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*J. G. Rom. d.*  
By M. D'ALEMBERT.

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Incorruptam fidem professis, nec amore quif-  
quam, & sine odio dicendus est.

Tacit. Hist. ch. i.

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To M. \* \* \*

C O U N S E L L O R

TO THE

P A R L I A M E N T

O F \* \* \*

**P**ERMIT, Sir, an unknown,  
but zealous, citizen, an  
impartial historian of the Je-  
suits, to pay public homage to  
that truly philosophical patri-  
otism which you have displayed  
in this affair. In exciting  
against the society the zeal of  
the magistrates, you have not  
A 2 neglected

neglected to fix their enlightened attention on all those men, who may have with this alien society any marks of resemblance, and who, arrayed in black, gray, or white, may acknowledge like it, in the very bosom of France, another country, and another sovereign.

You have shewn no less lights in making known to the sage Depositaries of the laws, all the men of the party, whoever they be, all the fanaticks, whatever livery they wear, whether they invoke *Francis of Paris*, or *Francis of Borgia*, whether

whether they maintain *pre-terminating decrees, or congruous assistances.*

If the author of this writing had been able to ask you your opinions, his work would, without doubt, have gained greatly by it. May you, such as it is, grant it your suffrage, and receive it as a slender mark of the acknowledgement which religion, the state, philosophy, and letters owe to you.

A D V E R -

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE different pieces which have been published on the affair of the Jesuits (if we except therefrom the requisitories of the magistrates) breathe an animosity or fanaticism in those who have undertaken either to defend or attack the society. We may say of these historians, what Tacitus said of the historians of his time : *Neutris cura posteritatis, inter infensos vel obnoxios* : “ None of them were influenced by  
 “ any regard for posterity, being  
 “ themselves among the exasperated  
 “ or the obnoxious.” As the author  
 of

of the following writing professes a pretty great indifference for quarrels of this sort, he has had no violence to do himself in order to tell the truth (so far at least as he has been able to come at the knowledge of it) with respect to the causes and the circumstances of this singular event: if he has sometimes told it with energy, he flatters himself at least that he has delivered it without bitterness, and he hopes that thus his work will not displease those, who like him are detached from any spirit of party or interest. He has even waited, before he published this writing, till peoples minds should be no longer heated, in regard to the



the matter which is the object of it; he will lose thereby, without doubt, some readers, but the truth will gain by it, or at least be no loser.

The facts which are related here, are, for the most part, very well known in France: they are less so to foreigners, for whom we have proposed to write as well as for the French. The reflexions which have been to this historical account, may be useful to both, and perhaps still more to the French than to foreigners.

ON



ON THE  
DESTRUCTION  
OF THE  
JESUITS in FRANCE.

**T**HE middle of the century,  
in which we live, appears  
destined to form an æra, not  
only in the history of the human  
mind, by the revolution which seems  
to be preparing itself in our opinions,  
but also in the history of states and  
empires, by the extraordinary events  
B of

of which we have successively been witnesses. In less than eight years we have seen the earth shaken, swallow up a part of Portugal, Spain, Africa, and Hungary; and terrify by its shocks several other nations; a war kindled from Lisbon to Peterfbourg; for some almost uncultivated tracts in North-America; the system of Europe changing suddenly its appearance at the end of two centuries by the strict and unhoped-for union of the houses of France and Austria; the consequences of that union, all contrary to what it was natural to have expected from it; the king of Prussia withstanding alone five formidable powers leagued against him, and issuing from the bosom of the storm victorious and covered with glory; an emperor cast headlong from

from his throne ; the king of Portugal assassinated ; France terrified at a like attempt, and trembling for a life the most precious ; lastly, the Jesuits, those men who were thought so powerful, so firmly established, so indoubtable, driven from the former of these two kingdoms, and destroyed in the second. This last event, which is, for certain, neither the most melancholy, nor the greatest of those which we have just recapitulated, is perhaps neither the least surprising, nor the least susceptible of reflexions. It is for philosophers to see it such as it is, to shew it such as it is to posterity, to make known to the sages of all nations, how passion and hatred have, without knowing it, assisted reason and justice in this unexpected catastrophe.

In order to explain myself with impartiality on the destruction of the Jesuits in France, the object of this treatise, we must begin very far back, and reascend to the very origin of this famous society, place in one point of view the obstacles which had been opposed to it, the progresses which it has made, the blows which it has given and received; lastly, the causes apparent and secret, which brought it to the brink of the precipice, and which have terminated by throwing it from thence. )

. It is somewhat above two hundred years since the society of Jesuits took birth. Its founder was a Spanish gentleman, who having had his brain heated by romances of chevalry, and afterwards by books of devotion,  
took

took it into his head to be the Don Quixote of the Virgin \*, to go and preach to infidels the christian religion which he knew nothing of, and to associate himself for that purpose with those adventurers who should think proper to join him.

It will be thought astonishing, without doubt, that an order, become so powerful and so celebrated, should have for its founder such a man.) This founder was however wise enough to decline entering into the order of Theatins, which a cardinal, who some years after became pope, had just established a little before the Jesuits began to appear. Ignatius, in spite of all the opposition which his society experienced at its birth, chose rather to be

By the way, the  
 \* See the Jesuit writers of the life of St. Ignatius.

the legislator of an institution than to subject himself to laws which were not of his making. It seems as if he foresaw, from that very time, the future grandeur of his order, and the small figure the other would make, though destined to be in our times the cradle of a pious prelate, raised from the bosom of that order (by an impenetrable Providence) to the first dignities of the state and of the church \*.

Ignatius had also the wit to perceive, that a society which made particular profession of devotion to the holy see, would find infallible support from the head of the Roman church, and by these means from the catholic princes, its dear and faithful

\* Father Boyer the Theatin, afterwards Bishop of Mirepoix, and first preceptor to the children of France.

faithful sons; and that thus this society would triumph at length over the transitory obstacles which it might meet with at its origin. It was in this view that he gave to it those famous constitutions, since perfected, and always on the same plan, by two successors very superior to Ignatius, the two generals Lainez and Aquiviva, so celebrated in the annals of the Jesuits: the latter especially, intriguing, adroit, and full of great views, was on all these accounts very proper for the government of an ambitious society: to him it is indebted, more than to any other, for those regulations so well contrived and so wise, that we may style them the master-piece of the industry of human nature in point of policy, and which have contributed, during two

B 4      hundred



hundred years, to the aggrandizement and glory of this order. These regulations, it is true, have ended in being the cause or the motive of the destruction of the Jesuits in France; but such is the fate of all human grandeur and power, it is in their very nature to grow worse and become extinct when they have arrived at a certain degree of greatness and lustre. The empire of the Assyrians, that of the Persians, the Roman empire itself, have disappeared, precisely for this very reason, because they were become too large and too powerful. These examples ought to console the Jesuits, if it be possible for Jesuitical pride to be consoled.

We cannot better compare this society, every where surrounded with enemies, and every where triumphant

phant for the space of two centuries, than to the marshes of Holland, cultivated by obstinate labour, besieged by the sea, which threatens every instant to swallow them up, and perpetually opposing their dikes to that destructive element. Let these dikes be pierced but in one single place, Holland will be laid under water after so many ages of labour and of vigilance. This is what has happened to the society; its enemies have at last found out the weak part, and pierced its dike; yet those who had raised it with so much care and patience, those who had afterwards watched so long over its preservation, those who have cultivated, with so much success, the soil which was

B. 5.                      protected.

protected by this dike, merit nevertheless commendation on that account.

Scarce had the company of Jesus (for that is the name which it had taken) begun to shew itself in France, when it met with numberless difficulties in establishing itself there. The universities especially made the greatest efforts to expel these new comers; it is difficult to decide, whether this opposition does honour or discredit to the Jesuits who experienced it. They gave themselves out for the instructors of youth gratis; they counted already amongst them some learned and famous men, superior perhaps to those of whom the universities could boast: interest and vanity might therefore be sufficient motives to their adversaries, at least in these first moments,

to

to seek to exclude them. We may recollect the like opposition which the Mendicant orders underwent from these very universities when they wanted to introduce themselves there ; opposition founded on pretty nearly the same motives, and which ceased not but by the state into which these orders are fallen, now become incapable of exciting envy.

On the other side, it is very probable that the society, proud of that support which it found amidst so many storms, furnished arms to its adversaries by braving them ; it seemed to shew itself, from this time, with that spirit of invasion which it has but too much displayed since, but which it has carefully covered at all times with the mask of religion, and of zeal for the salvation of souls.

... 11.1

B. 6

This

This desire of extending itself, and of domineering, appeared already on all sides: the society insinuated itself into the confidence of several sovereigns; it caballed at the courts of some others; it rendered itself formidable to the bishops, by the dependance which it affected on the court of Rome alone; in short, the more it aggrandized itself, the more it seemed to justify, by its credit and its intrigues, the rancour of its enemies against it. To govern the universe, not by force, but by religion, such appeared to have been the device of this society from its origin; a device which it has made appear further in proportion as its existence and its authority gained strength.

Never did it lose sight, either of this object, or of the means (as  
smooth.

smooth as efficacious) which it was to employ in order to succeed in it. It is perhaps the only one of all the societies, as the house of Austria is the only one of all the powers of Europe, which has observed an uniform and constant policy; an inestimable advantage to societies and sovereign houses. Individuals only pass away, and are subject in that short space to a small circle of events, which by no means permit them to have any immutable system. Bodies and great houses subsist for a long time; and if they pursue always the same projects, the scene of the world, which changes perpetually, brings on at last, soon or late, circumstances favourable to their views. We must, when once we have declared ourselves their enemy, either annihilate

annihilate them entirely, or end in being their victim ; so long as they have one gasp remaining, they cease not to be formidable. “ You have drawn the sword against the Jesuits,” said a man of wit to a philosopher ; “ well, throw the scabbard into the fire.” But individuals, how numerous and animated soever they be, have very little force against a body : accordingly the Jesuits so decryed, so attacked, so detested, would subsist perhaps still with more lustre than ever, if they had not had for irreconcilable enemies other bodies still subsisting as well as them, and as constantly taken up with the project of exterminating them, as they have been with that of aggrandizing themselves.

The

The manner in which this society established itself in those places where it found the least resistance, discovers very plainly the project which we have attributed to them, *of governing mankind*; and of making religion subservient to that design.

It is thus that the Jesuits have acquired in Paraguay a monarchical authority, founded, it is said, on persuasion alone, and on the lenity of their government: sovereigns in that vast country, they render happy, it is assured, the people there who obey them, and whom they have at last effectually subjected to them without employing violence. The care with which they exclude strangers, prevents our knowing the particulars of this singular administration; but the little which has been discovered of it, speaks  
its



its praise, and would render it perhaps to be desired, if the relations be faithful, that many other barbarous countries, where the people are oppressed and unhappy, had had, as well as Paraguai, Jesuits for apostles and masters. If they had found in Europe as few obstacles to their domination, as in that vast country of America, it is to be believed that they would rule there at this day with the same empire: France, and the states into which philosophy has penetrated for the happiness of mankind, would without doubt have lost greatly thereby; but some other nations perhaps would not have been more to be pityed for it. The people know but one thing only, the wants of nature, and the necessity of satisfying them; the moment they are by their situation.

tion sheltered from misery and suffering, they are content and happy : liberty is a good which is not made for them, of which they know not the advantage, and which they possess not but to abuse it to their own prejudice; they are children who fall down and hurt themselves the moment they are left to go alone, and who get up again only to beat their nurse; they must be well fed, kept employed without crushing them, and led without suffering them to see too plainly their chains. "This (say they) " is what the Jesuits do in Paraguay; " this probably is what they would " have done every where else, if the " world had been disposed to permit " them." But in Europe, where they had already so many masters, they did not think proper to suffer any new ones: this

this resistance, tho' so natural, irritated the Jesuits, and rendered them wicked: they made those nations, which refused their yoke, feel all the evils which those nations endeavoured to inflict on them: usefull and respectable in Paraguai, where they found only docility and gentleness, they became dangerous and turbulent in Europe, where they met with dispositions a little different; and it is not without reason it has been said of them, that seeing they did so much good in a corner of America, and so much ill elsewhere, it was necessary therefore to send them all to the only place where they were not hurtful, and to purge the rest of the earth of them.

Let us return to France, or rather to the history of the establishment of

of the society in that kingdom. Already had the Jesuits, supported by the protection of the popes and by that of kings, succeeded, in spite of the opposition of the universities, to obtain very great advantages, to found several houses, to raise at length in Paris itself a college, which was looked upon by the others with envy. The establishment of this college had undergone several assaults at different periods : at first Stephen Pasquier, so well known for his satirical talents, and several years after Anthony Arnauld, father of the doctor, had successively pronounced against the Jesuits those famous pleadings, in which a few truths are found joined to much declamation. The society, victorious in these pleadings, had obtained by patent the liberty of continuing

nuing its lessons; the university of Paris was obliged to put up with it, and thought itself still very happy in not being constrained to admit into its bosom those ambitious and factious men, who would soon have possessed themselves of the power: perhaps also they escaped this yoke, only because the Jesuits disdained to impose it on them: probably they thought themselves sufficiently strong to raise with success altar against altar; and their vanity, flattered with making a party by themselves, nourished from that time the hope which it has since but too well realized, of taking away from the universities the education of the most brilliant of the nobility of the kingdom.

In the midst of this war of the universities and the parliaments against

gainst the Jesuits, the assassination of Henry IV. by John Chatel, a scholar of those fathers, was, as it were, the signal of a new storm against them, and made that thunder burst which had long rolled over their heads. The Jesuit Guignard, being convicted of having composed, in the time of the League, writings favourable to regicide, and of having kept them after the amnesty, perished by the last torture; and the parliaments which long since saw with an evil eye those usurpers, and who sought only a favourable occasion to get rid of them, banished them the kingdom, as “ a detestable and diabolical society, the corrupters of youth, “ and enemies of the king and of the “ state :” these were the words of the arrêt.

It

It is unhappily too certain (and the history of those dreadful times furnishes melancholy proofs of it) that the maxims which they reproached Guignard and the Jesuits with, respecting the murder of kings, were at that time those of all the other religious orders, and of almost all the ecclesiastics. Henry III. had been assassinated by a fanatic of the order of St. Jacobins; their prior Bourgoin had just been broke upon the wheel for that doctrine; a Carthusian, named Quin, had attempted the life of Henry IV. This abominable doctrine was that of the chiefs of the League, among whom were reckoned priests and bishops; it was also, if we may venture to say it, that of a great part of the nation, whom fanaticism had rendered weak and furious.

furious. The crime of the society was then that of many others. But the rancour of the court of Rome against Henry IV. the particular profession which the Jesuits made of devotion to that ambitious court; lastly, the confidence which the king had shewn towards them, in permitting them to instruct youth; all these motives, strengthened by the just hatred which their ambition had excited, made them deemed with reason so much the more dangerous and more criminal. Never have the Jacobins been reproached with a Bourgoin and Clement, assassins of their fraternity, as the Jesuits have been reproached with their scholar Chatel, and Guignard their fellow: the reason is, that the Jacobins are little dreaded, and that



that the Jesuits were both feared and odious.

In this their almost general disaster, two parliaments had spared them, those of Bourdeaux and Toulouse: moreover, in banishing them the rest of the kingdom, they had neither alienated nor confiscated their effects; the magistrates who had proscribed them, had committed that great mistake; those fathers, who had still a corner in France to take shelter in, made use of the little breath which remained to them, in preparing for their resurrection; they joined to their intrigues, within the kingdom, the support of several sovereigns, and especially of the court of Rome, which Henry IV. feared to displease; and in spite of the just remonstrances of the parliaments,

ments, they obtained their return a few years after they had been banished. Henry IV. did much more for them; whether it was that they had found means to render themselves agreeable to that prince, or that he hoped to find in them more facility in reconciling with his amours the new religion which he professed; or whether, lastly, which is most probable, that great and unfortunate king, having been so often assassinated, and being still in danger of it, feared and wanted to shew respect for these foxes who were accused of having tigers at their command, he gave them in France considerable establishments; among others the magnificent college of la Flèche, whither he was desirous that his heart should be carried after his

C

death,

death; lastly, as if to interest them more particularly in his preservation, notwithstanding the reports which prevailed against them, he took a Jesuit for confessor. It is pretended that he acted thus, in order to have, in his very court and about his person, an hostage who should be answerable to him for that suspected and dangerous society: it is added, that the Jesuits had been recalled on the very condition of giving this hostage: if the thing be true, it must be confessed that they were able, like dexterous men, to make subservient to their grandeur a law humiliating in itself, and to avail themselves skilfully, for the augmentation of their credit, of the distrust and dread which they had inspired.

Louis

Louis XIII. who reigned after Henry IV. or rather cardinal Rich-lieu, who reigned under his name, continued to favour the Jesuits : he thought their zeal and their regular conduct would serve at once as an example and curb to the clergy ; and that the permission of teaching, which had been granted them, and of which they acquitted themselves with success, would be to the universities an object of emulation.

