	75
Death of Pope Ganganelli,	29	Lucrece Beroardi, Nun,	69
Debt for Masses,	157	Lupa, Priest,	84

317 064

<i>Madonna of Ancona,</i>	201	<i>Papal usurpations,</i>	167
<i>Manni, Priest,</i>	93	<i>Pay for Masses,</i>	156
<i>Maria Catharine Berni, Nun,</i>	60	<i>Perjury bought,</i>	218
<i>Maria Catharine Rossi, Nun,</i>	86	<i>Persecutions,</i>	208
<i>Maria Magdalen Sicini, Nun,</i>	61	<i>Pistoia, Synod,</i>	180
<i>Marianna Santini, Nun,</i>	85	<i>Pope Ganganelli poisoned,</i>	30
<i>Marriage,</i>	137	<i>Popes the greatest criminals,</i>	239
<i>Masses, price of,</i>	134	<i>Popish blasphemy,</i>	203
<i>Mathurines,</i>	260	<i>Popular ignorance,</i>	177
<i>Matrimonial dispensations,</i>	170	<i>Postillion priests,</i>	57
<i>Memoir by Rucellai,</i>	40	<i>Power of the Papacy,</i>	158
<i>Mendicant orders,</i>	137	<i>Præmonstratenses,</i>	259
<i>Mengoni, Abbe,</i>	218	<i>Price of Masses,</i>	134
<i>Menocchio, Pope's confessor,</i>	229	PRIESTS.	
<i>Miracle at Ancona,</i>	201	<i>Borghigiani,</i>	94
<i>Miracle by an image,</i>	26	<i>Buzzachinni,</i>	93
<i>Miraculous image,</i>	169	<i>Lupi,</i>	94
<i>Miraculous oil,</i>	207	<i>Manni,</i>	93
<i>Monachism opposed to know- ledge and piety,</i>	13	<i>Pacchiani,</i>	61
<i>Monasteries,</i>	168	<i>Priests' oath,</i>	49, 138
<i>Monastic system and Chris- tianity,</i>	18	<i>Priests' quarrels,</i>	134
<i>Money for Masses,</i>	131	<i>Priests subject to civil power,</i>	151
<i>Money from Venice for the Pope,</i>	152	<i>Privileged altars,</i>	134
<i>Monkish orders,</i>	254	<i>Prohibited books,</i>	136
<i>Monks and Nuns,</i>	238	<i>Purgatory,</i>	135
<i>Netherlands,</i>	185	<i>Quarrels among priests,</i>	134
<i>Number of Masses,</i>	155	<i>Reform of religious orders,</i>	139
<i>Number of Tuscan Priests,</i>	120	<i>Ricci and Pius VII. reconciled,</i>	229
<i>Nunneries at Lisbon,</i>	237	<i>Ricci, bishop,</i>	39
<i>Nunneries contrary to nature,</i>	10	<i>Ricci's apology,</i>	187
<i>Nunneries in India,</i>	237	<i>death,</i>	236
<i>Nunnery at Charlestown,</i>	7	<i>recantation,</i>	229
NUNS.		<i>St. Catharine,</i>	225
<i>Anna Merlini,</i>	87	<i>Riot at Prato,</i>	183
<i>Cath. Irene Buvnamici,</i>	90	<i>Roman festivals,</i>	58
<i>Clodesia De Spighi,</i>	90	<i>Roman priests, assassins,</i>	240
<i>Flavia Peraccini,</i>	84	<i>Roman priests' oath,</i>	49
<i>Lucrece Beroardi,</i>	59	<i>Roman stratagems,</i>	154
<i>Maria Catharine Berni,</i>	60	<i>Rucellai's memoir,</i>	40
<i>Maria Catharine Rossi,</i>	85	<i>Ruffo, archbishop,</i>	51
<i>Maria Magdalen Sicini,</i>	61	<i>Santa Croce, nunnery,</i>	60
<i>Marianna Santini,</i>	85	<i>Subornation of perjury,</i>	218
<i>Victoire Benedetti,</i>	61	<i>Suppression of convents,</i>	56
<i>Oath of Roman Priests,</i>	49	<i>Supremacy of the Pope,</i>	219
<i>Oath of vassalage to the Pope,</i>	138	<i>Synod of Pistoia,</i>	180
<i>Opposition to reform,</i>	148	<i>Tax office for Bulls,</i>	58
<i>Oratories,</i>	132	<i>Treachery of Archbishop of Florence,</i>	222
<i>Oxford,</i>	13	<i>Tuscan priests,</i>	120
<i>Paccanaristes,</i>	226	<i>Useless oaths,</i>	138
<i>Pacchiani, Priest,</i>	61	<i>Veiled images,</i>	133
<i>Papal arrogance,</i>	165	<i>Venetian education,</i>	159
<i>Papal doctrines of reform,</i>	141	<i>Virgin of Humility,</i>	192
<i>Papal exactions of money,</i>	153	<i>Weakness of Ricci,</i>	231
		<i>Wickedness of Popery,</i>	218
		<i>Withered lilies,</i>	206





3 2044 069 752 756

The borrower must return this item on or before the last date stamped below. If another user places a recall for this item, the borrower will be notified of the need for an earlier return.

Non-receipt of overdue notices does not exempt the borrower from overdue fines.

<p>Andover-Harvard Theological Library Cambridge, MA 02138 617-495-5788</p>
--

Please handle with care.
Thank you for helping to preserve
library collections at Harvard.