

Chapter 2

The Impact of the Tradition of Christian Piety Upon Ignatius

THERE is no ideal of perfection in the Church that did not have to prove its genuineness by the manner in which it fitted into the framework of the visible Mystical Body of Christ. Hence every Christian ideal of perfection represents an historical fact of tradition, because the Church of its very nature is something that has been handed down by the Apostles through the Fathers. In the history of the Church, every form of asceticism and mysticism that tried in pure intellectual pride to break away from humble dependence on the heritage of the past; or that sought to overleap the centuries in order to see in a former, primitive Church its ideal and pretended that all further growth and development was simply an excess and departure from the true path, has ended up in subjectivism and sterility. This is the profound thought expressed in the preface to the Ignatian Constitutions, where, among other scales of measurement, we find the "spirit of love" also measured by the examples of the

saints. Ignatius sets down there merely what he personally experienced from the first moment of his conversion. His ideal of perfection is also enkindled by the example of saints and consequently follows a pattern that can be accurately indicated from historical sources. "But in that castle none of the books he habitually and so passionately read were to be found; so they gave him *The Life of Christ* and *The Lives of the Saints*, both in Spanish." ²⁰ In these words Ignatius describes the exact point at which the stream of traditional Christian perfection began to enter his soul. But the reason this contact acted so powerfully toward bringing about a new life in Ignatius was that, in some way or other, he had already been prepared for it. Consequently, we must now consider two things: first, the remote preparation of his soul for the appeal of the traditional voices of Christian perfection; and secondly, the actual process of this contact and its essential consequences in the forming of his ideal.

I. Ignatius' Preparation

The primitive form in which contact with Christian tradition is usually established within the soul is the religious training in the parental home. Inigo was not a mere "untutored barbarian" in matters of piety. He has been described as such at various times and by various authors in order to make the startling character of his sudden conversion stand out in sharper contrast.²¹ He had not only a noble but also a pious education. Both he and his most intimate fellow Jesuits always deemed it worthwhile to insist that he had constantly remained

faithful to his religion from youth, with an irreproachable, never-doubting fidelity. "In my country we have no Jews," was the retort of Ignatius to the ecclesiastical inquisitor at Alcala.²² That was a pregnant phrase in the Spain of those days. Nadal penned the following words in regard to him in after years: "Ignatius is a Spaniard, an offspring of the best nobility of Guipuzcoa, of a family in which stainless faith has ever been preserved intact. The zeal for, and constancy in, their religion among the inhabitants was so great, and their adherence to their faith so stubborn, that they would not suffer any converts to live with them; nay, from immemorial times, from the days when Christianity was first planted in that land, no one has ever been found who had incurred even the suspicion of heresy."²³

This primitively Christian environment of his native land was introduced into the Loyolan household by Magdalena de Araoz, the wife of Inigo's eldest brother, when she became chatelaine of Loyola castle. She had brought with her as a part of her dowry the beautiful picture of the Annunciation still extant in the domestic chapel of Loyola, before which Inigo often prayed; she brought also the four large de luxe volumes of *The Life of Christ* which had just then appeared in Spanish and which would soon play such an important role in Inigo's conversion. Her advent evidently brought into the whole household a spirit of Spanish-Castilian refinement and culture, of fresh devotion. From that period of his early life, Inigo kept an eye for religious works of art; and, at the very eve of his setting out for Manresa, we behold him still expending the last ducats of his pay from the

Duke of Najera "to have a picture of our blessed Lady which was in poor condition restored as beautifully as possible."²⁴ At any rate, some fleeting memories of spiritual things may still have survived from the days when, with the aid of a pedagogue, his father had made his sad attempts to enroll him into the clerical militia. In Arevalo, however, at the court of Don Juan de Cuellar, Inigo stepped into a spiritual world that left unmistakable traces in the life of his soul.

At that time, owing to the piety of Don Juan and of two ladies, his wife and mother-in-law, both of whom rivalled him in devotion, Arevalo was the focal center of the new Franciscan spirit of reform—a reform which the genius-like figure of Cardinal de Cisneros had taken under his wing. Here, and afterwards in the palace of the Duke of Najera at Navarette, Inigo came into contact for the first time with a tradition of spiritual life which had made itself vividly felt. In the convent of the Poor Clares at Arevalo, founded by Don Juan de Cuellar, hymns were sung which had been composed by the Franciscan, Fray Ambrosio de Montesino, in honor of St. Francis of Assisi and dedicated to Dona Maria de Guevara, the Basque mother-in-law of Don Juan and friend of the youthful Inigo. Undoubtedly, Inigo was familiar with the verses which celebrate in song (and in a typically Spanish fashion) the *poverello* as the brave *caudillo*, laying siege to the three menacing fortresses of the world, the flesh, and the devil.²⁵ His later interest in the heroic figure of St. Francis is bound up with such recollections. Fray Ambrosio (who also translated into Spanish Ludolph of Saxony's *The Life of Christ* and so