This great minister was not deceived. It cannot be denied that the Jesuits, and especially those of France, have produced a great number of useful works for facilitating to young people the study of letters ; works, by which the universities themselves have profited, so as to produce, in their turn, similar

works, and perhaps better still : the one and the other are known ; and the impartial public has given them the favourable reception they merited.

Let us add (for we must be just) that no religious society, without exception, can boast so great a number of men famous in the sciences and in letters. The Mendicants, even at the time of their greatest lustre, were but schoolmen, the Benedictins only compilers, the other monks mere block-heads \*. The Jesuits exercised themselves with success in every kind, eloquence, history, antiquities, geometry, literature both profound and agreeable : there is hardly any class of writers in which they count not  
men.

\* We speak here in general ; for it is agreed that there have been, and are still, in the other orders, some men of merit.

men of the first merit : they have even had good French writers ; an advantage of which no other order can boast ; for this reason, that in order to write well in one's own language, it is necessary to keep company with people of fashion, and that the Jesuits, by the nature of their functions, have been more dispersed throughout the world than others.

It is assured that the late cardinal Passionei, who detested these fathers, (for which he might have good reasons) pushed his hatred against them so far, as not to admit into his fine and numerous library any writer of the society. I regret this, for the sake both of the library and of the master ; the one lost a number of good books by it ; and the other, so philosophical, as we are assured, in

other respects, was not at all so on this occasion. If any thing can console the Jesuits, it is that the same cardinal, so sworn an enemy of all their works, had the misfortune to countenance and extol the rhapsodies of that same Abraham Chaumeix, whose very name now is become ridiculous, and who is at present turned down to his proper place, after having been quoted and celebrated as a kind of father of the church \*.

The society owes to the form of its institution (so decried in other respects) this variety of talents which distin-

\* We know from a very respectable and very sure hand, that this father of the church was some months since at Petersbourg, where he wrote, for bread, panegyrics on a great princess, who pays to his eulogies the same regard as to his writings. Nothing more was wanting to the disgrace of those who set him to work, but to leave him, as they do, in want, and obliged to go to beg abjectly, at six hundred leagues, his subsistence.

distinguish it. They reject no sort of abilities, and require no other condition, in order to be admitted among its members, but a capacity of being useful. To engage our liberty, we must pay every where, even among the Mendicants. The Jesuits know nothing of this paltry interest; they receive with pleasure and gratuitously every person from whom they hope to draw any good; nobody is useless among them; of those from whom they expect the least, they make, according to their own expression, *missionaries* for the villages, or *martyrs* for the Indies. They have not even disdained very great personages, little worthy of the titles which they bore when they made themselves Jesuits, as a Charles of Lorraine, and several others: their names have served at least.



least as a decoration to the order, if they were good for nothing else : we may call them the *honoraries* of the society.

Two other reasons seem to have contributed to give the Jesuits, above all the other orders, the advantage of a greater number of men estimable for their talents and their works : the first is the duration of their noviciate, and the law which permits them not to bind themselves by the last vows before the age of thirty-three. The superiours have the more time to know their subjects, to judge of them, and to direct them towards the object for which they are most proper : these subjects moreover, being engaged at a mature age, after a long probation, and all the time necessary for reflexion, are less exposed to disgust and

and to repentance, more attached to the society, and more disposed to employ their talents for its glory, and for their own, which comes only afterward.

A second reason of the superiority of the Jesuits over the other orders, in respect to the sciences and knowledge, is, that they have sufficient time for resigning themselves up to study, enjoying in this point as much liberty as can possibly be enjoyed in a regular community, not being subjected, as the other orders are, to the minute practices of devotion, and to offices which absorb the greatest part of the day. If it were not known that hatred makes arms of every thing, we should have some difficulty to believe, that during their great and fatal law-suit, it was gravely ob-

jected to them as a crime, in some of the Jansenist pamphlets, that they did not assemble together so often as other monks, to say, in common, matins and prayers; as if a religious society (the first duty of which is to be useful) had nothing better to do than to chant over heavily bad Latin several hours in the day. It will be said perhaps, that religious orders are instituted only for prayer: be it so; but in that case let the religious shut themselves up in their houses, in order to pray there quite at their ease, and let them be hindered from meddling in any thing else.

This suppression of praying and chanting, among the Jesuits, before it became a subject of reproach against them, had been matter of pleasantry, agreeably to the genius  
of

of our nation : “ The Jesuits,” said they, “ cannot sing, for birds of prey never do : they are,” said they again, “ a set of folks who get up at four in the morning, in order to repeat together the litanies at eight in the evening.” The Jesuits had the good sense to laugh the first at these French witticisms, and to make no change in their manner of living ; they thought it more serviceable and more honourable to them, to have Petaus and Bourdaloues, than triflers and chanters.

It must be confessed nevertheless, that in the sciences and the arts, two kinds have been but feebly cultivated by the Jesuits : these are French poetry and philosophy. The best of their French poets is beneath medi-

ocricity : yet French poetry requires, in order to excel in it, a delicacy of feeling and taste, which cannot be acquired but by frequenting the world much more than a religious ought to permit himself to do. This school of urbanity and delicacy is perhaps the only thing that was wanting to the Jesuit Le Moine to make him a poet of the first rank ; for that Jesuit, according to the judgement given of him by one of our greatest masters, had, in other respects, an imagination that was prodigious \*. If it be asked why the Jesuits have not had French poets, we must ask why the universities have not had more of them, and why so many modern Latin poets, taken through-

\* M. de Voltaire, in his excellent catalogue of the writers of the age of Louis XIV.

throughout the several communities, and throughout all conditions, have not been able to succeed in making two tolerable French lines in verse.

Philosophy (I mean the true, for school-learning is nothing but the dregs and refuse of it) has not shone with greater lustre among the Jesuits; but has it been more brilliant among the other orders? It is almost impossible that a member of any community should become a great philosopher: the spirit of a society, of a monastick society in particular, and more perhaps than any other, the domineering spirit of the Jesuits, that of a servile devotion to their superiors, are so many fetters to reason, repugnant to that freedom of thinking which is so necessary to philosophy.

lofophy. Malebranche is the only philofopher of eminence that ever belonged to a regular congregation ; but that congregation was compofed of free-men ; and, befides, Malebranche is perhaps lefs a great philofopher, than an excellent philofophic writer.

If any order (by the by) could have hoped to difpute with the Jefuits the pre-eminence in the fciences and in literature, and perhaps to have borne away the palm from them, it is this congregation of the Oratory, of which Malebranche was a moft diftinguifhed member. The freedom enjoyed there, without being ever hampered by vows, the permiffion of thinking differently from their fuperiors, and of employing their talents according to their own pleafure, this was what furnifhed the congregation of

of the Oratory with excellent preachers, profound scholars, men illustrious in every way. Accordingly the Jesuits were very sensible what they had to fear from such rivals. They persecuted them; and the members of the Oratory had the folly to expose a weak side to them by becoming Jansenists \*. By this means they furnished a pretext to the attacks of their enemies, and have had the grief to see the decay of their congregation brought about by their own fault. They have indeed just now collected a few tattered remains from the plunder of the Jesuits; but these remains will hardly ever be able to replace what they have lost. We ought, besides, to do them

\* They were very far from this in 16... when they forbid all the subjects of the congregation from teaching Jansenism and Cartesianism.



them the justice to own, that they testified not any eagerness to profit by the ruin of their adversaries: the society in its misfortune experienced, on the part of the Oratory, a moderation of which they had never given them the example. But be this moderation counterfeit or sincere, it is difficult to persuade one's-self that the Oratory will ever recover with lustre the blows which have been given it by the Jesuits: the varnish of Jansenism with which it is still stained, and which renders it at least suspected by the greater part of the bishops, the almost general prejudice of the public, and of the greater part of the magistrates, against all communities, of whatever kind they be, and, above all, the philosophic spirit which makes every

day

day great progress, seems to forebode the end of this, and of other fraternities.

If the culture of the sciences and of letters has contributed to render the society commendable, and intrigue to make it powerful, another circumstance has not a little served to render it formidable to its enemies: and that is the union of all its members for the good of the common cause. In other societies, the interests and reciprocal hatred of individuals almost always hurt the good of the corps; but among the Jesuits it is quite otherwise. Not that in this society the individuals love each other better than elsewhere; perhaps they even hate one another more, being by their very constitutions spies and informers, from their birth, upon each other: yet  
 attack

attack a single person among them, you are sure of having the whole society for your enemy. Thus heretofore the Sénate and Roman people, often divided among themselves by intestine dissensions, united at the bare name of the Carthaginians or of Mithridates. There is not a Jesuit who may not say, like the wicked spirit in scripture, " My name is Legion." Never did republican love his country as every Jesuit loves his society: the very lowest of its members interests himself in its glory, of which he thinks some rays reflect upon himself: there is not (if I may presume to say so) even to their brother the apothecary, or the cook, one among them who is not proud and jealous of it. They are all at once put in action by this single spring, which  
one

one man directs at his pleasure; and it is not without reason that they have been defined “ a naked sword, “ the hilt of which is at Rome.”

The love which they have for their society, subsists even in almost all those who have left it: whether it be a real attachment founded upon gratitude, or a policy founded on interest or on fear, there is hardly an ex-Jesuit who preserves not his connexions with his old brethren; and who, even tho’ he has reason to complain of them, does not shew himself attached to their interests, and ready to defend them against their enemies. For the rest, this attachment of the Jesuits to their society, can be nothing but the effect of that pride which it inspires them with, and not at all of the advantages

vantages which it procures for each  
 of its members. Independently of  
 the little confidence and real friend-  
 ship which they have one for the other,  
 and the severe life which they lead  
 within their houses, individuals, what-  
 ever merit they may have, are not at  
 all considered in the corps, but in pro-  
 portion to the talent which they have  
 for intrigue : modest merit, or such as  
 is confined to the labour of the closet,  
 is there unknown, little considered,  
 sometimes persecuted, if unfortunate-  
 ly the pressing interest of the society  
 demand it. We have seen in these  
 late times the fathers Brumoi and  
 Bougeant, the last of the Jesuits  
 who had any true and solid merit,  
 die of chagrin under the weight  
 of the persecutions which their fra-  
 ternity were obliged to make them  
 suffer :

suffer: these two men, who were greater philosophers, and more enlightened, than their state in life seemed to permit, were sacrificed by the society to the clamours which they had excited; the one by approving a work, in which the regent of the kingdom (who had been dead about twenty years before) was indirectly attacked; the other, by a philosophical joke on "the language of beasts," for which they obliged him to make reparation, by confining him to the college of la Flèche, and charging him with the *making* of a catechism, which brought him down to the grave, overwhelmed with disgust and vexation. A hundred years before, Petau, the famous Petau, had like to have experienced a fate very nearly similar, for having pretended;

pretended, that before the council of Nice the church was not fully determined on the divinity of the word \*. He died in the college of the Jesuits at Paris, abandoned and in want of every thing. It seems as if the device of the society had been that of the ancient Romans; *Salus populi suprema lex esto* †.

To all these means of augmenting their consideration and their credit, they join another no less efficacious : this is the regularity of their conduct and manners. Their discipline on this point is as severe as it is prudent ; and whatever calumny may have published concerning it, it must be confessed, that no religious order gives less handle in this respect.

Even

\* See Bayle's dictionary under the word Petau. See also the Longueruana, Part I. p. 86.

† The safety of the people is the supreme law.

Even those among them who have taught the most monstrous doctrine, who have written on the most obscene subjects, have led the most edifying and the most exemplary lives. It was at the feet of the crucifix that the pious Sanchez wrote his abominable and disgusting work : and it has been said, in particular, of Escobar, equally known by the austerity of his manners, and the looseness of his doctrines, that he purchased heaven very dear for himself, but bestowed it at an easy rate upon others.

We have seen what success the Jesuits had the art to procure themselves at the court of France : their progress was nearly the same in almost all the other courts : at the beginning of the present century there was  
not



not in Europe a catholic prince, of whose conscience they were not the directors, and from whom they had not obtained the most signal favours; in all parts their enemies raged, and in all parts they made a jest of their enemies.

They confined not their ambition to Europe; perpetually full of the project of governing, and of governing by religion, they sent to the Indies, and to China, missionaries, who carried thither christianity for the people, and the profane sciences for the princes, for the grandees, and for the more enlightened persons, whom by these means they might render favourable to them.

Let us stop here a moment, and examine more particularly, by what kind of learning and doctrine the Jesuits were able to make such

great progress among the Christians, and among those who were not so.

The religion which we profess turns upon two points; its tenets and its morality. Among its tenets are the Trinity, the Redemption, the Real Presence, &c. which, in appearing to confound the human understanding, present to its belief only truths that are speculative in themselves: these sorts of truths, how obscure soever they seem to reason, and how much submission soever they require from it, are not those which meet with the most opposition from the multitude: naturally inclined to the marvellous, they are disposed to adopt blindly the most absurd errors in this kind, and much more the truths which are only incomprehensible, provided they op-

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pose

pose not their inclinations. The Jesuits therefore preached those truths in all their exactness; they knew well that they risked not much. But there are other tenets, as those of Predestination and of Grace, which border on practical religion, and which, preached in all their rigour to minds that are unprepared, would be little adapted to make profelytes. We must take great care, said the wise and pious Fleury, not to propose at once to infidels those articles of our belief, which might shock them too much. Suppose a missionary should come and say abruptly to savages, “ My children, I  
 “ make known to you a God, whom  
 “ you cannot serve worthily, without  
 “ his special grace, which he has re-  
 “ solved from all eternity to give, or  
 “ to

“to refuse you.” “Very well,” the savages would say to him, “we will wait for that grace, and till it come we will remain in our present faith.” What success would the Jesuits have had, had they proceeded in this manner? Let us suppose that a Jansenist had been in their place, to preach his incomprehensible doctrine (which he calls nevertheless modestly the doctrine of St. Augustin and St. Paul) he would soon have been either abandoned as a madman, or driven away by the people with stones. The Jesuits conducted themselves much more dexterously; they proved, according to the saying of their enemies, the truth of that maxim of scripture, that the children of darkness act with more prudence in their affairs than the children of

D 2

light :

light: they preached to the people they wanted to convert that Pelagianism of which they make profession, and which is much more accommodated to the weakness and vanity of human nature; but they not only preached in a manner better suited to humanity than the Jansenists would have done; they preached also more artfully than would Pelagius himself. The heresy of that monk did not meet with the success it might have had, because it stuck half way. Pelagius, while he restored to freedom her rights, imposed on her severe ties, by the morality which he recommended to practice: this morality was that of the Christian religion in all its austerity, the renouncing of one's-self, a penitence the most rigorous, and an eternal warfare

fare against the passions. The Jesuits perceived that these painful duties were not made for the common run of mankind, and it was the multitude they wanted to attract to them. After having softened what the doctrines of Predestination and Grace have too harsh in appearance, they did the same with what the ties imposed by Christianity have too difficult. Great personages, for the most part, are, by the fault of their education, superstitious, ignorant, and given up to their passions. The Jesuits permitted them to have mistresses, provided they displayed a zeal for religion, and an attachment to its outward forms, which are no more than a kind of amusement when the passions are satisfied, and which serve besides, to consciences that are but ill

D 3 enlight-

enlightened, by way of a quieter, or, if you will, a palliative in their hours of remorse. They followed pretty nearly the same plan with regard to all those whom they directed, and succeeded in making, by these means, a great number of partisans. The Jesuitical spirit, in the manner of teaching religion, is pretty well described in the definition which the Abbé Boileau gave of these fathers : “ They are (said he) a people who “ lengthen the creed, and shorten “ the decalogue.”

I cannot help remarking, on this occasion, one singular contradiction of the human mind in matters of religion. The Jansenists are at once what it seems impossible to be at the same time, Predestinarians in opinion, and Rigorists in morality :  
they

they say to man, " You have great  
 " duties to fulfill, but you can do  
 " nothing of yourself; and whatever  
 " you do, what human virtues soever  
 " you practise, every one of your ac-  
 " tions will be A NEW CRIME; at least  
 " unless God sanctify you by his  
 " grace, which you will not obtain  
 " if, you are not predestined to it  
 " gratuitously, and before the fore-  
 " knowledge of your merits." It  
 must be confessed, that this doctrine  
 is mild, adapted to consolation, and  
 above all consistent! but in these  
 sorts of matters, the business is not  
 to be consistent and reasonable;  
 it is the temper of the person who  
 dogmatizes, and not logic, that dic-  
 tates to him what he is to preach.  
 The Jansenist, unpitying in his na-  
 ture, is equally so, both in his doc-  
 D 4 trines.



trines and in the morality which he teaches; he is little embarrassed that the one is contrary to the other: the nature of the God that he preaches (and who, happily for us, is only his own) is to be harsh as himself, both in what he would have us do, and in what he wills that we should believe. What would be thought of a monarch, who should say to one of his subjects, “ You have irons on  
 “ your legs, and you have not the  
 “ power to take them off; how-  
 “ ever I now inform you, that if you  
 “ walk not presently, both for a  
 “ long time, and very upright, on  
 “ the brink of the precipice on which  
 “ you now stand, you shall be con-  
 “ demned to eternal punishment \* ?”

