

**THE BRITISH
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF PORTUGAL**

TWENTY SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT
AND REVIEW 1999

Quinta Nova
Carcavelos
2777 PAREDE

HEROVM SPECVLVM

DE VITA DD FRANCISCI
TREGION,

CVIVS CORPVS SEPTENDECIM
post annis in æde D. Rochi integrum inventum est

Edidit F. Franciscus Plunquetus Hibernus Ordinis
S. Bernardi nepos ejus maternus.

*Occiduo Tregon sol es clarissimus orbi;
Vt des lucis opes, non tibi solis opus.*



OLISIPONE, CVM FACVLTA TE,
Ex Officina Graesbeeckiana, Anno 1655.

THE LIFE OF FRANCIS TREGIAN (1548-1608).

BY FATHER FRANCIS PLUNKET OSB.

Edited by Andrew Bull.

INTRODUCTION.

In 1974, when the British Historical Society of Portugal was formed as the successor to the Historical Association, Lisbon Branch, it began immediately to collect archives, books and documents relevant to Anglo-Portuguese History. The Society was fortunate to receive in its inaugural year a bound typescript of a book of which only one printed copy is thought to be in existence. This is preserved in the British Museum.

The book in question 'Heroum Speculum De Vita D.D. Francisci Tregon' was written by his maternal grandson, Fr. Francis Plunket, an Irishman of the Cistercian Order and was printed in Lisbon in 1655. It was authorised by various Portuguese religious authorities including the Holy Inquisition.

The typescript copy in the Society's possession has the original Latin and the English translation interleaved. The Latin was translated by Fr. V.J. Scully, C.R.L.. Pearl A. Boyan of the Diocese of Plymouth provided the Introduction and presented the book to the English College, Lisbon on September 25th, 1929. Mgr. Sullivan, the last President of the English College, transcribed some verses both on and by Tregian from this book and these were published in the first issue of the Society's Annual Report in 1975. He also presented this copy to the Society.

The editor was considerably assisted in preparing the notes to this work by the Arundell family who advised him on their family tree and presented him with a book 'Francis Tregian' by P.A. Boyan & G.R. Lamb, published by Sheed & Ward in 1955, which has filled in

and corrected, a great number of details omitted or written erroneously by Br. Francis and by Mr. G. Jolly who researched the annals in Cornwall .

Here is a transcription of the book, which includes Ms. Boyan's introduction and omits only the authorisations of the Religious censors, Tregian's verses to his wife, the accounts of the miracles that occurred with his relics after his death and some verses written, presumably by the author, in honour of his grandfather. Fr. Plunket writes in the style and with all the fervour of those days of the Counter Reformation, which may strike the reader in our more ecumenical or indifferent days, as somewhat hostile to the Protestant Faith. It must be remembered how much his grandfather and his family suffered for their beliefs.

'Introduction.

'Fr. Morris S.J. in "Troubles of Our Catholic Forefathers" (1st series) publishes the account of the trial and imprisonment of Francis Tregian (1), from the contemporary MS. preserved at Oscott College, author unknown. In the same volume Fr. Morris prints a letter (original at Stonyhurst) dated April 26th, 1625, written from Lisbon by Fr. Ignatius Stafford S.J. at Madrid, describing the opening of the grave of Francis Tregian and the finding of the body, incorrupt and entire.

'About the year 1847 Mr. R.R. Madden, a Catholic writer, discovered accidentally in the Church of St. Roch (*Roque*) at Lisbon the Sepulchral stone and epitaph of the illustrious Cornish Confessor. In the Catalogue of the National Library in Madrid, he found mention of a Life of Francis Tregian by a Fr. F. Plunquetus. Two days were spent ransacking the library for this work without result, but a MS copy of the book was discovered at the English College, Lisbon. Mr. Madden was allowed the use of it and published extracts therefrom in his "History of Penal laws" 1847.

'In 1923, through the kind help of the Rector of the English College, a further search was made in the National Archives and the National Library of Lisbon, but no such book was found.

'A printed copy, however is preserved in the British Museum which is believed to be unique and is referred to in the D.N.B. under "Francis Tregian" as "one of the rarest of printed books."