made it possible for the wounded Loyola to read this work) dedicated still another book of verses, entitled *The Way of the Cross*, to the Duchess of Najera. Again there can be no doubt that Inigo read these poems at Navarrete. There is not the least doubt that in these years so fruitful for his spiritual life, Inigo read the epic of another poet, *Triumphs of the Apostles* by Juan de Padilla. At that time Inigo, strange to say, even tried his hand at writing verses himself! "It would be curious to see," observes Astrain, not without a tinge of irony, "what the poetry of this man would be like since he had so much difficulty in writing prose all his life long."²⁶ Inigo wrote an epic at that time on St. Peter, the Prince of the apostles,²⁷ for whom, as he himself confesses, "he had a very special devotion."²⁸ It is no wonder that the Saint of the hastily drawn sword, the patron of the Basque hermitage at Eguimendiga near Loyola castle, the patron likewise of the fortress church at Arevalo, where the page had to spend so much time at divine services, must have had a special appeal for him. Undoubtedly, the fine songs of Juan de Padilla composed in honor of St. Peter furnished him a model for his own poems. The *Triumphs of the Apostles* by this poet occasionally gives a glowing description of the beauties a pious soul can find in the Carthusian monastery of Santa Maria de las Cuevas at Seville; as a consequence, several years afterwards, while tied to his bed at Loyola, Inigo conceived a lively desire to enter this far-distant monastery, and not the Carthusian monastery of Miraflores at Burgos, as some have falsely imagined, though the latter would certainly have been nearer for a Basque.²⁹ From

all of this we can conclude that Inigo did read the poems of de Padilla. Consequently, there was, on the one hand, a possibility of effecting a connection between these and many other religious impressions, even though these were vague and half-understood, and, on the other, the future struggle between the good and bad spirits in the soul of Inigo. How strange a mixture the religious milieu at Arevalo and Navarrete and his still unpurified worldly spirit had formed in the heart of Inigo, we learn from an observation of his cousin, Father Araoz, who knew him well. He says, "Just before engaging in a duel, he used to compose verses in honor of our Lady."³⁰ Here we have the same old Inigo who even after his conversion, in order to vindicate the insulted honor of our Blessed Lady, wished to stab the offending Moor with his dagger.³¹

As yet "he was blind, yet full of desire to serve God as he best knew how";³² or, as Polanco puts it, "Up to his conversion, very little of his time was devoted to the exercise of spiritual things."³³ But what is characteristic of his whole knightly attitude we gather from the sources wherein Ignatius and others testify to the spiritual state of his soul during this period of knightly preparation. These particulars tell us that he never blasphemed,³⁴ for to some degree he felt within himself a sense of reverence for the Divine Majesty; that he had an instinctive aversion for every form of lying and that "he was very conscientious regarding this point even then";³⁵ that he had a fully developed, aristocratic feeling for spiritual purity; that he was entirely free from all attachment to money and earthly possessions. In his eyes, as Polanco aptly remarks, such an attachment would have been considered

dishonorable.³⁶ Hence, shortly after he had been wounded at Pampeluna, he gave his shield, armor, and dagger to those who had transported him to the castle of Loyola.

With a man of this caliber God could begin great undertakings for His glory. As Polanco testifies, the distinctive trait of Inigo's whole nature and of his piety, too, even in the dark days of sin and worldly life, was a magnanimous disposition of soul, a deeply planted urge to carry out difficult things, combined with an unerring prudence.³⁷ Again, this manner of showing his piety, the net result of the traditions in his parental home and of his aristocratic upbringing, formed an immediate preparation for the "more" of his service in the battleline of his eternal King, into the ranks of whose army he is now deployed as a consequence of his conversion.

2. His Conversion

We shall not fix our attention, here, upon the process of his conversion in its totality, but only upon its suitability for a deeper historical understanding of the ideal of the Spiritual Exercises, now coming to light for the first time in the movements of his soul as a result of his conversion. But here, too, we are face to face (without being under the necessity of reshuffling historical facts in order to prove a mere theory or to make a convenient division) with the two chief components which at once unite with life-giving force, like an embryonic plasma. They are the matter and form, as it were, of the coming Spiritual Exercises: namely, chivalrous service of Christ the eternal King in warfare against Satan, together with the urging

of the "more" toward distinguishing oneself in that service; and prudence, coolly weighing the pros and cons, scenting out all possibilities, discerning spirits. We have again, therefore, the Ignatian ideal of "discreet" love; and, thanks to the prudent notes (prudent to the point of genius) which St. Ignatius himself dictated, we are able to reconstruct the very earliest beginnings of this ideal.