Such

\* The reader, perhaps, will not be displeased to see what a philosopher of much wit, and full of

Such is the God of the Jansenists ; such is their theology in its original and primitive purity. Pelagius, in his error, was more reasonable. He said to man, “ You can do every  
 “ thing ; but you have a great deal  
 “ to do.” This doctrine was less shocking to reason ; but, however, very incommodious and irksome. The Jesuits have, if we may say so,

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beat

of contempt besides for all theological quarrels, thought of this charming doctrine. “ Can it be  
 “ possible to give to the word *freedom* a meaning  
 “ so forced as that which the Jansenists give it ?  
 “ We are now, according to them, like a ball on  
 “ a billiard-table, indifferent whether it move to  
 “ the right or to the left ; but at the very time  
 “ that it moves to the right, it is maintained to  
 “ be still indifferent as to its moving to that side ;  
 “ for this reason, that it might have been driven to  
 “ the left. Such is what they have the presump-  
 “ tion to call in us *freedom* ; a freedom purely pas-  
 “ sive, which signifies only the different use which  
 “ the Creator may make of our wills, and not  
 “ the use which we can make of them ourselves  
 “ without his help. What fantastic and fallacious  
 “ language !” *Lettre de Mr. de la Motte, à Mr. de Fenelon.*

beat down Pelagius's price : they have said to Christians, " You can " do every thing, and God requires " but little of you." This is the way in which we must speak to carnal people ; and especially to the great of the age, whenever we would have them listen to us.

These are not the only cautions, which they have taken ; for they have thought of every thing. They have had (indeed in small number) severe casuists and directors ; compared with the small number of those, who thro' temper or scruple wanted to impose, in all its rigour, the yoke of the gospel. By this means, making themselves, to use the expression, " all to " all," according to a saying of scripture (the sense of which indeed they wrested a little) on one side they

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procured to themselves friends of every kind ; and on the other they refuted, or thought they refuted, before-hand, the objection which might be made to them, of teaching universally looseness of morals, and of having made it the uniform doctrine of their society. This kind of complete assortment, designed to satisfy all tastes, is pretty well described in the following well-known lines of Despréaux :

Si Bourdaloue un peu sévère  
 Nous dit, craignez la volupté,  
 Escobar, lui dit-on, mon père,  
 Nous la permet pour la santé.

It must also be observed, that most of those Jesuits, who were so severe in their writings, or in their sermons, were less so towards their penitents. It has been said of Bourdaloue himself, that if he required too much,

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in the pulpit, he abated it in the confessional chair : a new stroke of policy, well understood on the part of the Jesuits, in as much as speculative severity suits persons of rigid morals, and practical condescension attracts the multitude.

In China they employed still other methods : they rendered light to the people the yoke which they came to impose on them, by permitting them to mingle with the practical duties of Christianity, some ceremonies of the religion of the country ; to which the multitude, every where superstitious and tumultuous, was too firmly attached.

This philosophy, so purely human, which sees in the zeal of the Jesuits, and of many others, to go and preach religion at the extremi-  
ties

ties of the earth, nothing more than a means which they make use of for becoming of consequence and powerful, regards, as the most dexterous of their missionaries, those who know how best to arrive at that end. We must not then be astonished, if the society is a little surprised at the number of invectives and clamours, of which these fathers have been the object, on account of the Chinese superstitions which they permitted to their new converts. In that, as well as in the rest of their conduct, to the very time of their destruction, they have proved, we repeat it, that they knew mankind better than their adversaries did : they perceived that they were not to frighten or disgust their new converts, by prohibiting them a few national practices which were  
I
dear

dear to them, and which they still have it in their power to interpret as they please. Pope Gregory, who is called the Great, and who was certainly a man of good sense, seems, if we may believe the Jesuits, to have set them, in that respect, the example: they have, at least, pretended to the authority of it. Augustin the monk, whom this pope had sent into England, to convert the people who were yet barbarous, consulted him on some remains of ceremonies, partly civilized, partly Pagan, which the new converts were unwilling to renounce: he demanded of Gregory, whether he might permit them those ceremonies. "There is no taking away," replied that pope, "from rugged minds, all their habits at once:

" we

“ we ascend not a steep rock by leap-  
 “ ing on it, but by clambering up  
 “ step by step.” We see here the  
 principle on which the Jesuits pre-  
 tend to have conducted themselves  
 in China. They were persuaded,  
 that without this condescension, the  
 religion which they preached would  
 not have been even heard there. I  
 have no doubt, but artful as they  
 are, (or rather as they were) they  
 have still further palliated and miti-  
 gated matters with respect to other  
 points ; and it cannot be denied,  
 that they have done well, relatively  
 to their own views ; since, after all, it  
 was neither God nor Christianity  
 that they wanted to reign there ; it  
 was the society under those respec-  
 table names.

Further-



Furthermore, neither the severe morality of religion, nor the doctrines of grace which they were accused of misrepresenting, are delivered in so exclusive a manner in scripture, as that we do not meet there also with several passages favourable to the most moderate opinions: and we may easily believe, that the Jesuits availed themselves of those passages, after the example of so many sects which have found in the Bible, and in the fathers, matter to support their opinions, while their adversaries found there in like manner wherewith to combat them. The scriptures are, if I may use the expression, common arsenals, to which every one goes, in order to arm himself from head to foot, and just as he pleases. Accordingly it is not without reason that the catholic

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lic church has decided, that it belonged to her alone to give to infidels the true sense of the scriptures, and of the fathers : a truth from which we cannot deviate, without exposing ourselves to a dangerous Pyrrhonism in matter of doctrine.

What is very singular, and must appear more strange still to the proselytes, whom they went to make at five thousand leagues distance from our continent of Europe, is, that while the Jesuits preached Christianity after their manner, other missionaries, their enemies, monks and seculars, preached it quite differently to the same people ; warning them, at the same time, under pain of damnation, not to believe in the catechism of the Jesuits. We may judge of the effect which these contests would

would produce. “ Indeed, gentlemen,” said the emperor of China to them, “ you take a great deal of trouble in coming so far to preach to us contradictory opinions, concerning which you are ready to cut one another’s throats.” After having made them this representation, he left them to preach as long as they would, persuaded that such apostles could not have any great success. He availed himself besides, for the good of his country, of the residence of the Jesuits, who talked much more at court of astronomy and natural philosophy, than of the Trinity and religion, and who succeeded at last in rendering the other missionaries either suspected or contemptible.

It

It is not that they were not very ready to expose themselves to the greatest dangers, and even to death, for the sake of that religion which they burlesqued in their manner of preaching it, and which served only as an instrument to their ambition. When the emperor of Japan judged it proper (for reasons which appeared to him indispensable) to exterminate Christianity from his territories, the Jesuits had there their martyrs as well as others, and even in greater numbers. The reader will not be surprised at it, when he knows what was told me by a person extremely worthy of credit. He was particularly acquainted with a Jesuit, who had been employed twenty years in the missions of Canada; and who, while he did not believe a God, as  
 he

he owned privately to this friend, had faced death twenty times for the sake of the religion which he preached with success to the savages. This friend represented to the Jesuit the inconsistency of his zeal: "Ah!" replied the missionary, "you have no idea of the pleasure which is felt in commanding the attention of twenty thousand people, and in persuading them to what we believe not ourselves."

Such is the spirit of the method which the Jesuits have followed, for teaching with success to mankind what they called religion and Christian morality. Such was the moderate doctrine which they preached at the court of Louis XIV. and by means of which they succeeded in rendering themselves so agreeable.

Accord-

Accordingly it was principally under the reign of that prince that the power, the credit, and opulence of the Jesuits received in France such prodigious aggrandizements : it was under this reign that they succeeded in rendering the clergy dependent on them (we may even say their slaves) by the disposal of benefices, with which the fathers la Chaize and le Tellier, the king's confessors, were successively entrusted : it was in this reign that they succeeded, in consequence of the need which the bishops stood in of them, in extorting, even while they braved them, their confidence, or the appearance of their confidence, and in obtaining the direction of several seminaries ; in which the youth, destined to the church, were brought up in  
their

their doctrines, and in the hatred of their enemies: it was under this reign that they succeeded, by decrying or vilifying the other orders and the secular ecclesiasticks, in invading a great number of colleges, or at least in obtaining permission for establishing new ones: it was under this reign that they succeeded so far, through the confidence and consideration which Louis XIV. gave them, as to draw all the court to their college of Clermont. We remember still the mark of flattery which they bestowed on that monarch, by divesting that college of the name which it bore of the *Society of Jesus*, in order to call it the college of *Louis the Great*; and nobody is ignorant of the Latin distich which was made on that occasion, and in which the society was reproached

reproached " with acknowledging  
 " no other God but the king." Thus  
 they represented them at once as ido-  
 lators of despotism, in order to ren-  
 der them vile, and as preachers of  
 regicide, in order to render them  
 odious : these two accusations might  
 appear a little contradictory, but the  
 business was not to speak the exact  
 truth ; it was to say of the Jesuits as  
 much ill as possible.

Lastly, what completed the power  
 and glory of the society was, that  
 under Louis XIV. the Jesuits suc-  
 ceeded in destroying, or at least in  
 oppressing in France the Protestants  
 and the Jansenists, their eternal ene-  
 mies ; the Protestants, by contribu-  
 ting to the revocation of the edict of  
 Nantes, that source of depopulation  
 and of evils to this kingdom ; the  
 Jansenists,



Jansenists, by depriving them of the ecclesiastical dignities, by arming the bishops against them, by forcing them to go and preach, and write in foreign countries, where even these unfortunate people still found persecution.

Under this very reign in which the Jesuits were so powerful, and so formidable, the most terrible strokes were given them, more terrible perhaps than any they had felt till that time. The pleadings of Pasquier and Arnaud were but bombast satyrs, and in a bad taste: the *Provincial Letters* gave them a wound much more deadly: this master-piece of pleasantry and eloquence diverted and moved the indignation of all Europe at their expense. In vain they replied, that the greatest part of the theologists and monks had taught, as well  
as

as them, the scandalous doctrine which they were reproached with: their answers, ill written, and full of gall, were not read, while every body knew the *Provincial Letters* by heart. This work is so much the more admirable, as Paschal in composing it appears to have divined two things, which seemed not made for divination, language, and pleasantry. The language was very far from being formed, as we may judge by the greater part of the works published at that time, and of which it is impossible to endure the reading: in the *Provincial Letters* there is not a single word that is grown obsolete; and that book, though written above a hundred years ago, seems as if it had been written but yesterday. Another attempt, no less difficult,

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was

was to make people of wit and good folks laugh at the questions of *sufficient grace*, *next power*, and the decisions of the casuists; subjects very little favourable to pleasantry, or, which is worse still, susceptible of pleasantries that are cold and uniform, and capable at most of amusing only priests and monks. It was necessary, for avoiding this rock, to have a delicacy of taste so much the greater, as Paschal lived very retired, and far removed from the commerce of the world: he could never have distinguished, but by the superiority and delicacy of his understanding, the kind of pleasantry which could alone be relished by good judges in this dry and insipid matter. He succeeded in it beyond all expression: several of his bon-mots have even  
become

become proverbial in our language, and the *Provincial Letters* will be ever regarded as a model of taste and style. It is only to be feared, that the expulsion of the Jesuits, lessening the interest which we took in this book, may render the perusal of it less poignant, and perhaps make it be one day forgot. This is a fate which the most eloquent author has to apprehend, if he writes not on subjects that are useful to every nation, and to all ages : the duration of a work, whatever merit it may have in other respects, is almost necessarily connected with that of its object. The *Thoughts of Paschal*, greatly inferior to the *Provincials*, will live perhaps longer, because there is all reason to believe (whatever the humble society may say of it) that

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Christianity will last longer than they.

The *Provincials* would be perhaps more assured of the immortality which they merit in so many respects, if their illustrious author, that genius so elevated, so universal, and so little formed for taking an interest in scholastick trumpery, had turned alike both parties into ridicule. The shocking doctrine of Jansenius, and of St. Cyran, afforded at least as much room for it as the pliant doctrine of Molina, Tambourin, and Vasquez. Every work, in which we sacrifice with success to the publick laughter fanaticks who worry one another, subsists even after those fanaticks are no more. I might venture to foretell this advantage to the chapter on *Jansenism*, which we read with  
so

so much pleasure in the excellent *Essay on General History*, by the most agreeable of our philosophical writers. The irony is scattered in that chapter to the right and left, with a delicacy and ease which must cover both the one and the other with indelible contèmp, and make them weary of cutting one anothers throats for nonsensical fancies. Methinks I see Fontaine's cat \*, before whom the rabbit and the weasel bring their suit on the subject of a pitiful hole which they contend for ; and who, by way of decision,

Jettant des deux côtés la griffe en même tems,  
Met les plaideurs d'accord en croquant l'un &  
l'autre.

No body is perhaps fitter than this illustrious writer, to form a history

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of

\* Lib. vii. Fabl. 16.

of theological quarrels, in order to render them at once both odious and ridiculous, and thereby deliver mankind for ever from this shameful and terrible scourge.

*The Practical Morals of the Jesuits*, written by doctor Arnauld, which came out soon after the *Provincials*, though of a merit greatly inferior, put the finishing stroke to the throwing upon these fathers an odium, which they will never be able to wash off. This unfavourable and deep impression, which is perpetually kept up by the reading of these books, has even now found, at the end of a century, minds disposed to believe all the ill which has been said of the Jesuits, and of approving all the mischief that has been done to them. The term of *Jesuitical morals*

*morals* has been, as it were, consecrated in our language, to signify loose morals, and that of *Escobarderie* to signify an artful lie : and we know how much weight a fashionable way of speaking carries with it, especially in France, towards procuring credit to opinions.

The Jesuits, loaded from that time with so much hatred, and such a number of imputations, were not to be till long after the victims of it : they triumphed in the first violence of the attack, and became but the more powerful, the more animated against their enemies, and the more formidable to them. Yet what enemies had they to deal with ? With men of the greatest merit and reputation, and whose consideration with the public still increased by

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their



their very persecution ; an Arnauld, a Nicole, a Saci ; in one word, all the writers of the celebrated house of Port-Royal. These adversaries were much more to be dreaded by the society than plain theologists, whom the common run of mankind listen not to, understand not, and have no esteem for : they were great philosophers (as great at least as could be in those days) men of the first class in literature, excellent writers, and men of an irreproachable conduct. They had in the kingdom, and even at court, respectable and zealous friends, whom they acquired by their talents, their virtues, and the signal services for which literature was indebted to them. The general and rational grammar, called the *Port-Royal* grammar, from their being the authors

authors of it; the excellent *Logic* called by the same name ; the *Greek Roots* ; their learned grammars of the Greek, Latin, Italian, and Spanish ; such were the productions of this free and respectable society. The illustrious Racine had been their scholar, and had preserved, as well as Despréaux, his friend, the most intimate connections with them : their works on religion and morality were read and esteemed by all France ; and by the masculine and correct style in which they were written, had contributed most of any, next to the *Provincials*, to the perfection of our language, while the Jesuits counted yet among their French writers only des Barris and des Garraffes. What pity that those writers of the Port-Royal, those men of such supe-

rior merit, should have thrown away so much genius and time in ridiculous controversies on the good or bad doctrine of Jansenius, on idle and endless discussions on free-will and grace, and on the important question, Whether five unintelligible propositions be in a book which nobody reads? Tormented, imprisoned, exiled for these vain disputes, and employed perpetually in defending so futile a cause, how many years of their lives have philosophy and letters to regret as lost! What lights would they not have added to those with which they had already illumined their age, if they had not been carried away by these unhappy and pitiful distractions, so unworthy of taking up the thoughts of men like them! May we venture to say a little

more of this, at the risk of deviating one moment from our subject? Can reason withhold shedding bitter tears, when she sees how many useful talents the quarrels, so often excited in the bosom of Christianity, have buried? how many ages these wretched and scandalous contests have destroyed to the human understanding? and how many geniuses, formed for discovering new truths, have employed (to the great regret of true religion) all their sagacity and abilities, in supporting or giving reputation to ancient absurdities? When we run through, in the vast royal library, the first apartment, of an immense extent, and find it destined, for the greatest part, to a collection, without number, of the most visionary commentators on the

scriptures, of polemical writers on  
 questions the most void of mean-  
 ing, of school divines of every sort ;  
 in short, of so many works from  
 whence there is no drawing one  
 single page of truth, can we re-  
 frain crying out with sorrow (*ad quid  
 perditio hæc ?*) “ To what end all this  
 “ loss ? ” Again, human nature would  
 have been in no very great degree to  
 be pitied, if all these frivolous and  
 absurd objects, these *holy trifles*, as  
 a celebrated magistrate calls them \*,  
 had ended in ill language only, and  
 had not occasioned the shedding of  
 torrents of blood. But let us shut  
 our eyes on these dismal objects,  
 and make only one other reflexion, as  
 consolatory as it is humiliating to the  
 human

\* Mr. de la Chalotais, in his *Essay on Education*,  
 presented to the parliament of Bretagne.

human mind. How is it possible, that the same species of beings which invented the art of writing, arithmetic, astronomy, algebra, chemistry, watch-work, the art of weaving, so many things in short worthy of admiration in the mechanical and liberal arts, should have invented the philosophy and divinity of the schools, judicial astrology, the concomitant concourse, versatile and congruous grace, the victorious delectation, absolute accidents, and so many other fooleries, as would occasion the suspending, by authority of justice, the person who should first broach them now-a-days ? Plato defined man, “ an animal with two feet “ without feathers.” How ridiculous soever this definition may appear, it was perhaps difficult (the lights of religion

religion set aside) to characterise otherwise the indefinable human species; which on one side seems, by master-pieces of genius, to have approached the heavenly beings, and on the other, by a thousand incredible marks of folly and cruelty, to have set itself on a level with the most stupid and ferocious animals. When we measure the interval between a Scotus and a Newton, or rather between the works of Scotus and those of Newton, we must cry out with Terence, *Homo homini quid præstat!* "What difference there is between man and man!" Or must we only attribute this immense distance to the enormous difference of ages, and think with sorrow that the *subtile* and *absurd doctor*, who wrote so many chimeras, admired by his contemporaries,

temporaries, had perhaps been a  
 Newton in an age more enlightened !  
 Let us weigh well all these reflexions ;  
 let us add thereto the perusal of ec-  
 clesiastical history, those kalendars of  
 the virtue of some men, and the  
 weak wickedness of so many others ;  
 let us behold in that history the  
 usurpations, without number, of the  
 spiritual power ; the robberies and  
 the violences exercised under the pre-  
 text of religion ; so many bloody  
 wars, so many cruel persecutions, so  
 many murders committed in the  
 name of a God who abhors them ;  
 and we shall have pretty nearly an  
 exact catalogue of the advantages  
 which the disputes of Christianity  
 have brought upon mankind.

