

he was leaving, and next day left Mantua, he thought, for ever.¹

¹ Professor Tozzi printed another letter which that same day Aloysius wrote to Acquaviva: the letter is, however, regarded as unauthentic: it runs as follows:

My Lord and Father Most Reverend in our Lord,

This very day I have stripped off the dress of the 'old man,' and have put on vestem novi hominis—that of the 'new man,' whereof I inform Your Reverence and assure you that I do not know how to thank God for so great a grace most blessed, all the more so as to-day He has deigned to give me a new consolation, permitting me to follow Him in poverty; for my father is no more prepared to assign to me what he had promised and to which he had bound himself. However he will pay for my journey and incidentals. I pray the blessed God that He will do all for the best and, if He also thinks it expedient, that my Lord Father find himself in a situation to fulfil his promise in favour of the Society. However I have letters ad hoc both from the Superiors of the college here and from my Lady Mother which I will present to Your Reverence, whom genibus humiliter flexis ex toto corde—kneeling humbly, and with all my heart—I pray for the love of God to receive me out of charity into the harbour of escape and safety and quam-primum—so soon as may be—for I will make efforts not to prolong overmuch the visits that I must pay during my journey, and to conclude I kiss your hands: Mantua, Nov. 2, 1585.

CHAPTER VII

TENDIMUS IN PATRIAM

*The song of all both high and low
To some blest vision true
The song of Kings of Kingdoms when
They rise above their fortunes men
And crown themselves anew—
And gladness in a fight
And song of some at holy war
With spell and ghouts more dread by far
Than deadly seas and cities are
Or hordes of quarrelling Kings.*

RALPH HODGSON: *The Song of Honour.*

THE retinue was large. Don Luigi Cattaneo was the chaplain; Giovanni Battista Bono, a doctor, who conducted the expedition; del Turco, his old tutor, went with him. To Ghizoni, his special valet, who had never left him since boyhood, he said good-bye at Mantua, and left him weeping his heart out: other servants now replaced him. There were many others besides these, and Rodolfo came in the carriage as far as the river. There Aloysius said good-bye to him, but scarcely spoke. On the boat, one of his gentlemen said that Rodolfo must be delighted at succeeding thus to the Marguisate: 'Not half so glad,' repeated Aloysius, 'as I am to have got rid of it!' Down the wide river they sailed to Ferrara to say good-bye to the Duke, Alfonso d'Este, who had married his kinswoman Margherita Gonzaga. Turning his back on that tremendous and tragic castle, destined now to so short a life before the Popes seized the duchy, he made for Bologna, intending to visit first the Grand Duke of Tuscany at Florence, and to go thus to Loreto, to fulfil his mother's vow, made at his birth. It is true that she had been dispensed from it but he wished none the less to prove his gratitude for the care that God had shown him ever since childhood. However, at the frontiers of Tuscany, at a place called Pietra Mala, he was turned back, as being unable to prove he had not passed through spots that were plague-stricken. The escort insisted, making the most of the Gonzaga name: useless: they

F. A. 10.04.044





Frontispiece

The woodcut, by Mr. ERIC KENNINGTON, symbolises the Vocation of Aloysius Gonzaga. The Saint, a man of bronze, kneels on a rock amid the swirl of things; but the bronze lives, thrilled by the deluge of the Holy Ghost. Aloysius has to respond in his own way to Christ, who, though He was God, abdicated the external homage due to God, taking a servant's form, and "humbling Himself" even to a death upon a cross. Aloysius, with all his will, responds. The strain is still seen as terrific: peace is not yet consummated; but victory will be absolute.

THE VOCATION
OF
ALOYSIUS GONZAGA

by
C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J.

LONDON
SHEED & WARD
1945

FIRST PUBLISHED 1927
 BY SHEED AND WARD, LTD.
 110/111 FLEET STREET
 LONDON, E.C.4
 REPRINTED 1945

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 BY FURNELL AND SONS, LTD.
 PAULTON (SOMERSET) AND LONDON