It is a well-known fact that the Spiritual Exercises have been subjected to research from every possible angle for the purpose of discovering real or pretended sources from which Inigo de Loyola is supposed to have drawn his teaching. Inigo, no doubt, would have had nothing but a smile of kindly pity or, we may suppose, of gentle irony, had it been his lot to behold the historizing vivisection that his little work, which caused him such immense painstaking, would undergo in later times. It is right to assert, as some have done, that if Inigo had consulted all the sources that, in all academic seriousness, he has been "proved" to have consulted, he must have had, at the time of his sojourn in the cave of Manresa, a stately library of Latin and Spanish authors. It has been supposed by others that the chief source for the Ignatian streams of piety was to be found in the "modern devotion" (*devotio moderna*) of the fifteenth century. Successively, Cisneros, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Alonzo de Madrid, Gerard of Zütphen, John Maubernus, even Werner of Saint Blaise and Pseudo-Bernard, who flourished at the height of the Middle Ages, were rated as "indubitably" proven authorities for whole sections in the text of the Exercises. This course has led nowhere.

What, in the end, was the upshot of all these laborious inquiries? Nothing but the simple fact that Inigo read only these three books: *The Life of Christ* of Ludolph of Saxony, *The Golden Legend*, and *The Imitation of Christ*. Furthermore, we can show many traces of these three works in the Spiritual Exercises—the statements, for example, that Adam was created in the regions around Damascus, that Joseph and Mary on their journey to Bethlehem had an ass and a servant-maid, that Mary's parents divided their property into three parts, and other trifling minutiae which are to be found in Ludolph of Saxony. But of what earthly use is all this quibbling for giving us a deeper comprehension of the genesis and development of the Spiritual Exercises? St. Ignatius himself, in his "pilgrimage" journal, testifies in the clearest manner to the fact that he read three books only. To establish that fact there is no need of elaborate investigations. We even know the editions of the works he made use of. *The Life of Christ* by the German Carthusian, Ludolph of Saxony, was that which had been translated into Spanish by Fray Ambrosio Montesino and published at Alcala in 1502–03. He read *The Golden Legend* by Jacopo de Voragine in the Spanish translation by the Cistercian Goberto Maria Vagad, which appeared at Saragossa in 1493 and was reprinted at Toledo in 1511. Concerning *The Imitation of Christ*, St. Ignatius himself confesses: "It was at Manresa that I saw the *Gerçonzito* for the first time, and since then there is no other book of devotion that I like more."³⁸ The *Gerçonzito* is one of the innumerable Spanish editions of *The Imitation of Christ*. It was called the *Gerçonzito* because it was gen-

erally ascribed at that time to Gerson, the one-time chancellor of the University of Paris.

The question before us now may be reduced to this: Is it possible to show where the contact-point, so to speak, between the tradition of Christian perfection and Inigo's own disposition for greatness arose in his heart as he whiled away the tedium of his long convalescence by reading these books, and is it possible to show it in such a way that the cell-forms begin to manifest signs of growth and development?

Two observations of Ignatius facilitate the answer to this fundamental question. His first remark tells us that he made excerpts from *The Life of Christ* with incredible diligence, entering with his own hand the "more important matters," after going over them prayerfully, into a notebook of three hundred densely crowded quarto pages.³⁹ His second remark preserves for us two memories of his first spiritual readings, recollections that left a life-long impression on him. In his "pilgrimage" journal, he narrates how his mind was continually haunted by the thought: "What would happen if I acted as St. Francis and St. Dominic did?"⁴⁰ And on one occasion he told Nadal, "At that period of my life I was filled with desire to do great things in the service of God, such as had been done by St. Onuphrius and other saints who gave themselves unreservedly to Him."⁴¹

To do great things—this is the first foundation of the Exercises, the seedling form of the "more." As yet Inigo is wholly ignorant of spiritual matters and the various fluctuating spirits which possess his soul, tossing him from "the great things" to be done for worldly, military

fame and for love of his Dona to "the greater things" to be done for God. "He always set himself hard and difficult tasks to perform,"⁴² he says when speaking of this life-generating chaos which he experienced within himself. Now his reading opened to him an entirely new world, a world in which his pent up forces could break forth in a manner wholly different from that which had been possible under the sway of his former ideals, now so strangely insipid.

The first pages of these two books, which he kept by his bedside, set the whole conflict in motion. Precisely here we have the first approaches toward the substance of the ideal of the Spiritual Exercises: the Kingdom of Christ and the noble following of that king in chivalrous service.

Fray Ambrosio Montesino begins by dedicating his work, *The Life of Christ*, to their Catholic Majesties, Ferdinand and Isabella:

May it please the sacred majesty of your Royal Highnesses never to forget that the dominion of earthly kings is nothing else than (to use the phrase of St. John Chrysostom) a symbol and figure of the everlasting and unchanging kingdom which good kings will enjoy in heaven after all earthly dominion, which flits by like a shadow, will have passed away. . . . But it is a sign and seal of future kingly and immortal dominion, when earthly kings show themselves more concerned with what pertains to the royal dominion of God and even make use of calamities and scourges, which a mysterious Providence of God sends, in order to advance in reverence and service of their eternal and sovereign King.⁴³