To return to the Jesuits, the no-  
 mination of father le Tellier to the  
 place



place of confessor to Louis XIV. furnished them with an opportunity of wreaking fully their vengeance. This violent and inflexible man, hated by his very brethren, whom he governed with a rod of iron, made the Jansenists drink "to the very dregs," according to his own expression, "of the cup of the society's indignation." Scarce was he in place, but they foresaw the evils of which he would be the cause: and Fontenelle the philosopher said, on learning his nomination, "the Jansenists have sinned."

The first exploit of this ferocious and fiery Jesuit, was the destruction of Port-Royal, where not one stone was left upon another, and from whence they dug up the very corpses that were interred there. This violence,

lence, executed with the last barbarity, against a house respectable for the celebrated persons who had inhabited it, and against poor nuns, more worthy of compassion than of hatred, excited clamours throughout the whole kingdom : these clamours have re-echoed down even to our times ; and the Jesuits themselves confessed, on seeing the spectacle of their destruction, that the stones of Port-Royal were falling on their own heads to crush them.

But the indignation which the destruction of Port-Royal excited against them, was nothing in comparison of the general commotion which the bull *Unigenitus* occasioned. It is certain that this bull was their work : we know also the universal opposition

tion which it produced in almost all the orders of the state : we know the intrigues, the frauds, the violences, which were put in practice to extort the acceptance of it. We may remember that Louis XIV. having succeeded in making it to be received (partly by foul and partly by fair means) by an assembly of forty prelates, saw with pain nine bishops who remained in opposition to it : he could have wished, for the peace of his conscience, an entire uniformity in the episcopal corps. " That is very easy," said the duchess his daughter to him, " you need only order the forty acceptants to be of the opinion of the nine others." The propositions condemned were, for the most part, so ill chosen, that it is pretended

tended that a great prince, on reading them in the bull, took them for truths which it enjoined to be believed, appeared edified by them, and was very much surprised, though of a docile disposition, when his confessor undeceived him.

The magistrates were not the last to rise against this bull. They were especially shocked at the censure of the ninety-first proposition. "The  
 "dread of an unjust excommunication ought never to hinder us from  
 "doing our duty." Instructed by the melancholy effects of the quarrels between the Priesthood and the Empire during so many ages, they perceived how easy it was to avail themselves of this censure, to detach the people, by menaces of excommunication, from the fidelity which they  
 owe

owe their sovereign. They saw, in so rash a condemnation, the secret attempt which the Jesuits and the court of Rome wanted to make upon our maxims, of the temporal independence of kings. There was no subscribing, with any modesty, to the Anathema launched out against a proposition so evident, but by confining it to a tortured sense, which it presents not, in judging it (which is ridiculous in such a case) upon a pretended intention of the author in favour of excommunicated fanaticks. Who doubts that fanaticks might not abuse the truth which this proposition includes, to the braving of every excommunication which they shall think unjust? But is the abuse, which may be made of a truth, a reason for proscribing it? Would the scripture  
itself

itself be safe from a stigma founded on like motives?

Nevertheless, in spite of the opposition of the magistrates, the bull was registered; every thing plyed, either willingly or by force, under the weight of the royal authority: the fury with which father le Tellier, the author of this strange production, persecuted all its opposers, was carried so far, that the Jesuits themselves, though long inured to violence, were terrified at his, and said aloud, "Father le Tellier drives at such a rate, that he will overturn us." They thought not perhaps, that they were speaking so much truth. It is this bull, and the persecution which it occasioned, that after fifty years has given the Jesuits the mortal blow: we shall see it  
in

in the sequel of this recital. But it may not be useless to make, before-hand, an observation on the conduct and the projects of father le Tellier. Many people believe, that this Jesuit was a knave, void of religion, who made its respectable name subservient to his hatred : it is much more probable, that he was a fanatick in reality, who, being persuaded of the goodness of his cause, thought every thing permitted him, in order to ensure the triumph of what he supposed to be *the sound doctrine*. At the same time, that he persecuted the Jansenists, he accused Fontenelle to Louis XIV. as an atheist, for having written *The History of Oracles*. Fontenelle, the pupil of the Jesuits, their friend at all times, as well as the great Corneille

neille his uncle, disapproving also the doctrine and morality of the Jansenists, as far as a philosopher can disapprove theological opinions; in short, ever discreet and reserved with respect to religion, in his discourses, as well as in his writings; such was the man whom Le Tellier wanted to ruin, at the very time that he sought to crush Quesnel and his partisans. Would he have behaved in this manner, if he had not been animated by a principle of persuasion?

Happily for Jansenism and for philosophy, Louis XIV. died. Le Tellier, loaded with the public execration, was exiled to la Flèche, where he ended, in a short time, a life odious to the whole nation. The duke of Orleans the regent, being in every respect



respect the reverse of Louis XIV. was disposed neither to brave with violence the publick clamour, which the constitution Unigenitus had excited, nor rudely to offend the pope and the bishops, who were too far engaged to recede: he caused to be accepted, almost without noise, this fatal bull, which, presented by the Jesuits, had excited such great clamours: supported by the philosophers who surrounded him, and who began, from that time, to command attention; supported above all by his minister Dubois, whose way of thinking, in matters of religion, was well known, he threw over this theological dispute, a ridicule which put a stop to it.

The Jesuits, though become less powerful during the regency, recovered

vered, nevertheless, in a short time, the place of confessor to the king, of which they had been for a short time deprived: it is pretended that their restoration at court was one of the secret articles of the re-union between France and Spain in 1719. It is added, that this article had been procured by the management of the Jesuit d'Aubenton, confessor to Philip V. and extremely powerful at the court of Madrid. For the honour of the ministers which France had at that time, we must believe that this anecdote is fabulous.

Every thing else was peaceable, with respect to the Jesuits, during the remainder of the regency and the succeeding ministry: they aimed only at supporting themselves, without making much noise. Cardinal

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Fleury.

Fleury, who loved them not, was nevertheless persuaded that they were to be protected strongly, “ as the “ firmest supports of religion ;” the maintenance of which that minister looked upon as a part of government. This manner of thinking in cardinal Fleury, with regard to the Jesuits, is found expressed in some manuscript letters of his, which I have read. “ They are,” said he further, “ excellent servants, but “ bad masters.” In pursuance of this principle, he treated them civilly, during his ministry, but without shewing them any marks of declared favour : on the contrary, he greatly raised (and the Jesuits were not the better pleased with him for it) the community of Sulpiciens, who were much less illustrious and less powerful,

ful, but also less formidable. Cardinal Fleury, an enemy to the Jansenists, whom he looked upon as dangerous, and at the same time very little biaſſed for what had any conſiderable degree of credit in its way, of whatever kind it was, took under his particular protection this numerous community: it had all that was neceſſary to make him think it worthy thereof: it joined to the merit of being extremely devoted to the bull, the happineſs of having never made any noiſe. This miniſter filled the biſhopricks of France with a multitude of the pupils of St. Sulpicius, who were more commendable for their devotion than their talents: thus he planted the firſt ſeeds of that ſtate of languor into which the clergy of France

seem now-a-days to be fallen, but from which it is to be hoped they will soon rouse themselves; thanks to the philosophick spirit which enlightens at present some of its members, and which makes them justly look upon fanaticism and ignorance as the two true scourges of Christianity.

However, the bull of which the Jesuits had been the promoters, and which had met with so much opposition when it appeared, came insensibly to be received by all the bishops. The French nation, which clamours so readily, and which more readily still grows tired of clamouring, was familiarized to a production which it had at first called *monstrous*: every one received it, with an interpretation according to his own liking; for such

is the wonderful privilege of these kinds of decisions of the church of Rome, that people may, by all means, understand them just as they please, and submit to them at the same time that they continue in their own opinion. Jansenism, heretofore maintained (in spite of reason) by men of real merit, had no longer for its support any defenders, but such as were worthy of such a cause, a few poor and obscure priests, unknown even where they lived: the phrensy of convulsions, which had raised dissensions in the party itself, had rendered them completely contemptible, by rendering them ridiculous: in short, this sect, now expiring and despised, was at the last gasp, when an unforeseen chain of circumstances restored it to a new life, which it hoped

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not.

not for. The viper which the Jesuits thought crushed, had strength enough to turn back its head, to bite them in the heel, and to kill them. The reader is here presented with the succession of causes, by which this strange event was produced.

The parliaments, which had opposed the society from its birth, had but too much reason for persisting in the same sentiments with regard to it. They were justly offended at the advantages of power and credit, which it had obtained in spite of them : they were above all hurt by the constitution *Unigenitus*, the acceptance of which the intrigues of the Jesuits had forced them to register ; an acceptance which they thought, as we have seen, contrary to the rights of the crown ; and in  
order

order to break forth, waited only for a favourable occasion, without perhaps presuming to flatter themselves that it would ever occur.

The contest occasioned by the refusal of the sacraments to the Jansenists, was the first spark of the conflagration, the Helen of that war, as small in its first object, as it is now become important by its consequences. One of the principal archbishops of the kingdom, and a bishop of Mirepoix, his aid and counsellor, both of them thoroughly persuaded of the excellence of the bull, and of the damnation of those who rejected it, resolved, like consistent prelates, to order the communion to be refused to Jansenists at the point of death. This refusal had before been attempted in some provinces, but twice

F 4 or



or thrice only, at wide intervals, and with little noise : it was now thought time to take off the mask, and absolutely to treat the enemies of the bull *Unigenitus* as hereticks cut off from the church. If we believe the crowd of constitutionary theologists, the two prelates, authors and executors of this project, were extremely in the right : but let us be permitted to relate here (as mere historians) the singular reasons which were alledged in their favour, and those that were opposed to them.

“ The bull *Unigenitus*,” said its partisans, “ ill received without doubt, “ and even spit upon at its birth, “ had terminated in being unani- “ mously received : there was not, “ in all Christendom, one bishop “ who rejected this production, whe- “ ther

“ ther good or bad, of the court of  
 “ Rome : it was in vain to say that  
 “ it overturned the principles of  
 “ Christianity ; that the acceptance  
 “ of it had not been free ; that  
 “ some had received it through fear,  
 “ others through interest : it was  
 “ accepted, and without opposi-  
 “ tion, by the whole body of pas-  
 “ tors. Here then we see, in the  
 “ principles of the Catholic church,  
 “ all that ought to serve, by way of  
 “ compass, to plain Christians in  
 “ their faith. It is not for them  
 “ to examine either the doctrines  
 “ themselves, or the nature of the  
 “ acceptance ; it is sufficient to them  
 “ that they see clearly, that the visible  
 “ church adopts them. We under-  
 “ stand here by the visible church,  
 “ what every Catholic understands  
 F 5 “ by

“ by the term ; that is to say, the  
 “ pope, the bishops, and almost all  
 “ the ecclesiasticks, secular and re-  
 “ gular, of the second order. What-  
 “ ever be the doctrine which this  
 “ visible church teaches, the faithful  
 “ ought to believe firmly, notwith-  
 “ standing even the strongest appear-  
 “ ances to the contrary, that it has  
 “ always taught the same ; otherwise  
 “ Jesus Christ would not have said  
 “ true in promising that church to be  
 “ always with her. The passages of  
 “ scripture, and of the fathers,  
 “ which may appear the most evi-  
 “ dently contrary to the new cate-  
 “ chism, will be explained in a  
 “ manner favourable to it : the  
 “ church has alone the right of  
 “ fixing the meaning of them. In  
 “ a word, from the moment the  
 “ church

“ church speaks, we must submit to  
 “ her, whatever she may say. After  
 “ the council of Nicē, the divinity  
 “ of Jesus Christ was very far from  
 “ being as solemnly, as universally,  
 “ as uniformly received by the body  
 “ of pastors, as the bull *Unigenitus*  
 “ hath been in these latter times.  
 “ Nevertheless, after the council of  
 “ Nice, the Arians were, from that  
 “ time, hereticks declared, notwith-  
 “ standing the partisans that still ad-  
 “ hered to them. It may be; it  
 “ is even out of doubt, that in the  
 “ councils which have decided on  
 “ matters of faith, many of the  
 “ bishops declared for the good  
 “ cause, through views of policy,  
 “ interest, or passion. Witness the  
 “ unhappy facility with which most  
 “ of the prelates, who, under Con-  
 “ stantine,

“stantine, had declared that the  
 “Word was God, declared after-  
 “wards, under Constantius, that it  
 “was but a man. Witness again  
 “the violent conduct of St. Cyril,  
 “and of the council of Ephesus,  
 “with regard to Nestorius. Wit-  
 “ness, lastly, the intrigues which  
 “too often disturbed those holy  
 “assemblies, and affronted, as we  
 “may say, the Holy Ghost, that pre-  
 “sides in them. But still, once  
 “more, it is not the motives, it is  
 “the result of the decision, that the  
 “faithful ought to consider. It is  
 “by this result alone that they ought  
 “to abide: they would have too  
 “much to do, if it were necessary  
 “for them to go back again to the  
 “causes which dictated the decree.  
 “God hath promised to his church  
 “infal-

“ infallibility in her decisions ; but  
 “ he has not promised to every indi-  
 “ vidual purity in his motives : he  
 “ makes use of all sorts of means,  
 “ even of the passions of men, for  
 “ making the truth triumph, and be  
 “ known ; and he employs human  
 “ things, in order to make divine  
 “ matters succeed.”

Agreeably to these reasonings (the  
 justness of which we pretend by no  
 means to judge of) the partisans of  
 the bull thought themselves warrant-  
 ed to treat the Jansenists as declared  
 sectaries. The latter said, in their  
 defence, that the universal church  
 was possessed of their cause, by the  
 appeal which they had made to a  
 future council ; and that, 'till the de-  
 cision which they waited for, they  
 could not be cast out of her bo-  
 som.

som. It was replied, that a crowd  
 of hereticks, to begin with Pelagius,  
 so odious to the modern Jansenists, had  
 been looked upon and treated as in-  
 novators, without having been con-  
 demned expressly by any œcumenical  
 council. They objected, that the  
 bull proposed in reality not one truth  
 for belief; the accumulated quali-  
 fications of *hereticks*, *smelling of heresy*,  
*of ill sounding*, *of offending pious ears*,  
 &c. were not applied to any one pro-  
 position of father Quesnel's in parti-  
 ticular. Some of their adversaries,  
 after the example of an illustrious  
 chief of Israel \*, replied to them,  
 (making a jest probably both of them  
 and the bull) that it proposed "to  
 "believe with an implicit faith in-  
 "determinate truths:" others said  
 simply,

\* The late cardinal de Tencin.

simply, that in a list of poisons, it was not necessary to mark expressly the degree of malignity of each, in order to warn people to abstain from them. It was demanded again of the Jansenists, how the church could preserve one of her essential characters, that of being *visible*, if she were reduced to a handful of priests, opposed to all the other pastors? And they replied, that the true church, the *visible* church, was that which taught *visibly* sound doctrine, and which did not authorise, like the bull, the most shocking Pelagianism : they added, that the church, *visible* as she is, and must be, was not the less hid in appearance in those unhappy times, when the fathers of the church assure us that the whole universe “ was astonished to see itself  
 “ Arian.”



"Arian!" In a word, the Jansenists answered their adversaries, as Sertorius did Pompey,

Rome n'est plus dans Rome ; elle est toute où je suis.

