

**THE STUDIES AND TEACHING
OF THE SOCIETY OF
JESUS AT THE TIME OF ITS
SUPPRESSION, 1750-1773**

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The Studies and Teaching of the Society of Jesus at the Time of Its Suppression, 1750-1773 by M. L'abbe Maynard

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M. L'ABBE MAYNARD

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THE
STUDIES AND TEACHING
OF THE
Society of Jesus,
AT THE
TIME OF ITS SUPPRESSION,
1750-1773.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF
M. L'ABBE MAYNARD,
HONORARY CANON OF MOULIERS; PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC AT POMLEVOT.



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Translator's Preface.

THE translator deems that he is performing a good office to the cause of truth, in laying before the American public the facts recorded in the present work. Every day is the Society of Jesus assailed by calumny, libels are widely circulated, and with malicious ingenuity is history perverted; but rarely is a voice, at least one speaking our tongue, raised in its defence, and with difficulty could an impartial man obtain, in our language, a statement of facts, upon which a candid and dispassionate judgment could be based.

To aid in disseminating some of these facts has been the object of the translator. He does not pledge himself to the advocacy of every opinion expressed by the author. In the controversy which originated the present work, a controversy whose existence he deprecates, he does not in any manner participate. He would not have been induced to undertake this trans-

lation, had he not regarded the discussion with Father Theiner as merely incidental, and in nowise affecting the value of the facts narrated.

Even in times like the present, in times of prejudice and fanaticism, there are men whose nobleness of soul elevates them above the region of contending passions: to such the work is principally addressed.

For the loyal Catholic no other defence of the Society of Jesus will be requisite, than to remind him, that it was founded with the sanction of the Holy See, that it flourished under its protecting care, that, though suppressed, it never was condemned, even by the Pope who suppressed it, that after an experience of the void occasioned by its extinction, the Sovereign Pontiff recalled it to life at the earnest supplication, and with the unanimous applause of the Catholic world. No one then can be a dutiful son of the Holy See, and be hostile to the Jesuits. Still it would be satisfactory to every Catholic inquirer, it is sheer justice to the characters of injured men, that every slanderer should be rebuked, and every falsehood encounter a crushing rejoinder. But how reply to these countless attacks? The time and patience of the defender will be spent, before the inventions of his mendacious opponents are exhausted.

It seemed to the translator, that the Jesuits should be defended particularly in their capacity of teachers. That they might discharge the duties of instruction was the primary object of their restoration: teaching is the principal end of their Institute, and against them, as teachers, the storm of persecution is especially directed. Let them but close their schools, and the strife will cease. Louis Philippe and his government would tolerate them as simple missionaries, and permit them to labor in Algeria: the German Sovereigns would allow them to preach, and to administer the sacraments, and Espartero would suffer them to exist in the Philippines. Does not every one see that other religious orders would share more largely than they do in the persecution for Christ's sake, were it not that the teaching order inspires peculiar hatred, and excites the most determined opposition? How well the enemies of religion appreciate the truth, so clearly seen by St. Ignatius of Loyola, that he who guides the youth, directs the destinies of the man! How well they know, that upon their success in perverting education, depends the accomplishment of their object—the triumph of error! Once, already, this plan has succeeded: with what consequences, the bloody pages recording the aberrations of the past generation will attest.

Thinking, therefore, that as teachers the Jesuits are particularly to be cherished and protected, the diffusion of Abbé Maynard's work seemed to the translator greatly to be desired. It was alleged, that the Society of Jesus, at the time of its suppression, no longer produced eminent men; and it was said (with all the experience of modern times before us), that its utility had ceased. To the former charge Abbé Maynard replies, by reading the roll of her distinguished children: to the latter, by pointing out the mischievous consequences of the suppression, especially in Portugal and Germany. He does not tell us of those flourishing missions in foreign lands, made desolate by the brief *Dominus ac Redemptor*: he does not narrate the elation, the sanguine hope of further conquest, conceived by the enemies of religion, upon obtaining this their first victory. These topics would be foreign to his thesis. Nor does he dilate upon the results of the suppression in France; for he wrote for Frenchmen, to whom all he could teach on this point was already familiar. But the effects of the suppression in Germany and Portugal; the dissemination of Jansenistic and infidel opinions; the corruption of morals that ensued: these were subjects not before touched upon—were subjects worthy of his pen, and fruitful

in useful lessons for the lover of religion and social order.

From the perusal of the Abbé's work, and from a diligent consideration of the facts he presents, it will be manifest, that it is of the utmost importance to preserve in the Church a body of teachers capable of giving instruction in the highest branches of education, that the Jesuits were the only body which aimed at fulfilling these duties, that to the discharge of them they were fully competent.

That Catholic education is necessary, reason evinces, experience has taught, and the Sovereign Pontiff and the Bishops, many of whom are now making such strenuous exertions, and undergoing such sacrifices to erect universities and colleges, authoritatively declare. But single colleges and universities will not satisfy the wants of Catholic youth. There may be isolated institutions perfectly unobjectionable, even highly commendable. To mention no others, one, at least, there is in our own country—"the mother of Bishops," of edifying priests, of highly accomplished, and truly Catholic laymen. From her fair fame, gained by so many services rendered to Catholicity in the United States, no advocate of the Jesuits should, even by inference, detract. The translator would, on the contrary, join his feeble voice to the