These words were read by Inigo in those tedious days, read with a disposition of soul which he himself has so aptly described in the following words, "with a magnanimous heart, inflamed by God."⁴⁴ The preface affixed to *The Golden Legend* by the Cistercian Goberto Vagad showed him the way such greater service for his King could be performed. On the title page of *The Life of Christ* there was a portrait of their Catholic Majesties, whom Inigo had served with enthusiasm. On the title page of *The Golden Legend* we find a life-sized picture of the crucified Saviour. To this Fray Goberto appended the following remarks:

It is understood that we should fix our gaze upon the sublime power, the incomparable, incomprehensible, more than kingly magnanimity shining forth from the Passion and death of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who is a portal, so to speak, through which we enter into the saintly and glorious life of the blessed. Whoever reads this book should grasp the crucifix with his right hand and hold it aloft as a royal standard bringing with it victory and happiness, as an incentive spurring generous souls to an eternal triumph, as an emblem which armed the chivalrous hearts of the saints for a courageous conquest of the world, the flesh, and the devil, who, together with all his infernal satellites, far outstrips all the damned in astuteness and adroitness.⁴⁵

Can anyone fail to see how this natural as well as acquired "noble" magnanimity of Inigo links up with the ideal that is the innermost core of the Spiritual Exercises? Yet this connection will be made even plainer by another extract that Inigo culled from the life of St.

Augustine in *The Golden Legend*. There we read that St. Augustine's object in writing his classic opus, *The City of God*, was to portray the historic battle for the salvation of the world between Christ and Satan; "that his book was concerned with the story of two cities, with the kings of these two cities, Jerusalem and Babylon. For Christ is king over Jerusalem, Satan over Babylon. Two contrary loves gave birth to these cities. The city of Satan was built on self-love, mounting up even to contempt of God; the city of Christ was built on love of God, mounting up even to the contempt of self."⁴⁶

In view of the excerpts just cited, what need is there to waste time exploring every imaginable avenue of research; what need to establish, for instance, that for his meditation on the Two Standards (a basic meditation in the whole structure of the Spiritual Exercises) Ignatius' authority was Pseudo-Bernard or Werner of St. Blaise or some other ascetical writer? No, his whole method of procedure was much simpler. Inigo's soul underwent long preparation in prayerful reading of these texts from *The Golden Legend* before the basic law of the Kingdom of Christ flashed upon him. (He informs us that he spent his time partly in prayer, partly in copying out excerpts.)⁴⁷ *The Golden Legend*, written in Latin by a pious Dominican in the thirteenth century and translated into Spanish by a holy Franciscan in the fifteenth century, gave Inigo an immediate contact with the Christian tradition classically formulated by Augustine's theology of history.⁴⁸ This classic narrative was clothed in a style so graphically simple but of such vivid power that it made an ineffaceable impression upon Inigo, who was as

yet untrained in the ways of spiritual thinking but who was deeply agitated and perplexed by the mysterious motions of the different spirits within him. "Thus it came about gradually," he dictated in later years, "that he began to recognize the difference between the spirits that agitated him, the spirit of God and the spirit of Satan, and this was the very first meditation he ever made in regard to spiritual things. When later on he had made the Exercises himself, he began to draw light from this former experience for his teaching on the discernment of spirits."⁴⁹

We must therefore firmly hold to the view that these first spiritual experiences were produced in him, not solely and exclusively by scrutiny of the interior movements in his soul, but also, and accompanying it, by the reading of these two, so to say, "conversion" works. Consequently, even at this early date, the notion of the warring Kingdom of Christ had already begun to dawn upon him; the powerful divine light which bathed his soul at Manresa would bring to definitive completion the form of the meditation on the Kingdom of Christ as we now see it in the Spiritual Exercises.

But the formal element of this ideal of the Spiritual Exercises that was beginning to develop—the pressure of the "more" of a generous love which counted no cost and was filled with enthusiasm for the kingly ideal—also took fire from the reading of these so-called conversion books. The ever-fresh power of the words of the New Testament (in *The Life of Christ*), copied by Inigo in red ink, lifted him into regions of the spirit hitherto unknown to him; this "more," as yet little understood, he

immediately translated "into the difficult undertaking" of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to the very places where the Saviour's whole life was spent and where the cross stood, "the banner and insignia of the whole world's salvation," to use a phrase often employed by Ludolph of Saxony.⁵⁰ The idea of a pilgrimage, as Inigo himself reveals, "soon absorbed all his thought," and took even stronger possession of his soul than the longing for the Carthusian monastery in Seville. For, in his own words, "He feared he would not be as free in a Carthusian convent to put into practice the hatred he had conceived against himself as he would be on a pilgrimage through the whole world."⁵¹ In this we hear an echo of Augustine's famous dictum, "the love of God growing more and more even to hatred of self" (*crescens usque ad contemptum sui*). Here we watch the great soul of Inigo as it begins to swell under the uneasy crescendo of the "more" to which Manresa and its awesome penances are shortly to bear witness.