It was thus that the one and the other defended their cause. We say nothing of the ill language which they added to them, and which on either side were worthy of their reasons.

The magistrates alone (and this observation is not to be neglected), opposed, on this occasion, to the constitutionists, reasons that were unanswerable : they pronounced, that the doctrine, taught or authorised by the bull, was contrary to the laws of the kingdom, and of consequence ought not to be a pretext for vexation.

tion. Of this the magistrates were competent judges, and the partisans of the bull had nothing to reply : it belongs to the depositaries of the law to decide what is conformable or contrary to it ; and this question is not within the province of the church.

It is certain, besides, that all those refusals of the sacraments, occasioned by the bull, disturbed private families ; that they sowed dissension among the people : that in this view, at least, the magistrates ought to take cognizance of it, and to employ, as they did, the authority of the laws, to put an end to the confusion. But the inconvenience which attends contests in theology, of hurting the public tranquillity, is the fruit of the error which was committed in France,  
and

and almost every where else, of connecting civil affairs with religion, of requiring a citizen of Paris to be, not only a faithful subject, but also a good catholic, and as exact in providing holy bread as in paying his taxes. As long as this spirit shall subsist among us, the maxim of which fanaticks make an ill use so often, " That it is better to obey God than " man," will be an invincible obstacle to the most prudent measures of government and of magistrates for stifling religious quarrels; because men like better to obey a master of their own chusing (and who, after all, commands them to do only what they please) than a master whom they have not chosen, and who enjoins them what they dislike. In Holland, where the Jansenists form

a church absolutely separate, which the government knows nothing of, and leaves in peace, they are neither the cause nor the object of any disturbance. It is only by a discreet toleration (equally avowed by religion and politicks) that we can prevent those frivolous disputes from being contrary to the repose of the state, and to the union of the subject. But when shall we see that happy time?

However this be, the Jansenists, treated at their death as excommunicated persons, rose up against this new persecution. The parliament, which had registered the bull with a very ill will, undertook their defence; it banished the fathers who refused the communion to dying Jansenists: the archbishop, on his side, forbid them, and deprived  
of

of their places those priests who obeyed the parliament ; and the unhappy *God-Bearers* (so they are called) having before their eyes exile on one side, and famine on the other, found themselves under a melancholy alternative. Reasonable people were surpris'd that the archbishop, the author of their misfortune, did not go and present himself to the parliament, declare that they had done nothing but by his orders, and give himself up as a victim for so many innocents. They had so much the more reason to expect this, as the virtue of that prelate, and his sincerity in this affair, were by no means suspected. The Jansenists called him persecutor and schismatick ; the courtiers, obstinate : his partisans compared him to St. Athanasius, who

who was also (they said) called obstinate and rebellious by the courtiers of his time.

The dispute grew more and more warm : the court wished ineffectually to put a stop to it ; the Jansenists had found means to occasion more trouble in their deaths than they had done during their lives ; the parliaments and the arch-bishop were exiled by turns. At last the king, justly tired of these disputes, recalled the magistrates, and in concert with them imposed alike silence on the partisans and on the adversaries of the bull.

This law of silence, it is true, was not too well observed ; it was particularly broken by the encomiums which the Jansenists bestowed on it : they printed large volumes to prove that

that it was necessary to be silent; they resembled the Pedant in Moliere, who after having talked a long time, and said abundance of foolish things, promises at last to keep silence \*, and in order to shew that he maintains his promise, interrupts every moment the conversation, by observing *that he opens not his mouth.*

The constitutionists on their side had the presumption to say, that the King had no right to ordain mad subjects to be silent on the ridiculous object which heated their imaginations; that the sixth general council had *anathematized* the *type* of the emperor Constantius, which was also, as they pretended, nothing more than

\* *Le Dépit amoureux*, Act first, Scene last.

than a *law of silence*. The Janse-  
nists replied, that this council had  
done better still, in *anathematizing*  
Pope Honorius.

The King, employed like a good  
father, according to the expression of  
a celebrated author, in parting his  
children who were fighting, was  
desirous of supporting himself by  
an authority respectable to both  
parties, and especially to the most  
numerous: he thought proper to  
consult on this question, by which  
all France was agitated, the late pope  
Benedict XIV. a man of under-  
standing, who loved not the Jesuits,  
and who at the bottom despised this  
controversy. The pope replied like a  
crafty Italian; on one side he ordained  
the acceptance of the bull, the work  
of one of his *infallible* predecessors,



which he could not decently condemn; on the other, he declared at the same time, that the Jansenists who rejected it, ought nevertheless to have the sacraments administered to them at their deaths, "but at their own risque and hazard," and after having been *thoroughly advertized* of the danger which they ran with respect to their eternal salvation. From this period the refusals of the sacraments became less frequent; the Jansenists and their adversaries thought they had alike the pope for them, and tranquillity seemed almost re-established.

It was not even lessened by the step which the parliament thought itself obliged to take some time after,  
of

of protesting anew against this bull *Unigenitus*; the acceptance of which it had registered with reluctance. It called not in question indeed the doctrine of the bull; that would have been to encroach on the authority of the church, and it knew too well the limits of its own rights : it protested only against the execution of this bull, declaring it contrary to what is termed in France “ the liberties of the Gallican Church.” This protest had not the glory it merited ; it was the sequel of a number of writings, of which the French levity began to be tired. Nay, the partisans of the bull even made a jest, with an indecency that deserved punishment, of the “ pretended liberties of the Gallican Church,” by virtue of which, the parliament, according to the

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terms of its decrees, enjoined the priests, under ignominious penalties, to administer the sacraments : they saw not, said they jeeringly, how such decrees supported and favoured the liberty of the church of France, by forcing its ministers to do what they did not think they ought to do. This way of talking, these contests, the pieces without number, which resulted from them, served to feed the frivolous disposition and gaiety of the nation : people laughed at the reciprocal animosity of the theologists of both parties, for questions which deserved it so little : for that animosity, though very usual, and of all ages, always astonishes and amuses reasonable people. Every body laughed no less at seeing, that notwithstanding the reiterated orders issued by the Sorbonne,

to

to mention no more of the bull *Unigenitus*, either in their writings or their theses, the college displayed an attachment the most obstinate to this bull, which it had rejected so long. Nothing more was wanting, it was said, to all the strange things that had happened on this subject, than to forbid without success the faculty of divinity from teaching a doctrine which it cost so much trouble to make them receive. Philosophy, above all, laughed in silence at all these extravagancies, and amused herself with this new change of the scene, waiting with patience for an opportunity of profiting by it. Those among the philosophers who hoped for no good from these quarrels, took the still wiser part, of laughing at the whole. They observed the mutual rancour of the Jansenists and their

adversaries, with that disinterested curiosity with which they observe the combats of animals, well assured, let what would happen, of finding cause to laugh at the expence of some of them. So many blows reciprocally struck on both sides with violence, did not yet reach the Jesuits ; employed on one hand in arming the bishops against the expiring remains of the Jansenists their enemies ; and on the other, in animating, underhand, the court of France against the parliaments, they were the secret soul of all this war, without appearing to intermeddle in it. But the Jansenists, who, in the quarrel concerning the sacraments, had, or at least thought they had, gained ground, grew bolder by degrees, seemed to prepare for a more decisive stroke ;

stroke; and the arch-bishop, their enemy, whetted, without knowing it, by his zeal, the sword with which the society was soon to be pierced.

Two capital errors which the Jesuits committed about that time at Versailles, began to shake their credit, and to prepare from afar their disaster. They refused, as we are assured, through motives of human respect, to take under their direction some powerful personages \*, who had no reason to expect from them a severity so singular in many respects. This indiscreet refusal, it is said, contributed to hasten their ruin by the very hands which they might have

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made

\* It is said that the Jesuits, out of respect to the Queen and Dauphin, refused to undertake the spiritual guidance of La Pompadour. *Appendix to the XXXII. Vol. of the Monthly Review.* p. 499.

made their support: thus these men, who had been so often accused of loose morals, and who had maintained themselves at court by such morals alone, were undone the moment that they wanted (even to their own great regret) to profess severity; an abundant subject for reflexions, and an evident proof that the Jesuits, from the very first till that time, had taken the right way to support themselves, seeing they ceased to be, the moment that they deviated from it. It is added, that at the same time that they displeased the court by their scruples, they displeased it also by their intrigues. They laid, it was said, snares for some men in place, whose crime in their eyes was that of being wanting in devotion to the society, the only

only country which they know : the usual effect of these sorts of attacks is, to strengthen the credit which they do not overthrow ; those who were the objects of the Jesuitical plots obtained but the more favour by that means.

While the Jesuits, rather dreaded than supported by the greater part of the clergy, animated against themselves the parliaments, and alienated the persons of the court who had most credit, they also found the secret to indispose greatly a set of men, less powerful in appearance, but more formidable than is imagined, that of the men of letters. Their declamations, at court and in the city, against the *Encyclopedie* had irritated against them all those who wished well to that work, and who were very numerous : their in-

G. 4.                      vectives



vectives against the author of the *Henriade*, their old pupil, and for a long time their friend, had provoked that celebrated writer, who made them sensibly feel the folly which they had been guilty of in attacking him. Whatever be our strength, or whatever we imagine it to be, we ought never to make ourselves enemies of those who, enjoying the advantage of being read from one end of Europe to the other, are able, with one stroke of their pen, to inflict a signal and lasting vengeance. This is a maxim which favour and power itself ought never to make either individuals, or societies, lose sight of, but which the Jesuits of our times seem to have forgot to their great misfortune. The lion pretends to sleep, suffers the wasp to  
 buz

buzz around his ears; but grows  
 tired at last of hearing it, rouses  
 himself, and kills it. For six years  
 and upwards, the Journalists de Tre-  
 voux, and the light troops which  
 low literature maintained in their  
 pay, abused the celebrated person  
 above mentioned, who seemed not to  
 know it, and suffered them to go on.  
 At length tired of seeing himself har-  
 rassed by so many insects, he tucked up  
 the marauders, and silenced their chiefs;  
 and what is of importance in France  
 to the gaining of a cause, exposed  
 both the one and the other to pub-  
 lick laughter. While he rendered  
 the Jesuits ridiculous, they rendered  
 themselves odious to all the sensible  
 men of the nation, by the spirit of  
 persecution which they preached up  
 in the same Journal de Trevoux, and

the fanaticism which they published in it. The philosophers, as they are called, whom they sought to maltreat, forgot, on their side, no opportunity of avenging themselves in their works; and this they did in a manner the most mortifying to the Jesuits, without too much engaging and exposing themselves. They did not say to them as the Jansenists did, " You are ambitious, intriguing, and knaves:" this accusation would not have humbled the society: they said to them, " You are blockheads; you have not among you a single man of learning, whose name is famous in Europe, and worthy of being so: you boast of your credit; but that credit exists more in opinion than in reality; it is only a house of cards, which will be over-  
 " turned

“turned the moment one blows up-  
 “on it.” They said true, and the  
 event has proved it. To complete  
 their misfortune, the Jesuits, over-  
 whelmed with the blows which  
 they had imprudently drawn upon  
 themselves, had not one single de-  
 fender able to repel them: they had  
 no good writers, nor men of merit  
 in any kind; their new enemies,  
 oppressed by them at Versailles, were  
 too strong for them at the pen; and  
 the value of this advantage is sensibly  
 felt in a nation which loves to read  
 only to amuse itself, and which ends  
 always by declaring for that party  
 which succeeds therein the best. The  
 Jesuits had for them the phantom of  
 their power; their adversaries had  
 France and all Europe.

It

It must be confessed that the Jansenists, who never piqued themselves on being artful, were much more so in these latter times, than they thought for; and that the Jesuits, who value themselves greatly on their finesse, were not at all cunning. They fell like fools into the snare which their enemies had laid for them, without once suspecting it. The Jansenist Gazetteer, excited only by fanaticism and hatred (for that half-witted satyrist knew no better) reproached the Jesuits with pursuing in the Jansenists the phantom of heresy, and of not falling upon the philosophers, who became daily, according to him, more numerous and more insolent. The Jesuits stupidly quitted their expiring prey, to attack men full of vigour,

vigour, who never thought of hurting them: What was the consequence? They have not quieted their old enemies, and have drawn upon themselves new ones, whom they had nothing to do with. They perceive it very plainly now, but it is too late.

Such was the situation of these fathers, when the war kindled between England and France brought upon the society that famous law-suit which ended in its destruction: the Jesuits carried on a trade with Martinico; the war having occasioned them some losses, they wanted to break their correspondents at Lyons and Marseilles; a Jesuit in France, to whom these correspondents addressed themselves for justice, talked to them like the *rat retired from the world*: “My friends,” said the recluse,  
“things

" things below no longer concern :  
 " me ; and what can a poor hermit  
 " assist you in ? What can he do but  
 " pray God to help you in this  
 " affair ? I hope that he will take  
 " some care of you. \* "

He offered to say a mass for them to  
 obtain from God, instead of the money  
 which they demanded, the grace to  
 bear in a *Christian-like* manner their  
 ruin. These merchants, thus robbed  
 and treated like fools by the Jesuits,  
 attacked them in the regular way of  
 justice ; they pretended that these fa-  
 thers, by virtue of their constitutions,  
 were answerable one for the other,  
 and that the Jesuits in France ought  
 to discharge the debts of their mis-  
 sionaries in America. The Jesuits  
 were

• Fontaine, Lib. VII. Fable iii.

were so persuaded of the goodness of their cause, that as they had a right to be judged before the Great Council, they demanded, in order to render their triumph more brilliant and complete, to have the cause brought before the Great Chamber of the parliament of Paris. They lost it there unanimously, and to the great satisfaction of the publick, which testified its joy at it by universal applause: they were condemned to pay immense sums to the parties, with a prohibition to them to meddle with commerce.

This was but the beginning of their misfortunes. In the law-suit which they maintained, it had been debated, whether in reality, by their constitutions, they were answerable one for the other: this question fur-



furnished the parliament with a very natural opportunity of demanding a sight of those famous constitutions, which had never been either examined or approved of with the requisite forms. The examination of these constitutions, and afterward that of their books, furnished *legal* means more than sufficient for declaring their institution contrary to the laws of the kingdom, to the obedience due to the sovereign, to the security of his person, and to the tranquillity of the state.

I say *legal* means; for we ought to distinguish, in this cause, the *legal* means on which the destruction of the Jesuits was founded, from the other motives, no less equitable, of that destruction. We must not believe, that either the constitutions  
of

of these fathers, or the doctrine they are reproached with, were the only cause of their ruin, though they may be the only truly *legal* cause, and the only one of course which should have been mentioned in the decrees issued against them. It is but too true, that several other orders have nearly for principle the same servile obedience which the Jesuits vow to their superiours, and to the pope; it is but too true, that a thousand other doctors and religious orders have taught the doctrine of the power of the church over the temporalities of kings: it was not merely because they thought the Jesuits worse Frenchmen than other monks, that they destroyed and dispersed them: it was because they looked upon them with reason as  
more

more to be dreaded on account of their intrigues and their credit ; and this motive, though not *legal*, is certainly a much better one than was necessary to get rid of them. The national league against the Jesuits resembles that of Cambray against the republick of Venice, which had for its principal cause the riches and insolence of those republicans. The society had furnished the same motives for hatred. The publick were justly displeased at seeing persons of a religious order, devoted by their very profession to humility, to retirement and silence, directing the consciences of kings, educating the gentry, caballing at court, in the city, and in the provinces. Nothing irritates reasonable people more, than men who have renounced the world, and yet  
seek

seek to govern it. This, in the eyes of the wise, was the least pardonable crime of the society : this crime, of which no mention was made, was of greater weight than all those they were loaded with besides, and which, by their nature, were more proper to cause a decree to be pronounced against them in a court of judicature.

The Jesuits have even had the presumption to pretend, and several bishops their partisans have dared to declare it in print, that the great collection of assertions, extracted from the Jesuit authors by order of the parliament, a collection which served as the principal motive for their destruction, ought not to have had that effect : that it was  
 “ compiled

“ compiled in haste by Jansenist  
 “ priests, and ill-attested by magi-  
 “ strates who were unfit for the  
 “ work : that it was full of false  
 “ quotations, passages that were mu-  
 “ tilated or misunderstood, objections  
 “ that were taken for answers :” in-  
 short, of a thousand other unfair  
 things of the like nature. The ma-  
 gistrates took the trouble of replying  
 to these reproaches, and the publick  
 would have excused them : it cannot  
 be denied, that amidst a great number  
 of exact quotations, some errors had  
 escaped : they were acknowledged  
 without difficulty. But could these  
 errors (though they had been much  
 more numerous) prevent the rest  
 from being true? Besides, were  
 the complaint of the Jesuits and  
 their defenders as just as it ap-  
 pears.

appears to be otherwise, who will give himself the trouble of examining so many passages? In the mean time, till the truth be cleared up (if truths of this nature be worth the trouble) this collection will have produced the good which the nation desired, the annihilation of the Jesuits; the reproaches with which we have a right to upbraid them will be more or less numerous; but the society will not exist; that was the important point.