'The full title is: "Heroum Speculum de Vita D.D. Francisci Tregon, cujus corpus septendecim post annos in aede D. Rochi integrum inventum est."

'Edidit F. Franciscus Plunquetus Hibernis Ordinis S. Bernardi nepos ejus maternus.

'Olisipone 1655 (12 mo)

'The chief value of this Life of Tregian lies in the certainty of its authorship, and in the approbation accorded to it by the ecclesiastical authorities. It is evident that Plunket received his knowledge direct from his mother, who was Tregian's daughter. The details of the trial and imprisonment are practically as given in the Oscott MS., but the account of the relations of Francis Tregian with Elizabeth has not been published elsewhere, and is such as would preferably be handed down by word of mouth, at least during the lifetime of the Queen. There are various historical inaccuracies, as one might expect from a writer living in a foreign country with few English books at his command; but the accounts of the chivalrous reception given to the Confessor by King Philip, of his brief sojourn in Spain and Portugal, and of the miracles wrought at the shrine are written in a more convincing style. It is noteworthy that Fr. Stafford died at Lisbon in 1642 and Fr. Forster survived until 1655; both could acquaint Fr. Plunket with the circumstances of 1625.

'The Oscott MS. is the relation of the trial and imprisonment of Francis Tregian rather than the story of his life, and no mention is made of his experiences at the Court. One passage however

("Troubles" p.120) points to his association with eminent personages, stating that shortly after his marriage (about 1570) he was "upon causes of great importance enforced by the space of almost ten months suppliantly to follow the Lords of the Council."

'In the Hatfield Papers Part 13, p.117 there is a document headed "Fugitives from England" dated "after 1572" in which the name of Francis Trugien appears in company with several well-known Catholics and divers officers and soldiers, begging for Her Majesty's pardon to return to England and "desiring to to spend their lives in Her Majesty's service.....and they will discover themselves upon Her Majesty's good acceptance of their dutiful affection and zeal."

'This is the only record of Tregian's visit abroad. It may be that his sojourn among the English exiles conduced to his subsequent apostolic labours at the Court and to his reception of Blessed Cuthbert Mayne(2).

'The Church of St. Roch , Lisbon, is now used by a confraternity (*S. Roque is also the parish Church of the Bairro Alto*) and the Tregian tomb remains unharmed.

'The MS. copy of Plunket's book, beautifully written, but with no indication of date or scribe, is still preserved at the English College. (*It was presumably sold with most of the rest of the library when the English College closed down in 1972*).

'Until recently the volume in the British Museum was bound between four tracts relating to the work of the Society of Jesus among the Chinese, Japanese and Mongolians. Since this transcription has been undertaken it has been rebound separately, and is now seen in the Reading room of the North Library of the Museum, where especially valuable books are shewn: press number c 53 L.26. P.A.B.'

"To His Most Serene Highness John IV, King of Portugal.

"Your Serene Highness. This little work is brought to your august attention, it is laid at your royal feet. Herein let no man reproach me that I am rash. Rather shall I be commended for prudence; for no patronage could I have sought more sublime, more full of grace. None more sublime, because it is my Prince's; none more full of grace, because his name is John. From the good omen of that name it derives a force and gathers confidence, so that what is lacking in the author's pen is fully compensated in the Patron's favour. The Mirror of Tregian seeks the protection of Your Majesty that it may show forth to the whole world the sublime virtues whereof it is so faithful a reflection and that in the radiance of your name it may fear no dimming from the dark night of heresy. Let then the kindly grace of the name of John temper the severe gravity of kingship, and shed such favour on this treatise that under your name and auspices it may prosper on its travels through the world.

"Brother Francis of the Order of St. Bernard.

"To the devout and Catholic Reader.

"In almost every age, Christian Reader, you will encounter divers and numerous heretics and heresies. These heretics, falling away from God's faith, disturb the peace of His Church and pursue her most loyal children with a malignant hatred. Such monsters God suffers both for our own profit and His greater glory and honour: and never does He fail to provide His followers with leaders of sound morals and eminent piety to repel their insistent assaults and to bring back the heretics themselves to embrace the teachings of the true Faith. Wonderful indeed are the manifold ways in which God recalls the erring to the right path, consoles the afflicted and comforts the faithful. And because of His loving desire for the eternal salvation of all, daily does He work miracles.