In addition to this compelling principle of love and his assimilation to Christ's annihilation on the cross, in some way or other anticipated even in the midst of his strange penitential orgies, another motive now comes into play—namely, the example of the saints, "the knights of the cross,"⁵² principally those saints who had a special attraction for him: Onuphrius, Francis, and Dominic. After the lapse of more than thirty years, Ignatius could still recall the profound impression made upon him by the life and unheard-of penitential works of Onuphrius, the ancient desert monk from the Egyptian Thebaid. Like him, Inigo now became enthusiastic about

a rough garment of sackcloth and "an exclusive diet of herbs."⁵³ The "Life of Onuphrius," in *The Golden Legend*, assigns the deeper motive for these practices; by them the battle with "the enemy of the human race" (a phrase that Inigo continued to use for the rest of his life) is fought to the finish. These are "the great things in the service of God" which Inigo, according to his own testimony, sought to imitate in the life of Onuphrius; for while reading he felt the same interior urging to higher things which Onuphrius expressed to his visitor Paphnutius in those beautiful, legend-like words: "Ever bear in mind, as I do, what joy and glory those will enjoy in heaven who have fought the good fight here on earth. My heart burns within me and my spirit bounds with joy at the prospect of giving up all earthly pleasures and of surrendering myself up to God with the whole energy of my soul."⁵⁴ For the meditating Inigo, Onuphrius has become the model of the man who has "a generous heart inflamed by the love of God."

The genesis of the Ignatian ideal stands out even more clearly, perhaps, when we consider the example of the two other saints, Dominic and Francis, whom St. Ignatius still mentioned by name in 1553, when he was dictating the reminiscences of his life. St. Francis was already long familiar to Inigo through the pious poetic circle at Arevalo, where he had been celebrated in song "as the valiant captain of the soldiers fighting against the three fortresses of the world, the flesh, and the devil."⁵⁵ Now (that is, during his convalescence) Inigo had the opportunity of reading in *The Golden Legend* the de-

lightful story in which Francis and Dominic are brought together:

One night, during his sojourn in Rome to obtain the confirmation of his Order, St. Dominic beheld a vision: He saw Christ hovering above a cloud and holding in His hands three spears which He was about to hurl at the earth. Kneeling at His feet was His Blessed Mother, who asked Him what He was about to do. Jesus answered her, "The whole world is filled with three vices: pride, avarice, and sensual pleasure. I have therefore resolved to destroy it with these three lances." His mother replied, "Have pity, my dear Son, and let Your just indignation be turned into mildness." Our Blessed Lord responded, "Do you not see how they insult Me?" She answered in turn, "My Child, restrain Your wrath and be patient for the moment, for I know of a true servant and a brave knight who is traveling up and down the whole world in order to subjugate it to Your royal dominion. I associate him with another true servant, as a companion in arms, vying with him in fiery zeal and courage." Jesus responded, "Your plea has pacified Me, but I am now anxious to behold these two men regarding whom you have made such great promises." Then Mary presented St. Dominic. Christ said, "Truly, this man is a good and brave knight." After this Mary introduced St. Francis, and Christ bestowed equal praise upon him.⁵⁶

To compete as a good knight "in fervor and courage" with Dominic and Francis was the spiritual experience of Inigo on his sickbed at Loyola. Here his "more" was enkindled; here his longing "to accomplish great and difficult things for Christ" was born. Inigo must have felt that the words at the very beginning of the life of St. Francis in *The Golden Legend* were meant for him:

"Francis was a merchant and up to his twentieth year led a worldly and dissipated life. Then God pricked him with the goad of sickness, and overnight he was changed into a wholly different man. . . . He heard a voice speaking to him, 'Francis, if you really wish to know Me, seek sweetness in bitter things and despise thyself.'"⁵⁷ In this case, too, Augustine's self-contempt has the final word, a self-contempt that leads first to God, then to the surprising experience that in the kingdom of the spirit bitter things may become sweet, and sweet things insipid, and lastly to the discernment of spirits, already commencing to work at the base of his enthusiasm. There was yet lacking in the spiritual thinking of Ignatius that depth which will be imparted to him at Manresa "from above," as it were, by mystical grace. All he could think of at this time was to repeat over and over again: "St. Dominic did this, therefore I also must do it; St. Francis did this, therefore I too will do it."⁵⁸ But "from the sides"—that is, by the tradition of Christian perfection—Inigo has already been molded. (One might almost be tempted to say "finally molded.") He too has the ambition to become a knight of Christ, wandering over the whole globe in the interests of the Kingdom of his Lord, in order to overcome Satan; and to do this by means of severe penances after the example of his crucified King of Kings, urged on by the passion to signalize himself by the "noble" willingness to serve, now turned into the Christian willingness to serve.