This volume of assertions, extracted from the books of the Jesuits, condemned by the magistrates, had been preceded some years before by the condemnation of the work of the Jesuit Busenbaum, in which the doctrine of king-killing is openly maintained: the copy on which this  
con-

condemnation was pronounced, bore date 1757, the melancholy æra of that attempt which filled France with horror and consternation. The Jesuits have pretended that this date was a forgery of their enemies, who, to render them odious, had caused a new title-page to be prefixed to an old edition: the Jansenists maintained, that the edition was in reality quite new, and proved in a sensible manner how far, and to what a degree of impudence, the Jesuits dared be bad subjects. These Jansenists, so little dexterous in other matters, but very violent and rancorous, had actually persuaded the greater part of the French nation, that the atrocious crime in question was the work of the Jesuits. However, the answers of the criminal to the interrogatories

rogatories put to him, as they were made publick, by no means accused those fathers; but he had been a servant to them, as well as to persons of the opposite party: he had declared this to his judges; the Jesuits (for good reasons without doubt, but which we are ignorant of) were not interrogated, as it seemed they should have been; this was enough to a great part of the publick, to charge them with the crime.

The assassination of the king of Portugal, which happened the year following, and in which the society was again involved, served as a new means to its enemies for maintaining, and making it believed, that the attempt, which shocked all France, was their work. The friends of the Jesuits pretended that they were innocent



nocent of the crime committed in  
 Portugal; that the storm raised  
 against them on this occasion, and of  
 which also they became the victims  
 in that kingdom, was an effect of the  
 hatred which they had drawn upon  
 them, on the part of the prime mini-  
 ster Carvalho, who was all-powerful  
 with that prince. But why should  
 persons of a religious order inspire a  
 minister of state with hatred against  
 them; unless it be because they have  
 rendered themselves formidable to  
 that minister by their intrigues?  
 Why should Mr. Carvalho, who de-  
 tested the Jesuits, leave in peace the  
 Cordeliers, the Jacobins, and the  
 Recollects, unless because he found  
 the Jesuits in his way, and that the  
 others vegetated in peace in their con-  
 vents, without doing the state either  
 good

good or harm ? Every religious and turbulent society merits, on that account alone, that a state should be purged of them ; it is a crime for them to be formidable.

Accordingly the Portuguese minister availed himself dexterously of the imputation laid to the charge of some of these fathers, of having advised, directed, and absolved the assassins, for causing all the Jesuits to be driven out of the kingdom : they were sent to their general, who, it is said, not knowing what to do with these new-comers, left them to perish with hunger and want on board the very vessels which brought them.

M. de Carvalho, when he expelled the Jesuits, caused three of them to be arrested, who had been declared guilty ; but he was not power-

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full enough to procure the Jesuit Malagrida to be put to death, though he passed for the most criminal. The Portuguese populace, ignorant, superstitious, and full of Romish maxims, would not have suffered a religious to be delivered up to the secular arm for a crime deserving of the greatest punishments, because that crime was committed only against a layman: they were obliged, in order to convict Malagrida of a crime against God, which should render him worthy of death, to go and seek out some silly books of devotion, the productions of weakness and of madness, written by that unhappy Jesuit: it was solely for these rhapsodies that he was condemned to the fire of the inquisition, not as guilty of high treason, but as a heretick. They reproached him

him with visions and miracles, of which he had had the folly to boast; they reproached him particularly with having been able, at the age of seventy-five years, to divert himself all alone in his confinement as a young novice would have done; which might also have been looked upon as a kind of miracle, truly worthy of being counted among the others. It was upon motives of this sort that he was condemned to a most cruel death: the arrêt did not even make mention of the parricide of which he was accused; and as M. de Voltaire most excellently remarks, an excess of severity was joined to an excess of folly.

It was matter of pleasantry to observe the embarrassment into which the Jesuits and the Jansenists were

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thrown,

thrown, on account of this victim sacrificed to the inquisition. The Jesuits, devoted till that time to this bloody tribunal, dared no longer take its part, since it had burnt one of their society : the Jansenists who abhorred it, began to think it just, from the moment that it had condemned a Jesuit to the flames. They assured us, and asserted it in print, that the inquisition was not what they had thought it till then, and that justice was done there *with much wisdom and deliberation*. Some magistrates also, till then sworn enemies of the inquisition, seemed at this juncture to soften a little towards it. One of the first tribunals in the kingdom condemned to the fire a writing, in which the Portuguese inquisition was very ill treated on account

count of the punishment of Malagrida : and in the declaration which condemned this writing to the fire, they bestowed many commendations, not wholly on the inquisition itself, but on the *scrupulous examination* in consequence of which the Jesuit was delivered up to the secular arm.

On account of this charge of regicide, so often renewed against the Jesuits, we shall relate here a curious anecdote. It is astonishing, that among so many pieces which have called these fathers *assassins*, not one has made mention of a circumstance indeed little known, but which seems to afford a fine light to their enemies. At Rome, in their church of St. Ignatius, they have caused to be represented in the four corners of the eupola (painted about a hundred years

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since

since by one of their fathers) subjects drawn from the Old Testament; and these subjects are so many assassinations; or at least murders, committed in the name of God by the Jewish people: Jael, who, impelled by the Divine Spirit, drives a nail into Sisera's head, to whom she had offered and given hospitality; Judith, who, conducted by the same guide, cuts off the head of Holofernes, after having seduced and made him drunk; Sampson, who massacres the Philistines by order of the Almighty; lastly, David, who slays Goliath. At the top of the cupola, St. Ignatius, in a glory, darts out flames on the four quarters of the world, with these words of the New Testament; "I came to set fire to the earth; and what would I but that it  
" be

“ be kindled ?” Methinks, if any thing could make known the spirit of the society, with respect to the murderous doctrine that is imputed to them, these pictures would be a stronger proof of it than all the passages which are related from their authors, and which are common to them with many others : but the truth is, that these principles, supported in appearance by the scriptures ill understood, are the principles of the fanatics of all ages ; and we may add, of the greater part of any sect, when they believe it to be their interest to propagate them, and that they can preach them in safety. To them an heretick and infidel prince is a tyrant, and of course a man whom religion and reason order us equally to rid ourselves of. The only thing

H. 4. which



which the Jesuits ought to be reproached with, is that of having forsaken these abominable principles later than others, after having more strongly maintained them; of making particular profession of obedience to the pope, and of a stricter obedience than the other orders; of being, on this account, so much the more to be dreaded in the state, the more they are in credit there, the more dispersed, the more addicted to the ecclesiastical function, and above all to the instruction of youth; of never having expressed themselves frankly and clearly (when they have not been forced to it) on the maxims of government, touching the infallibility of the pope, and the independence of kings; and of having given too much room to understand, that

that they looked upon these maxims as mere local opinions, which might be maintained either pro or con, according to the country in which they found themselves placed. We may say with truth, and without passion, that this manner of thinking breaks forth in all their works, and in those even of the French Jesuits, who have wanted to appear less Romish with respect to our maxims, than their brethren of Italy or Spain.

We must not believe, however, that this submission to the pope, with which the society are so often reproached, is with them an irrevocable doctrine. While the Jesuits preached it in Europe with so much zeal, we may say with madness, to effect the acceptance of the bull which they had drawn up, they op-

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posed

posed in China the decrees which the sovereign pontiffs launched out against them on account of the Chinese ceremonies : they went even so far, as to call in question the pope's authority to decide on subjects of that nature. . So far it is true, that their pretended devotion to the pope was only, as we may say, by way of *inventorial benefit*, and on the tacit condition of favouring their pretensions, or at least of not prejudicing their interests.

However this be, the parallel which has just been made of the doctrine of the Jesuits with the other orders, is, in my opinion, the true point of view from which we should have set out in their destruction. Among so many magistrates, who have written long examinations on  
the

( 155 )

the affair of the society, M. de la Chalotais, attorney-general of the parliament of Bretagne, appears more than any other to have considered this affair like a statesman, a philosopher, an enlightened magistrate, and one disengaged of all spirit of hatred and of party. He has not amused himself with proving laboriously and weakly, that the other monks were better than the Jesuits : he has penetrated farther and deeper : his march to the fight has been more frank and firm. " The monastick  
" spirit," said he, " is the scourge of  
" states : of all those whom this spi-  
" rit animates, the Jesuits are the  
" most hurtful, because they are the  
" most powerful ; it is then with  
" them that we must begin to shake  
" off the yoke of that pernicious race."

It

It seems as if this illustrious magistrate had taken for his device the following verses of Virgil \*.

Ductoresque ipsos primùm, capita alta ferentes  
Cornibus arboreis, sternit; tum vulgus, &  
omnem.

Miscet agens telis nemora inter frondea tur-  
bam.

The war which he has made with so much success upon the society, is only the signal of the examination to which he appears desirous of having the constitutions of the other orders submitted, with a proviso of preserving those, which on such examination shall be judged useful. There are even some particular communities, for example, that of the fraternity called *Ignorantins*, whom he points out expressly to the vigilance of  
the

\* *Æneid* I.

the magistrates, as having already gained silently much ground : however, I know not whether I am mistaken, men who bear a name so little formed to command respect, ought by no means to flatter themselves with succeeding one day to the Jesuits, among a people with whom names are apt to give law : it is necessary, in order to have in France success and enemies, to begin by calling one's-self otherwise.

With regard to the other monks in general, it belongs to the wisdom of government to judge of the method they ought to take with them; but supposing they should one day want to destroy them, or at least to weaken them enough to prevent their being hurtful, there is an infallible way of succeeding therein, without

without employing violence, which must be avoided even with them: this would be to revive the ancient laws, which forbid monastick vows before twenty-five years of age. May the government yield in this respect to the unanimous desire of enlightened citizens!

In expectation of this disaster of the monastick communities and the happiness of the state, let us continue and finish the account of the annihilation of the Jesuits. In spite of the war declared against the society by the magistrates, those fathers did not think their destruction unavoidable: the parliament of Paris, which had given them the first blow, had assigned them a year to judge of their institution: the party which desired their ruin, blind

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with.

with hatred, and knowing neither the laws nor its forms, reproached the parliament with having granted them so long a term: they were afraid, that the friends which they had still left at court, would obtain from the king an evocation to himself alone of the judgement of this affair. These apprehensions appeared so much the better founded, as, in the interval of the time assigned for judgement, they had again received from court pretty striking marks of protection. The parliament, by the arrêt of the 6th of August, 1761, which adjourned them to appear at the end of the year for the judgement of their constitutions, had ordained provisionally the shutting up of their college on the first of October following: the king, notwithstanding the



the representations of the parliament; prorogued this time till the 1st of April; and this prorogation made it be apprehended, that they might obtain marks of favour still more signal. Nobody moreover could imagine that a society, lately so powerfull, could ever be annihilated: their very enemies dared not flatter themselves with it fully; but they wished at least to deprive them, if it were possible, of the two principal branches of their credit, the place of confessor to their kings, and the education of the gentry.

The king, in the midst of all these proceedings, had consulted, on the institutes of the Jesuits, the bishops who were in Paris: about forty among them, either through persuasion or policy, had bestowed the  
greatest

greatest encomiums, both upon the institute and the society: fix were of opinion, that their constitutions should be modified in certain respects: one alone, the bishop of Soissons, declared the institute and the order alike detestable. It was pretended that this prelate (so severe, or so honest) had personal and very grievous subjects of complaint against the Jesuits, who, on a delicate occasion, had deceived, exposed, and sacrificed him. Besides resentment, as they said, and that he wanted to avenge himself of them, this bishop was become Jansenist, and declared chief of a party, which had no longer a head, and was soon to have no members. Unhappily for the Jesuits, the prelate, whom they sought to cry down, was of an unblemished reputation.

reputation in point of religion, probity, and manners : he affirmed, without disguise, that the parliaments were in the right, and that they could not too effectually get rid of a society, equally destructive to religion and to the state.

Nevertheless, a plurality of the bishops being favourable to the preservation of the Jesuits, the king, in order to show deference to their opinion, issued an edict, the object of which was to suffer them to subsist, modifying, in several respects, their constitutions. This edict being carried to the parliament to be registered, met there a general opposition : they made strong remonstrances against it ; and these remonstrances had more success than the parliament itself could have expected.

The

The king, without making any reply to them, withdrew his edict.

In this situation, Martinico, which had already been so fatal to these fathers, by occasioning the law-suit which they had lost, hastened, it is said, their ruin, by a singular circumstance. We received, at the end of March, 1762, the melancholy news of the taking of that colony. This capture, so important to the English, occasioned a loss of several millions to our commerce: the wisdom of the government was desirous of preventing the complaints which so great a loss would occasion to the publick. They bethought them, by way of causing a diversion, of furnishing the French with another subject of conversation; as heretofore Alcibiades thought of cutting off his dog's

dog's tail, in order to prevent the Athenians from talking of weightier matters. They declared then to the principal of the college of the Jesuits, that nothing more remained for them but to obey the parliament, and to put a stop to their lectures, by the 1st of April, 1762. From that time the colleges were shut up, and the society began seriously to despair of its fortune : at length the 6th of August, 1762, the day so wished for by the publick, arrived : the institute was unanimously condemned by the parliament, without any opposition on the part of the sovereign : their vows were declared not binding, the Jesuits secularised and dissolved, their effects alienated and sold ; the greater part of the parliaments, sooner or later, treated them pretty nearly in the

the same manner; some mingled still more rigour in their judgements, and drove them away without other form of process.

They lived therefore dispersed here and there, and wearing the secular habit; but they remained still about the court, and were even in greater numbers there than ever: they seemed there to brave in silence their enemies, and to wait, in order to recover themselves, a more favourable season. It was said pretty loudly, that these foxes were not destroyed, if they proceeded not at last to shut them up in the hole where they thought themselves secure; and that they were not martyrs so long as they were confessors. "They are very sick;" it was added, "perhaps dying, but their pulse yet beats."

They

They were thought to be so little annihilated, notwithstanding their dispersion, that a superior of a seminary, to whom their house for novices was offered, replied, that he would not accept of it, out of fear of *spirits*.

They were not however very far distant from the moment of their total expulsion, and it was again to the inconsiderate zeal of their friends that they owed this obligation. A frantick partisan of the society published, in their defence, a violent treatise, abusing the magistrates, entitled, *It is Time to Speak*. Somebody said then, that the magistrates answer should be, *It is Time to Depart*. Such person was so much the less mistaken, as a new subject of complaint succeeded, to fill up the measure of these

these proceedings. The arch-bishop, of whom we have already made such frequent mention, thought the rights of the church violated by the arrêts of parliament, against vows contracted before the altars : he issued, in favour of the Jesuits, a mandate, which served completely to set the magistrates against them ; some of these fathers were accused of having hawked about the mandate ; some of their votaries, of having vended it : this was, as it were, the signal of the last blow given to the whole body. The parliament ordered, that within the space of eight days, every Jesuit, professed or not professed, who was desirous of remaining in the kingdom, should make oath that he renounced the institution. The term was short ; they did not choose to  
 3 give



give them time to deliberate : it was feared they might hold secret assemblies among themselves ; that they might write to their general to beg his leave to give way to the times ; that by favour of *mental restrictions*, they might take the oath which was required ; that under the cover of this oath they might remain in France, in order to wait there a more favourable juncture ; that they might practise at last the maxim of Acomat in Bajazet :

Promettez ; affranchi du péril qui vous presse,  
Vous verrez de quel poids sera votre promesse.

It is certain that the Jesuits, in signing the oath which was proposed, would have greatly embarrassed the Jansenists their enemies, who sought only a pretext to get them banished, and to whom that pretext would have

have been wanting. It is certain moreover, that as Frenchmen and as Christians they might have signed conscientiously what was required of them: this a writer, by no means well affected in other respects to the society, has proved demonstratively, by a writing which has fallen into my hands, and which will be found in the sequel of this history: but whether it was fanaticism or reason, whether a principle of conscience or human respect, whether honour or obstinacy, the Jesuits did not what they might have done, and what it was feared they would do. These men, who were thought so much disposed to trifle with religion, and who had been represented as such in a multitude of writings, refused almost all to take the oath which was required.

I of

of them: in consequence thereof they had orders to quit the kingdom; and these orders were executed with rigour. In vain several of them represented their age, their infirmities, the services which they had performed; hardly one of their requests was granted. The justice which had been done on the body, was pushed against individuals to an extreme severity, which probably was thought necessary. They wanted to take away from this society, the very shadow of which seemed to terrify even after it no longer existed, all means of springing up again one day; sentiments of compassion were sacrificed to what was deemed reason of state. Nevertheless the implacable Jansenists, irritated by the very recent remembrance of the persecutions which

which the Jesuits had made them undergo, thought that the parliament had not yet done enough: they resembled the Swiss captain, who ordered the dead and the dying to be buried together on the field of battle: it was represented to him, that some of the interred still breathed, and begged only to live: "Pho," said he, "if we were to mind them, there would not be a dead man among them."