"Singular among these and worthy of all admiration, are the marvels he has wrought in his servant, Francis Tregian, whose admirable life, innumerable trials and incredible losses I here offer, Reader, for your

consideration. It is a life indeed calculated to overthrow and extirpate those very heresies and heretics from whose cruelty he suffered so many wrongs and, at the same time, to serve as a standard and pattern of virtue for all who are willing to follow in his steps.

“First, if you have regard for rank and riches, wherewith he was duly blessed, consider awhile how blamelessly he passed his early years, intent only on the pursuit of learning and virtue: how amid the nobles at the Queen’s Court he spent his wealth: how courteously he bore himself, winning all hearts: how, like a doughty warrior, he withstood the assaults of his enemies, deeming it cowardice to yield either to brute force, or misfortune. Moreover he hated all deceit and hesitated not to expose his life for Faith and Fatherland.

“ If you are a married man, see how dear his consort was to him, what love he lavished on his children and upon all his household, how watchful, how zealous he was to save their souls from the jaws of Satan. How deeply indeed he loved and revered his spouse he proved when, with the Kingdom of England at his feet, he preferred rather to be faithful to his marriage vows. This in fine was his one and only concern, to serve God worthily and piously and duly to provide for his family and dependents.

“If you are a devout Catholic, whom I pray, will you find to have suffered more grievously, if you weigh those twenty-seven years and longer that he passed in prison? What need to mention the forfeiture of his immense property, the loss of all his wealth, his unspeakable grief in the sufferings of his mother, wife, children, of his whole household? And worse, the perils that constantly menaced his life from every side, the innumerable and well nigh barbarous cruelties and wrongs inflicted on him, the hunger that racked him; he bore all with the calmness of another Job. Never once, though instant death threatened him, would he sully his chastity. Admirable too his other virtues, charity, patience and self-denial.

“If you are a heretic, take note how beloved he was of God, Who delivered him so wondrously from the sword of the foes that

threatened him with death: Who after he had endured with constancy, sufferings and calamities and griefs innumerable, bestowed upon him earthly goods in abundance: Who now for nearly fifty years has preserved his body whole and incorrupt and by his patronage has wrought divers and wondrous miracles: Who finally has exacted penalty for his wrongs from Elizabeth, Queen of England, the Marshall (3), Justice Popham and Sheriff Grenville.

‘The Queen met a miserable end: for thirty days before her death so foul a corruption exuded from her body that, for the stench thereof, none could stay in the room where the wretched creature lay. Cursing God, and blaspheming that holy name again and again, she passed away in the utmost agony, leaving no issue to carry on the government of England.

“The Marshall was so devoured by vermin even to his intestines that in a few days he gave up his wretched and unhappy soul. Nor did Justice Popham meet with a happier fate, but after passing sentence on Master Francis Tregian and his servants and Cuthbert Mayne his sacrificing priest, he was suddenly carried off by a most foul and loathsome disease.

“But what of Grenville? (4) For a while indeed he enjoyed great honours and wealth until, for his depraved morals and enormous crimes, he was banished from the realm of England and forbidden to return on penalty of death.

“Nor did the Almighty curb His wrath even here, but he girded Himself to bring about the total destruction of those who were cruel and unjust to the children of Master Francis. With almost daily prayers and tears these besought King Charles I of England to grant some share of the patrimony that was due to them both by the civil and by the natural law. Moreover they sent the King eight thousand and sixty English pounds to be permitted to enter on their estate. This money the King retained, nevertheless he still would not restore them their property. Large sums were also given to Lords Portland and Strafford to champion their cause. By these means at

length they recovered their paternal inheritance, but, after three days, they were again disinherited by Parliament on the plea that the property was too extensive to be held by Papists, especially in view of the proximity of Spain and the convenience of the ports. A third of their rich patrimony was accordingly offered them. This they rejected as insufficient and thereupon they were deprived of the whole, to the utter ruin of themselves and their descendants to the present day.