At this point the ideal of Christian perfection looming before the gaze of the convalescing Inigo enters into the

stream of historical tradition, beating upon the soul of Inigo with its last dying waves. That tradition consisted in the heroic renunciation of the world made by Egyptian monasticism in its exaggerated effort at union with God, in the best fruits of Augustinian theology and spirituality, in the high medieval spirit of Franciscan-Dominican reform, and in German mysticism's tender love of Jesus. But this "influence" of tradition took on the form of the vessel into which it was poured. We must never forget that it is the noble grandee and the soldier who permits himself to suffer this "influence" of tradition, and that consequently whatever he reads in these two cherished sick-room books resolves itself into a deeper perception of those two truths which form the innermost core of the future Spiritual Exercises: the Kingdom of Christ and the Two Standards. There can be no doubt that he possessed this insight at the moment of his departure for the pilgrimage to Montserrat and Manresa. In one of his exhortations, Father Olivares, a very close friend of Ignatius in his old age, says as much. "From the very outset of his conversion, even while on the road to Montserrat and to a secluded spot near Manresa, his mind was totally preoccupied with two meditations: the Two Standards and his King setting out to wage war on Satan and the whole world."⁵⁹ It remained necessary only for the mystical grace of Manresa to purify this insight. The knight of Christ (whom the Blessed Virgin commends to her royal Son, as in the legend of Dominic) now consecrates his sword to Our Lady of Montserrat and imagines that he ought to begin the brave fight at

once by stabbing several times a Moor who had insulted the Blessed Virgin. The illumination which was to change him completely was still lacking.

Thus he wended his way to Montserrat, his mind constantly fixed on the great feats he longed to perform for the love of God in the service of his royal Master. And since his mind was entirely taken up with the tales he had read in his beloved romances of love and books of a similar nature, he resolved to keep a vigil of arms for a whole night before the altar of Our Lady of Montserrat and to doff his usual princely garments and put on the livery of Christ.⁶⁰

It was only through the mystical grace of Manresa that he was to grasp fully in what the "livery of Christ" really consisted, namely, in the ignominy of Christ that leads to the glory of the Father. It was at Manresa, too, that all his previous spiritual experiences were reduced to those skeleton notes which form the backbone, so to speak, of the Exercises: the Kingdom of Christ and the battle between the two camps, the outcome of which battle, both in general history and in individuals, hangs upon the saying "Yes" to the shame of the cross. Accordingly, in his dialogues on the Institute, Father Nadal remarks, "Here at Manresa God communicated to Inigo the Spiritual Exercises and by this means led him to give himself wholly to the service of the glory of God and the salvation of souls. That God wished him to do so he learned chiefly from two meditations, the Kingdom of Christ and the Two Standards."⁶¹

3. Conclusions

From this embryonic form of the Loyolan ideal, as described above, it is possible to make some deductions that lead us to a deeper understanding of the Spiritual Exercises and the Society of Jesus.

First, in regard to the Spiritual Exercises. We now perceive more clearly that the meditations on the Kingdom and the Two Standards constitute the real heart of the Exercises, are its "principle and foundation"; however, we are not to confuse them with the Principle and Foundation, the opening consideration. For although the Exercises must start with the Principle and Foundation of the First Week, it is the call of the King and the spectacular array of the two camps that form the real foundation for an economy of salvation. Everything in the Exercises which precedes and follows these two key meditations takes its significance from them; all that precedes, because only after them do we see with such clarity what Ignatius intended in his Principle and Foundation which he prefixed to his First Week. Only after these Exercises does their theology become apparent, progressing as it does from creation, through indifference, to that which "conduces more to the end for which we were created." But why and for what end we were created we can learn only from Christ our Lord; we can learn in what the "more" consists, since now it receives a more significant development, though in itself it appears illogical and meaningless. All this provides a new solution to the question whether or not the Foundation is primarily and solely concerned with natural crea-

tion and the consequences which flow from it, and whether it is therefore merely a preparatory theodicy. This is not the case at all. It is, then, incumbent upon us to imbue the meditation on the Foundation with the Christological spirit, without in any way sacrificing its introductory character of laying bare the mere outlines and nerves, so to speak, of the Spiritual Exercises. We must try therefore to make the meditation assume the striking shape in which it occurred to Inigo on his sickbed as he looked on the title page of *The Golden Legend* and, "lifting his gaze to the starry heavens, felt himself moved by a strong desire to serve God, our Lord,"⁶² and consequently to serve also Christ crucified, Creator of heaven, earth, and himself.

The same Christological influence applies also to the First Week. Its meaning, in the first place, does not consist in a purification from sin for the sake of making a good general confession (though it has that meaning also), but its whole motivating force is derived from the contemplation on the Kingdom of Christ and the Two Standards. It is Christological even to the point where the cross stands at the brink of hell, where all sinners of all time are divided according to the position they have taken toward the Incarnate Word, where the question is wrung from me: "What should I do for Christ?" It has its climax in the "shame of the recreant knight" penetrated by this fresh call of his King. This is exactly as Inigo experienced it, when he looked back upon the "First Week" of his past sinful life and resolved then and there, like St. Francis, to become a new man for whom the bitter would be sweet in Christ. Therefore the

profoundly theological "history of sin," proceeding from the fall of the angels to that of our first parents, foreshadows in outline what the meditation on the Two Standards reveals in full: that "the regulating of our daily life," a keynote of the Exercises, means a battle to a decision between Christ and Satan.