It is certain that the greater part of the Jesuits, those who in that society (as elsewhere) interfere with nothing, and who are much more numerous among them than is imagined, ought not, had it been possible, to have been punished for the faults of their superiors: thousands of these innocents were confounded

unwillingly with a score of criminals : nay, further, these innocents were unhappily the only persons punished, and the only ones to be pitied; for the leaders had obtained, by their interest, pensions which they could enjoy at their ease, while the multitude sacrificed remained without bread as well as without support. All that could be alledged in favour of the general decree of expulsion pronounced against these fathers, was the famous passage of Tacitus, relative to that law of the Romans, which condemned to death all the slaves in a house for the crime of a single one : *habet aliquid ex iniquo omne magnum exemplum*; “ every  
 “ great example has somewhat un-  
 “ just in it.” Thus, in the destruction of the Templars, a great number of innocents fell victims to the pride  
 and

and insolent riches of their chiefs: and thus the disorders, of which the 'Templars' were accused, were not the only cause of their destruction; their principal crime was that of having rendered themselves odious and formidable. Posterity will think the same of the judgement issued against the Jesuits, and of the exile to which they have been condemned: they will deem it perhaps severe, at least in appearance, but perhaps also will judge it indispensable: this time alone can decide.

For the rest, independently of the natural compassion which the aged Jesuits, or those sick, and without resource, seemed to claim, and who after all are men, one would think a distinction might have been made, in the oath which was required, between

the professed Jesuits and those who were not so, between those who had already renounced the institution and those who adhered to it still, without being absolutely tied to it. Allow the oath to have been required from the professed Jesuits, whom they wanted to get rid of, such a precaution might have been thought necessary : but was it necessary to require any thing more of the Jesuits who were not professed, than a simple promise that they would not bind themselves to the institution, or any thing else of the ex-Jesuits, than a bare declaration that they had renounced it ? The contrary conduct which was observed, might have preserved to the society subjects who were disposed to quit it, and who were deprived of every other resource : this rigour also might

might restore to the order, members which it had already lost.

In proposing these reflexions, I am very far from disapproving of the conduct of the magistrates; who for just reasons, without doubt, thought it their duty to act otherwise: it is proper however to remark, that several parliaments have thought it their duty, on their parts, to observe a contrary conduct; after having dissolved the institution, they have left the dispersed Jesuits all the rights of subjects: but is it not to be feared, said they, that by preserving them thus in more than one half of the kingdom, they have left to these men, who are thought so turbulent, a means of forming intrigues, so much the more dangerous as they are concealed? Once more, time alone can



inform us which of the judges have taken the best method in this affair; whether the one have not been too rigorous, and whether the others, in wanting to be less so, have not buried the fire under the ashes.

Some parliaments besides had pronounced no sentence against the institution; and the Jesuits subsisted still entire in one part of France. There was room to apprehend, that at the first signal of rallying, the *dispersed* party, suddenly joining the party *united*, might form a new society, even before any should begin a condition to oppose it. The wisdom, and the honour also, of government, seemed to require, that the law, with regard to the Jesuits, whatever it was, should be uniform throughout the kingdom. These  
views

views seem to have dictated the edict, by which the king has just abolished the society throughout all France; but permitting, in other respects, its members to live quietly in their country, under the eye and under the protection of the laws. May these pacifick intentions of our august monarch be crowned with the success which they merit!

It was without doubt the better to fulfill these respectable intentions, that the parliament of Paris, on registering this new edict, ordained the Jesuits to reside each in his own diocese, and to present themselves every six months before the magistrates of the place in which they shall dwell. We know not whether the Jesuits, who are already withdrawn

I 5

into

into foreign countries, will think proper to submit to this constraint. The same arrêt forbids them to come within ten leagues of Paris, which banishes them at least six leagues from Versailles, but prohibits them not from dwelling at Fontainebleau and Compiègne, where the court resides at least three months in the year. It was thought perhaps, that during so short a space of time, their intrigues at court would not be to be dreaded.

On banishing the Jesuits by its first arrêt, the parliament of Paris had assigned them pensions for their subsistence: this mitigation to their exile appeared to many people a contradiction. Wherefore, said they, facilitate a retreat into foreign countries to subjects reputed dangerous, apostles

apostles of regicide, enemies of the state, and who, by refusing to renounce the society, prefer their Italian general to their lawful sovereign? There is no cause, however, for blaming with severity this apparent contradiction; though we should disapprove, in logical rigour, of what it is not our province to decide upon, we ought still more to excuse it, on account of the law of nature which existed before there were Jansenists and Jesuits. Those who have hampered themselves in the institution of the society, did it altogether under the protection of the publick faith and the laws: if they have refused to renounce it, it may be thro' a delicacy of conscience ever to be respected, even in men who are wrong. On sacrificing them to the

I 6

necessity

necessity which was thought indispensable, of no longer permitting Jesuits in France, it would have been inhuman to deprive them of the necessities of life, and to forbid them even the air which they breathe. As to the rest, these reflexions, whether well or ill founded, have no longer place, from the moment that the Jesuits are permitted, without requiring any thing of them, to remain in the kingdom: after having deprived the society of its effects, it is right to furnish its members with the means of subsisting, inasmuch as it is thought possible, without inconvenience, to restore them to the state to which they belong.

Let us not forget, before we conclude this narrative, a singular circumstance, extremely proper to show,  
in

in its true point of view, the pretended concern for religion, with which several of its ministers seek to bedeck themselves. Some bishops, who reside in their dioceses, joined themselves, by their mandates, to the archbishop, defender of the Jesuits : other bishops (who reside not) were ready to join themselves also. The parliament made a shew of wanting to renew, and causing to be observed with rigour, the ancient laws respecting residence : these bishops then were silent, and their menacing zeal expired on their lips. Disconcerted and humbled at their impotence against the enemies of the Jesuits, they will seek perhaps to indemnify themselves, by falling upon the philosophers, whom they accuse, very unjustly, of having communicated

cated to the parliament of Paris their pretended liberty of thinking : even already some of these prélatés, we are assured, have taken this sad and feeble revenge ; like that wretch, on whom, as he was passing, a tile fell from the top of a house, the roof of which was repairing ; and who, to revenge himself, threw stones up to the first story, not having strength, as he said, to throw them higher.

Such has been in this kingdom the fate of the Jesuits : the circumstances of their destruction have been very strange in all respects ; the storm begun at a place where it was expected the least, in Portugal, the most addicted of all the countries of Europe to priests and monks, which appeared not formed for delivering itself so speedily from the

the Jesuits, and still less to set in that respect the example; their annihilation in France was prepared by the rigour which they assumed in spite of themselves; lastly, it was consummated by a dying and abject sect, which has finished, against all expectation, what an Arnauld, a Paschal, and a Nicole, would neither have been able to execute, nor attempt, nor even to hope. What more striking example of that inconceivable fatality which seems to preside over human affairs, and to bring them, when we expect it least, to the point of maturity or destruction? It would make a fine chapter, to add to history the great events which have happened through slender causes.

A well-known writer, speaking in 1759, three years before the destruction



tion of the Jesuits, of the two parties which divided the church of France, said of the most powerful party, " that it would cease soon to exist \* : " some wanted to make these words pass for a prophecy ; but as probably the writer aspires not to the honour of being a prophet, he will confess that on writing this sort of prediction, he was very far from suspecting it was so true. It was plainly seen, that the party till then oppressed began to gain ground ; but nobody could foresee to what a degree it was to oppress, in its turn, that by which it had been till then kept under : fine matter to the enemies of the society, to enforce the validity of their ordinary common-  
place

\* Mélanges de littérature, d'histoire & de philosophie, par M. D . . . . Tom. IV. p. 364.

place sayings, on the Providence of God, in support of what they call *the good cause*.

It is not less singular, that the French nation, at a time when she suffered her weakness to appear abroad, by an unsuccessful war, should have performed this act of vigour at home : it is true, that, on reflexion we shall find perhaps, in the same principle, the cause of so much weakness without, and of such great strength, or, if you please, of such great fermentation within : but this political discussion would carry us too far, and is no part of our subject.

What is more singular still, is, that an undertaking, which would have been thought very difficult, and even impossible at the beginning of 1761, should have been accomplished in

in less than two years, without noise, without resistance, and with as little trouble as they would have had in destroying the Capuchins and the Pickpusses. We cannot say of the Jesuits that their death has been as brilliant as their life. Nay, if any thing ought to humble them, it is that they have perished so pitifully, so obscurely, without lustre and without glory. Nothing better discovers a real weakness, which had only the appearance of strength. The Jesuits will say, without doubt, that they have only executed, and wanted only to execute, literally the precept of the gospel; "When they persecute you in one city, fly into another." But why, after having forgot this precept for two hundred years, have they remembered it so late?

Lastly,

Lastly, what will complete our astonishment is, that two or three men only, who would not have thought themselves destined to effect such a revolution, should have conceived and accomplished this great project : the general impulse given to the whole body of the magistracy was their work, and the fruit of their impetuous activity. Mankind indeed are seldom led by cold and calm spirits. Tranquill reason has not, of herself alone, the warmth so necessary to enforce her opinions, and make us enter into her views : she is content with instructing her age silently, and without bustle, and to become afterwards a mere spectatress of the effect, whether good or bad, which her lessons shall have produced. She resembles, if we may use the

the comparifon, the “ old man of the “ mountain,” at whose voice the young people, his difciples, ran to throw themfelves over precipices, but who took care not to throw himfelf over.

It is true, that this fmall number of men, who fet all the tribunals of the kingdom in motion againft the Je-fuits, found the nation favourably dif-pofed for that fermentation, and eager to fupport it by its difcourfes. We fay *by its difcourfes* ; for in France all that the nation can do, is to fpeak, right or wrong, for or againft, thofe who govern : but it muft be con-feffed alfo, that the publick cry is there held in fome account. Philo-fophy, againft which the Jansenifts had declared war almoft as hot as againft the company of Jefus, had made, in fpite of them, and happily for

for them, sensible progresses. The Jesuits, intolerant by system and situation, were become by it only the more odious: they were considered, if I may so say, as the giants of fanaticism; as the most dangerous enemies of reason, and as those whom it imported most to get rid of. The parliaments, when they began to attack the society, found this disposition in all minds. It was properly philosophy, which by the mouth of the magistrates, issued the decree against the Jesuits: Jansenism was only the solicitor in it. The nation, and the philosophers at its head, wished the annihilation of these fathers, because they are intolerant, persecutors, turbulent, and formidable: the Jansenists desired it, because the Jesuits maintain *versatile*

*fatile grace*, and themselves *efficacious grace*. But for this ridiculous scholastick dispute, and the fatal bull which was the fruit of it, the society would perhaps still exist, after having so often merited destruction, for causes somewhat more real and more weighty. But at last it is destroyed, and reason is avenged.

*Qu'importe de quel bras Dieu daigne se servir ?*

To these reflexions we may join another no less important, and formed to serve as a lesson to all religious orders, which may be tempted to imitate the Jesuits. If those fathers had been prudent enough to confine the credit of the society to what it might draw from the sciences and letters, that credit would have been more solid, less envied, and  
more

more durable. It was the spirit of intrigue and ambition which they displayed, the oppressions which they exercised ; in one word, their enormous power (or what was thought such) and, above all, the insolence which they joined to it, that ruined them. There is no believing to what a height they had carried their audaciousness lately : the following is a pretty recent stroke, which will make them thoroughly known.

Benedict XIV. at the beginning of his pontificate, accepted the dedication of a work, which father Norbert the Capuchin had composed against the Jesuits ; for they were come to that pass, as to arm even the Capuchins against them : *Tu quoque Brute\** !  
cried

\* *And thou too, my dear Brutus !* It is assured that this satyrist gave to the word *Brutus* a more malicious interpretation than we pretend to approve of.



cried a famous satyrist on this occasion. The pope thought he might permit Norbert to remain at Rome under his protection. He had not the power to do it : the Jesuits took their measures so well, that in the end they drove the Capuchin not only out of the pope's territories, but even out of all the Catholick states : he was obliged to fly to London, and found not till 1759 an asylum in Portugal, when the society were driven from thence : he had the satisfaction, as he tells us himself, to assist at the execution of Malagrida, and to say mass for the repose of his soul, while they finished burning his body.

The persecution, so rancorously carried on by the Jesuits against this monk, who was protected by Benedict

( 193 )

dict XIV. had greatly irritated that pope against them ; he omitted no opportunity of giving them, on all occasions, disgust, whenever it was in his power. The Jansenists even doubt not but, if he had lived, he would have availed himself of the circumstance of their destruction in Portugal and France, to annihilate the society : but whatever they may say, it is not probable that a pope, be he what he will, should ever forget so far his own true interests. The Jesuits are the sovereign Pontif's Janissaries, formidable sometimes to their master, like those of the Ottoman Porte, but necessary like them to the support of the empire. It is the interest of the court of Rome to curb and to preserve them : Benedict XIV. had too much sense not to

K think

think so. The Czar Peter, it is true, broke at one time 40,000 Strelitzes, who had revolted, though they were his best soldiers: but the Czar had twenty millions of subjects, and could recruit them with other Strelitzes; whereas the Pope, whose whole power is supported only by the spiritual army under his command, would not be able easily to recruit it with such soldiers as the Jesuits, so well disciplined, so devoted to the church of Rome, and so formidable to the enemies of the sovereign Pontif.

It may be asserted with truth, that Pope Benedict XIV. would have acted better on such an occasion than his successor Clement XIII. He would not, like the latter, have written to a king, who did him the honour of consulting

sulting him, " that the Jesuits must  
 " remain as they were:" he would  
 have returned an equivocal answer,  
 as he did on occasion of the refusal  
 of the sacraments to the Jansenists;  
 he would have gained time; he  
 would have granted the parliaments  
 some modifications in regard to the  
 institution (at least with respect to  
 the French Jesuits); he would have  
 flattered and engaged the Jansenists,  
 by some bull, in favour of *efficacious*  
*grace*: in short, he would have dead-  
 ened or weakened the blows that  
 were aimed at his regiment of guards.  
 But it looks as if, in this affair, the  
 Jesuits and their friends had been  
 seized with a fit of giddiness, and  
 that they did themselves all that was  
 necessary to accelerate their ruin:  
 they shewed themselves, for the first  
 K 2 time,

time, inflexible in a matter, where it was of the highest importance to them not to be so : they caballed in secret, and talked openly at court against their enemies : they cried out, that religion was undone, if we parted with them ; that we drove them away only to establish in France incredulity and heresy : and by these means they cast oil on the fire, instead of extinguishing it. It looks as if the Jansenists had put up to God, for the destruction of the society, the following prayer of Joad in Athalia.

Daigne, daigne, grand Dieu, sur *son chef* &  
sur elle

Répandre cet esprit d'imprudence & d'erreur,  
*De leur destruction* funeste avant-courreur.

Accordingly the Jansenists strongly  
assured us in their bigotted language,  
that

that the *finger of God* was manifest on all parts in this affair: "Alas!" replied a quondam Jesuit, seemingly consoled at being no longer of the order, "you may say, all his four fingers, and the thumb too!"

Thus then was this famous society cut off from amidst us; heaven grant that it may be without return, were it only for the sake of peace, and that we may at last be able to say, *hic jacet*. Its best friends (we are not afraid to assert it) are too good subjects to think the contrary: the re-establishment of this turbulent, irritated, and fanatical society, would do more hurt to the state, than it could, in the opinion even of its own partisans, do good to the church. This event (if Providence please to make it durable) will form not only an epoch,

but, according to many people, a true chronological æra in the history of religion: dates will be reckoned henceforth in that history from *the Jesuitical Hegira* \*, at least in Portugal and in France; and the Jansenists hope, that this new *ecclesiastical computation* will not be long before it be admitted into other Catholic countries. This is the end of those fervent prayers which they put up to God for the greatest good of their enemies, and for bringing about “the return of the society to itself.”

Nothing will be, without doubt, more advantageous and more pleasing to them. It is well known that every Jansenist, provided he can say, with the savages in *Candide*, “Let  
“ us

\* The reader knows that *begira* signifies *flight*, or *expulsion*.