Thus, the Spiritual Exercises, which are arranged with a view to the election of a state of life, stand or fall with this Christological foundation. Only by holding fast to this view do we gain a solid vantage point for manifold practical questions, such as those mooted by the oldest directories and even by Ignatius himself.⁶³ They might be questions such as the following: To whom are the Exercises in their entirety to be given? Are three-day retreats, comprising only meditations of the First Week, to be labelled "Spiritual Exercises" at all? Is the Second Week, together with the contemplation on the Kingdom of Christ, to be "tacked on" in these three-day retreats; if they are, to what extent and with what object in view? An unequivocal answer to these questions is supplied by the eighteenth annotation of the Exercises and, in like manner, by the directories written by Ignatius himself; that is, whatever goes beyond the First Week belongs "to the domain of the election" and should therefore be given to the exercitant only if grace and aptitude enable him to profit from it. Ignatius and his first companions viewed with suspicion any attempt "to water down" the substance of the Spiritual Exercises.

Conversely, from all we have said, the statement also holds good that if the First Week be conceived Christologically it may act as a sufficient substitute for the omis-

sion of the Second Week, especially a Second Week hurriedly dragged in at the last moment and never permitted to wield its full effect. It is much better to adhere to the rule that Ignatius dictated to Polanco: "If those who are to make the Spiritual Exercises are not prepared spiritually, so as to give promise of drawing greater spiritual fruit from them, the retreat master should be content with giving them the First Week only, dismissing them with a certain thirst for spiritual things and putting them off till they show more tangible signs that greater spiritual fruit may be expected of them."⁶⁴

The second result of our historical investigations into the primitive origins of the substance of the Spiritual Exercises is that we are *de facto* in a better position to fill out the parable of the two kings in the contemplation on the Kingdom of Christ in the vivid sense that Ignatius attributed to it. It is well known that a vast amount of historical material has been assembled on this subject, beginning with the crusades and wars against the Moors and ending with the expedition of Charles V against Tunis and the naval plan of Ignatius himself.⁶⁵ From an historical point of view, our method would be more accurate if we concentrated upon the idea of a king found in the introduction to the Spanish edition of Ludolph of Saxony's life of Christ, which also runs through the entire work of Jacopo de Voragine, and then correlated these elements with the ideals that animated Inigo as a page and as a soldier. For this is precisely the source from which proceeded the contemplation on the Kingdom of Christ, or, to speak more accurately, the source by which the mystical grace of Manresa could establish

a nexus, thus enabling Inigo to arrive at the theological idea of the Kingdom of Christ as expressed by the words of the Church drawn from Holy Writ: "Be brave in battle, fight with the ancient serpent, and you will receive an eternal kingdom" (Antiphon of the *Magnificat* in the Second Vespers of the *Commune Apostolorum*).

From all this we gain a deeper insight into the nature of the ideal of perfection which Ignatius desired to see incorporated in his "Company." The earliest form of his Order begins to appear for him in that part of the Spiritual Exercises where, at the end of the meditation on the Two Standards, he begs "to be received under the standard of his Lord in the highest spiritual poverty, thereby to imitate Him better" (no. 147). Indeed, it is by means of the discernment of spirits, intensified by the deeply moving sight of the army camps portraying the history of the world, that the choice and character of a state of life is brought about. Hence the spiritual guide, whom we usually style "retreat master," should be an expert in discerning the "subtle and advanced" things of the spiritual life (no. 9), a man who knows how to distinguish different spirits in himself and in others, with a sure and light touch. That is the sense of those annotations which Ignatius, with sublime prudence, prefixed to his Spiritual Exercises ("Introductory Observations," 6-15). But in these annotations he merely sketches the ideal that he wishes to see realized by his co-laborers in the Society of Jesus. In a passage of his Directory, Ignatius, giving the obverse of the above idea, makes the following remark: "The more a person seems suited to embrace the manner of life in the Society of Jesus, the

more suited he is, generally speaking, to make the whole of the Exercises."⁶⁶ The Jesuit, formed by the Spiritual Exercises, should consequently be adept in the discernment of spirits, a man of "discretion"—with all that is implied in this really untranslatable term which is so closely connected with the "discernment of spirits," *discretio spirituum*. Again and again Ignatius speaks of this quality in his Constitutions. He demands this "discretion" from candidates who wish to join his Order; at a minimum, it is that capacity for spiritual formation which may be described as tact, a calmly sober readiness in regard to decisions of practical life (*discretio in rebus agendis*). He looked upon "indiscreet devotions" as almost an impediment to entrance into the Society of Jesus.⁶⁷

What is here outlined as a minimum for beginners is amplified in the qualifications demanded by Ignatius in a general of the Order: he must be a man full of "discreet" prudence in matters pertaining to the interior life and to the handling of men.⁶⁸ His contemporaries were right in asserting that in drawing this portrait of the general, Ignatius was simply drawing a portrait of himself.⁶⁹ Above all, this "discretion" has reference to the "difficult" works of prayer, penance, and obedience. It is needed wherever there is question of important matters in the Kingdom of God and wherever a critical decision has to be made. It is a front-line virtue where Christ and Belial, light and darkness, stand face to face and where it is necessary to unmask "the angels of light" as the widely dispersed emissaries of the "throne" of Babylon "made up of fire and smoke." The primitive form in

which the spiritual life appeared to Inigo at the commencement of his conversion, the substance of the original cell of the Spiritual Exercises, so to speak, that is what should be for every Jesuit the source of ever-advancing knowledge and progress. The Jesuit ought to be "a divine weather-prophet," with a keen sense of what is divine and diabolical in the events of universal history. He should be a man who knows his Jerusalem and Babylon thoroughly. This is the whole purport of the petition in the Two Standards where the exercitant asks for some introduction to the "intentions" and designs of Christ our Lord and those of the enemy of human nature (no. 135), and begs again and again "for knowledge of the deceits of the rebel chief and for knowledge of the true life exemplified in the sovereign and true Commander" (no. 139).

In this ability to discern spirits lies concealed that fine interior sureness of mind that we call discretion. Here we touch upon a bit of the Ignatian ideal of perfection that has so often and on various occasions been thrown up to the Society as a bit of Jesuitical cunning, "hiding itself," as Fülöp-Miller words it, "under a thousand masks." Indeed, it was a daring attempt on the part of Ignatius to formulate in set rules this inconceivable attitude, so to speak, and to demand their observance from a Society that was constantly growing. No one can have a right understanding or make an unfailingly correct use of this discretion, except one who has from prayerful experience learned to know the source from which it springs: that is, from knowledge, enlightened by grace, of the discernment of spirits, or, to speak theologically,

from knowledge of the relation existing between nature and grace, between Christ and the world. It is only by taking into consideration such a discretion that we can understand how Inigo, even during his first still raw beginnings, was being prepared for the bold stroke of founding a new order which is to unite two disparate elements: (1) an entire renunciation of the world by its members through a total and unreserved offering of themselves to Christ the King; and (2) a commingling of the members with the world they have given up in order to wrest it from the control of Satan. Only by means of this "divine discretion" is it possible for a soldier of this Company to move along the thin and almost invisible frontline which passes through the world and the center of his own heart. It is always a hazard for anyone, even one with a keen scent for the movements of the spirit, to be in the world but not of the world. Who will dare to maintain that the sons of Ignatius were always successful in evading this danger? Who, on the other hand, because some have failed, will refuse to mix boldly with the world in order to snatch it away from him who has set himself up "as the prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30) and, by such an action, win it back for Christ and make the kingly rule of Him "who created this world" (John 1:10) a substantial reality?

If our investigations so far have led us to infer that, in Inigo's future Order, obedience and discipline were the result of his descent and breeding, now we find that the outcome of his encounter with the thought of Christian tradition makes his attitude stand out with even greater distinctness. Obedience is now seen to be, not merely "the

regimentation" of a company, not merely a discipline enforced by the rules of the Society as a necessary prerequisite for the apostolic life, but as a wholehearted devotion to a King engaged in constant battle with a Satan who has flung off the yoke of obedience. Discipline does not mean merely aristocratic reserve nor the fundamental way of acting which gave birth to the caricature of the Jesuit as excelling all other men in knowledge, cunning and power. Discipline is the virtue of a soldier who is in actual combat with Satan, a soldier who knows no other way of getting the better of his unscrupulous and disconcerting foe "with his snares and chains" (no. 142) than by a watchful, cautious, and clear-eyed freedom of spirit. This freedom of spirit, however, springs from that interior cleanliness, through which a soldier of Christ preserves his own soul free "from the fire and smoke of Babylon." It is precisely this clear-visioned liberty of spirit that is at the root of Ignatian discipline and its absolute renunciation of all that savors of the world. Vice versa, it is only discretion again that enables us to understand why Ignatius sends his sons into a world full of dangers, into "an everyday life" ⁷⁰ that apparently does not call for any "hard and heroic" activity. The same soldier of the Company who just a little while ago desired and begged to be enrolled under the banner of the highest poverty is now bidden to practice it only "according to the measure of holy discretion." ⁷¹ It is through this discretion alone that we are able to grasp the fact that the Jesuit approaches the world only from the remote standpoint of the cross, that there is in him not so much a mystical running away from the world as

a mystical joy in running toward the world in order to win it back again for his divine Leader, Christ. Like Inigo, the Jesuit travels the road that goes from the heroic cave at Manresa to the fully developed outlook on the world of the Gesu Church at Rome.⁷²

In his pilgrimage from his native castle to Montserrat and Manresa, Inigo had only a dim idea of all these things. The clear knowledge and the definitive seal came to him only at Manresa in the powerful mystic light that burst upon him, as it were, "from above." We shall now make it our task to describe what this illumination meant in the formation of his ideal of perfection.