“us have a slice of the Jesuit,” will be at the summit of his happiness and joy: but it remains to know what profit reason (which is full as good as Jansenism) will derive at last from a proscription so greatly desired. I say *reason*, and not *irreligion*: this is a precaution necessary to be taken; for the theology of the Jansenists is, as we have seen, so reasonable, that they are apt to consider the words *reason* and *irreligion* as synonymous. It is certain that the annihilation of the society may be productive of great advantages to reason, provided the intolerant spirit of Jansenism succeed not in credit to Jesuitical intolerance; for we are not afraid to say that, between these two sects, both which are wicked and pernicious, if we were obliged to choose, and supposing them to be

K 4.

invested



invested with the same degree of power, the society, which has just been expelled, would be still the least tyrannical. The Jesuits, a complaisant set of people, provided we declare ourselves not their enemies, give sufficient permission to think as we please. The Jansenists, devoid of consideration as well as abilities, will have us think just as they do: if they were masters, they would exercise over our writings, over our understandings, over our discourses, the most violent inquisition. Happily it is not much to be feared, that they will ever acquire much credit: the rigor which they profess will not make its way at court, where folks are very desirous of being Christians, but on condition that it cost them little; and their doctrine of Predestination  
and

and Grace is too harsh and too absurd not to shock their minds. Let foreigners reproach France as much as they will (it is of small importance) on the little concern she seems to take in her national theatre, so esteemed throughout all Europe, and on the distinguished favour which she bestows on her musick, though despised by all nations: those foreigners, envious of us and our enemies, will not surely ever have the melancholy advantage of reproaching our government with a more material fault, that of taking, for the object of its protection, men without talents, without understanding, unknowing and unknown; after having heretofore carried on a violent persecution against the illustrious and respectable fathers of fo-  
 K 5 pitifull

pitifull a posterity. Furthermore, the nation, which begins now to be enlightened, will probably grow enlightened more and more. Disputes concerning religion will be despised, and fanaticism will be held in horror. The magistrates, who proscribed the fanaticism of the Jesuits, are men of too much understanding, too good subjects, too much fitted for the age they live in, to suffer another fanaticism to succeed it : even already some of them (among others Mr. de la Chalotais) have explained themselves so openly as to displease the Janse- nists, and to merit the honour of being placed by them in the rank of philosophers. That sect seems to say like God, whose language it so often and so abusively makes use of, " He that is not for me is  
 " against

“ against me :” but it will not thereby make the more proselytes. The Jesuits were regular troops, bred and disciplined under the standard of superstition : they were the Macedonian phalanx, which it imported reason to see broken and destroyed. The Jansenists are only Cossacks and Pandours, of whom reason will have a cheap conquest, seeing they will fight singly and dispersed. In vain will they cry out as usual, that it is sufficient to shew an attachment to religion, to be reviled by *modern philosophers*. It will be replied to them, that Paschal, Nicole, Bossuet, and the writers of the Port-Royal, were attached to religion ; and that there is not one *modern philosopher* (at least, one worthy of that name) who does not revere and ho-

nour them. In vain will they imagine, that because they succeeded to the Jansenism of Port-Royal, they are to succeed also to the respect which it enjoyed : it is as if the valets de chambre of a great lord should want to make themselves be stiled his heirs, because they inherited a few of his cast clothes. Jansenism, in the Port-Royal, was a blemish which it effaced by great merit : in its pretended successors it is their sole existence ; and what, in the age wherein we live, is an existence so poor and ridiculous ?

Accordingly it need not be doubted but the destruction of their enemies will soon bring on theirs, not with violence, but by slow degrees, by insensible transpiration, and through a necessary consequence of the contempt

tempt with which that sect inspires all sensible people. The Jesuits, driven out by them, and dragging them along with themselves in their fall, may put up, from this instant, to their founder St. Ignatius, the following prayer for their enemies, "Father, pardon them, for they know not what they do."

To speak seriously, and without circumlocution, it is time that the laws should lend reason their aid for the annihilation of that party-spirit, which has so long disturbed the kingdom with ridiculous controversies; controversies, we are not afraid to assert it, more fatal to the state than infidelity itself, when it seeks not to make proselytes. A great prince, it is said, reproached one of his officers with being a Janfenist or Molinist,

Enist, I know not which : they told him he was mistaken, for that the officer was an Atheist : “ If he be “ only an Atheist,” replied the prince, “ that is another affair, and I have “ nothing to say to it.” This answer, which some have wanted to turn into ridicule, was however extremely wise : the prince, as head of the state, has nothing to fear from an Atheist, who is silent, and dogmatizes not. Such a wretch, while extremely culpable in the eyes of God and of reason, is hurtful only to himself, and not to others : the party-man, the disputant, disturbs society by his idle controversies. In this case that law of Solon prevails not, by which all who took not some side in the troubles of the state were declared infamous. That great legislator was

too

too knowing to rank in this number the controversies concerning religion, so ill calculated to interest good subjects; he would rather have made it an honour to shun and to despise them.

Our gloomy theological quarrels confine not to the limits of the kingdom the injury and hurt they do us: they debase, in the eyes of Europe, our nation, already too much humiliated by her misfortunes: they make strangers, and even the Italians, say, "That the French know not how to be warm, excepting for billets of confession, or for buffoons, for the bull Unigenitus, or for the comick opera \*." Such is the very unjust idea which a hand-full

\* This is what a thousand French have heard said in England, in Germany, and even at Rome.



full of fanaticks give to all Europe of the French nation, at a time nevertheless when the truly estimable part of that nation are more enlightened than ever, more taken up about useful objects, and fuller of contempt for the follies and the men that disgrace it.

It is not only the honour of France which is interested in the annihilation of these vain disputes; the honour of religion is still more concerned in it, on account of the obstacles which they oppose to the conversion of unbelievers. I will suppose that one of those men, who have had the misfortune, in our times, to attack religion in their writings, and against whom the Jesuits and the Jansenists have equally exerted themselves, should address at the same time the

two

two most intrepid theologists of each party, and speak to them thus : “ You  
 “ are right, gentlemen, to cry out  
 “ shame against me, and it is my in-  
 “ tention to repair it. Dictate to me  
 “ then in concert a confession of faith  
 “ proper for the purpose, and which  
 “ may reconcile me first with God,  
 “ and afterwards with every one of  
 “ you.” On the very first article of the  
 creed, “ I believe in God the Father  
 “ Almighty,” he would infallibly set  
 by the ears the two Catechists, by  
 asking them if God is equally power-  
 ful over the heart and over the body ?  
 “ Without doubt,” the Jansenist  
 would aver : “ Not quite so,” the Je-  
 suit would mutter. “ You are a  
 “ blasphemer,” the former would  
 cry ; “ And you,” would reply the  
 second, “ a destroyer of the freedom  
 “ and

“ and the merit of good works.”  
 Both addressing themselves afterward  
 to their profelyte, would say to him,  
 “ Ah, Sir, infidelity is still better  
 “ than the abominable doctrine of  
 “ my adversary : beware of confiding  
 “ your soul to such bad hands. If  
 “ the blind,” says the Gospel, “ lead  
 “ the blind, they will both fall into  
 “ the ditch.” It must be owned,  
 that the blind infidel would find him-  
 self a little embarrassed between two  
 men, who offer each to serve him as  
 guide, and yet mutually charge each  
 other with being blinder than him.  
 “ Gentlemen,” would he say to them,  
 without doubt, “ I thank you both  
 “ for your charitable offers : God has  
 “ given me, to conduct me in the  
 “ dark, a staff, which is reason, and  
 “ which you say will lead me to the  
 “ faith :

“ faith : well, I will make use of  
 “ this salutary staff, and I will draw  
 “ from it more utility than from you  
 “ two.”

Nothing more remains then to government and the magistrates, for the honour of religion and the state, than to repress, and render alike contemptible, both parties. We say it with so much the more confidence, as nobody calls in doubt the impartiality of the wise depositaries of justice, and the hearty contempt which they have for these absurd contests, the dangerous effects of which their office has required them to prevent. With what satisfaction will wise and enlightened subjects see them complete their work? Ought not the Jansenist Gazetteer and the Convulsionaries

sionaries \* to expect from them, on the first occasion, the same treatment as the Jesuits; with this difference, however, which we are to put (in point of honour) between the punishment of a revolted noblesse, and that of a turbulent populace? The Jesuits uttered their dangerous maxims in open day: the Convulsionaries and the Jansenist Gazetteer preach and print their extravagancies in the dark. The obscurity alone with which these wretches envelope themselves, can shield them from the fate which they merit: perhaps also there needs to destroy them only to drag them out of that obscurity, only to order the Convulsionaries (under pain of whipping) to

\* It is assured, that the day after the expulsion of the Jesuits, the Convulsionaries began to foretell it. It is thus that they have always prophesied; and what is very surprising, they have never been mistaken.

to exhibit their disgusting farces; not in a garret, but in a fair, for money, among dancers on the rope, and players with cups and balls, who will soon bring them down : and as to the Jansenist Gazetteer (under pain of being led through the streets upon an ass) of printing his dull libel not in his garret, but at an authorised bookseller's, at the publisher's, for example, of the *Christian Journal*, so widely circulated, and so deserving of being so. Convulsionaries and gazetteers will vanish, the moment in which they shall have lost the little merit which remains to them, that of *clandestineness*. In a very short time the name of the Jansenists will be forgotten, as that of their adversaries is proscribed; the destruction of the one; and the disappearance of the

the

the others, will leave no longer any trace to recollect them by : this event, like those which have preceded it, will be effaced and buried by those which shall follow ; and nothing at most will remain of it but that French witticism, that the chief of the Jesuits is a broken captain, who has lost his company.

To conclude, we shall observe that the title of *Society of Jesus* is still one of the reproaches which the Jansenists cast on the Jesuits, as a too proud denomination ; by which they seemed to attribute to themselves alone the quality of Christians : this is a pretty slight subject of quarrel, and proves only what we have already said, that hatred has formed weapons of every thing to attack them. The true crime of the society,  
we

we cannot repeat it too often, is not the being called the *Company of Jesus*, but the having been really a company of intriguers and fanaticks; the having endeavoured to oppress every thing which gave it umbrage; the having wanted to domineer in every thing; the having intermeddled in all affairs and all factions; the having fought, in a word, rather to render themselves necessary than useful.

The spirit of giddiness, which has occasioned the misfortune of the Jesuits in France, seems to announce to them a like fate in the rest of Europe. They have long been cried down in the territories of the king of Sardinia, and the republick of Venice; and the little existence they yet preserve there, may very possibly be shaken anew by the shocks which  
they



they have just felt elsewhere: their conduct in Silesia, during the last war, has not disposed favourably towards them a prince, in other respects an enemy to superstition and the monkish race: the house of Austria, which has so long protected them, begins to be tired of them, and to find out what they are; and they have all room to fear, lest the bomb, which has burst in Portugal and in France, should dart some of its splinters against them into all parts of Europe.

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**W**E shall close this treatise with the queries, of which mention has been made above, respecting the oath which was required of the Jesuits: they are proposed in such a manner,

manner, that there seems to be no doubt, either as to the answer to be made to each, or consequently as to the part which these fathers should have taken. It appears, in the writings published on this subject by the Jansenists and the Jesuits, as if they had made it their business to deviate from the true point of view of the question. Instead of the idle declamations which have been printed on both sides, the author seems to have meant to substitute a little logick : this is the secret for abridging a number of controversies, which the rhetorick of lawyers and of mandates would perpetuate to eternity.

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Q U E-

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## Q U E R I E S. \*

### I.

**A**RE not the king, or the magistrates who represent him, competent judges for deciding, whether a religious institution be conformable or contrary to the laws of the kingdom?

### II.

Is it necessary that the spiritual power concur with the temporal, for this decision, which is purely civil?

Did

\* These queries appear to have been written in the interval between the arrêt, which ordains the Jesuits to take the oath, and the arrêt which banished them. It was thought they might be useful, if any unforeseen circumstance should seem one day to require the Jesuits to be forced to renounce expressly the institution.

## III.

Did not the king's subjects, who submitted themselves to this institution, submit thereto, on the supposition, nay, in the persuasion, that the king and the state approved thereof?

## IV.

If the king, or the magistrates who represent him, having at first permitted or tolerated the institution, come afterwards to be of opinion, that it is contrary to the laws of the kingdom, would the king's subjects, who had subjected themselves to this institution, and who took the resolution of renouncing it, wound thereby their consciences?

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Does

## V.

Does the renunciation of the institution import a renunciation of the vow of *chastity* and that of *poverty*, which they had taken, and which neither the king nor the magistrates can hinder them from observing ?

## VI.

Is it making an attempt upon the rights of the spiritual power, to declare that their vow of obedience, (considered only in a civil light) is inconsistent with the obedience which they have vowed from their birth to their lawful sovereign ; an obedience, by virtue of which they live in the territories of that sovereign, under the protection of the laws ?

If

## VII.

If the vow which they have made as subjects, be declared contrary to that which they have made as monks, is not this second vow null of itself, being destroyed by a vow more ancient and more sacred?

## VIII.

If they think themselves, notwithstanding this consideration, engaged by their vow of *obedience*; if they prefer a religious state to that of subjects; can, nay indeed ought not the prince, or the magistrates who represent him, to declare, that they have forfeited the rights of subjects, and oblige them to quit a state of which they refuse to be members?

## IX.

Have not the professed monks, who shall renounce the institution, and who are bound besides, by their vow of *poverty*, and by the renunciation of their effects, a right to require the state to charge itself with their subsistence?

## X.

Would professed monks, who on refusing to renounce their vow of *obedience*, should receive either from the court, or their friends \*, notwithstanding their vow of *poverty*, pensions much greater than is necessary for their subsistence, prove by this conduct, that they were much less attached

\* As the Jesuits of Versailles, and some others of the principal have done.

attached to *their* vow than to their General; that they refused much more through pride than through religion, to renounce the society; that they were, in a word, more Jesuits than Christians?

### XI.

Ought not those professed monks, who shall renounce the institution, at the same time, in order to put out of dispute their religion and their honour, to declare the motives of attachment to their sovereign and their country, which oblige them to that renunciation, and to demand a juridical act of that declaration?

### XII.

Is it necessary to require of the *non-professed* monks, any thing more

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than



than a mere juridical declaration, that they have made no vows; and a promise of not making any?

### XIII.

And with regard to those who voluntarily renounced the institution, before the arrêt, which requires the oath, is it necessary to require of them any thing else than a simple juridical declaration that they have renounced it?

### XIV.

Will not the Jesuits equally embarrass the Jansenists their enemies, whether they take the oath which is required, or whether they take it not? If they take it, they deprive their inveterate enemies of the hope and the pleasure of seeing them banished;

nished ; if they refuse to take it, they refuse, without reply, the imputation which has been so often cast upon them, of sporting with religion and with oaths ? In the first case they disconcert hatred ; in the second they confound calumny. Which side ought they to take ? That of disconcerting hatred, and of confounding calumny both at once ; in joining to the oath, which is required of them, the declaration, the substance of which is contained in the XIth Query, and of which we shall give below the formula.

## XV.

What scourge have been the disputes concerning religion, and in particular the absurd and miserable contest of Jansenism, which for upwards of a

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hundred years has made so many persons unhappy in one of these two parties, and which now is likely to make as many in the other !

## XVI.

What a happiness, for nations and for kings, is the banner of philosophy, which by inspiring for those frivolous disputes the contempt which they merit, is the only means of preventing their becoming dangerous ?

## XVII.

Who is the author of these reflexions ? A Frenchman, attached solely to his country, who interests himself neither for *versatile grace*, nor *victorious delectation* ; who is neither of any sect, nor of any order, neither

neither of the congregation of *messieurs*, nor of the troop of St. Médard ; who has neither received money from the General of the Jesuits, nor been whipped with rods in the garrets of the Convulsionaries ; who wishes that men would live in peace, and that so much hatred, excited by whims, so many *profound* acts of knavery, occasioned by *senseless* disputes, so many evils, in short, brought about by so many follies, should teach them at last to be wise.

So be it.

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*A form of declaration for the professed monks.*

**I** The undersigning, a professed monk of the late society called of Jesus, declare, that when I subjected myself to the institution and government of that society, I supposed, as an indispensable condition of that engagement, that it had the approbation of the king my lawful sovereign ; his majesty having declared since, in an unequivocal manner, by the mouth of the magistrates, depositaries of his authority, the incompatibility of my vow of obedience, with that more ancient and sacred vow which I have made to my king and to my country, and finding myself

myself obliged to choose the one or the other of these vows, which I can no longer observe together, I think myself bound, in honour and in conscience, to hold by that which I made as a Frenchman and subject of his majesty : it is through this sole motive that I renounce living, henceforward, under the authority of the institution, and the government of the said society ; not intending, however, to renounce the vow of poverty, and that of chastity, which I have made, and the observance of which no motive can forbid me ; promising anew to God and to the church, as far as is necessary, to preserve the virtue of perfect continence, and to receive from those, who shall think proper to provide me with subsistence, only just what is absolutely

absolutely necessary to that very subsistence, pursuant to the precept of St. Paul. In confirmation whereof I have signed the present declaration, of which I demand the enrollment, in order to discharge, at once, without any view either of interest or human respect, what I owe to God and my king.

*Done at Paris this . . . . .*

*A forme*

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*A form of declaration for the non-  
professed Jesuits.*

**I** The undersigning . . . . . declare, that not being bound yet by the vows of profession to the late society called of Jesus, and the king my sovereign having forbidden all his subjects, by the mouth of the magistrates, depositaries of his authority, to bind themselves to that institution, I promise and swear, as a good and faithful subject of his majesty, not to engage myself in the said society, by any vow whatever. In confirmation, &c.

*A form*



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*A form of declaration for the ex-Jesuits.*

**I** The undersigning declare, that in the month of . . . . . and year of . . . . . before the arrêt of the court of . . . . . which requires of the late Jesuits the renunciation of that institution, I made voluntarily that renunciation, of which the pieces hereunto annexed are vouchers.

**F I N I S**



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**This book is under no circumstances to be  
taken from the Building**

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