“How swiftly, gentle reader both the king and the aforesaid Lords brought upon themselves the just and unavoidable wrath of God, you can see from the following. Lord Portland died suddenly soon afterwards; the other Lord perished miserably upon the scaffold. A like fate befell the King; for England, Scotland and Ireland rose in arms against him and deprived him of both his kingdom and his head, while the Queen and the Royal Family were forced to depend upon the generosity of others in distant lands. Clear and striking instances certainly, if they be well weighed, to strike terror into the hearts of those that ill-use the servants of God.

“Take care therefore, whoever you are, that you fall not into the like calamities and miseries, yea, that you be not cast headlong into Hell. But rather, if you be wise, follow in the footsteps of St. Paul who, after exceeding all others in the zeal with which he persecuted the faithful followers of Christ, being suddenly changed by the power of God, forsook his false sect and joined himself at once to the body of the the believers, thereby winning for himself a high place in Heaven, such as I promise shall be yours also if you imitate his example.

“Farewell.

“Your most obedient and faithful servant in Christ,
“Brother Francis Plunket of the Order of St. Bernard.

“The Beginning of the Life of Tregian.

“If he who boasts his family tree dishonours his name, it is not fitting that I should follow the usual course by unweaving the web of Tregian’s genealogy. For he need not vaunt the meretricious splendour of ancestry who, by the brightness of his virtue, has shed an undying light upon his cradle. If you examine the line of his descent you will find it derived from three kings, of England, of Castile and of Portugal, and so Francis was connected with three royal houses.

“It would have been unseemly that one whom God had designed to endow with the greatest gifts should be born a minor. John Tregian and Margaret Arundell (5), a woman of the highest nobility, begot Francis, a new sun to his family and faith. The Tregian rose unfolded its crimson amid the English thorns, not to be concealed thereby, but rather to be surrounded as with a guard of honour.

“The young eagle, disdainng earth, gazes with unblinking eyes into the radiance of the sun. So it was with Tregian, who dissipated not his soul with childish trifles, but from an early age rose to great heights of piety. When twenty-one he took to wife a woman of noble family, Mary, daughter of Lord Stourton and, for nearly ten years, he lived with her in the honoured bonds of wedlock.

“Now at this time, Elizabeth, Queen of England, or rather bane of the true Faith, was wickedly conspiring against the little flock of Christ, directing her fury especially upon those who were most loyal to the See of Rome and promulgating most inhuman and barbarous laws. To none did this policy cause more distress than to Francis. Unspoiled by his immense wealth and possessions, he was filled with anxiety at the sight of the old religion dying out and the new gaining ground, and through his zeal, many were instructed in true doctrine and brought to a knowledge and love of the Sacraments of Christ.

“For the sake then of his friends, whose peril daily grew more deadly, he betook himself to the Court and there he encouraged

them not to yield to the troubles of the times, insisting that woes make wings to sprout, and that happiness is often composed of the most sorrowful ingredients. Thus, by word and example, he gained esteem at Court and wielded considerable influence.

“His modesty, combined with dignity, won all hearts and, in relieving the needs of the poor, he was tireless, never allowing the fastidiousness of his own breeding and habits to stand between him and the most sordid squalour. But the friendship of Elizabeth for Francis developed into passion and she desired to keep him as near to her person as she felt him near to her heart. As the attraction waxed stronger, Elizabeth offered to make Francis a Viscount, but he, in his modesty, shrank from the burden and courteously declined the honour lest, as he said, this premature mark of royal favour should detract from his merits by being attributed solely to affection. ‘To me,’ he added, ‘it would be quite enough if the Faith, for the sake of which I came to Court, should breathe more freely and recover strength’. But because violent passion exceeds all bounds and knows no law, it came to pass shortly afterwards that the Queen, late at night, sent as a confidential messenger to Francis, one of those ladies who are called Maids of Honour. She earnestly begged him to go and see the Queen at an early date and so secure from Her Majesty yet greater favour than she had already shewn, especially as Elizabeth wished to consult him on a matter of the greatest importance. She added that he had captivated the Queen, that nothing more agreeable could be imagined than that their intercourse, with increasing familiarity, should ripen into intimate friendship and that Francis ought to realise what immense advantages would accrue to him from the favours of royalty.

“Tregian’s Marvellous Strength of Mind.

“This ill-conceived embassy of the night enveloped Francis as in a thick cloud of sadness and perplexity, bringing him as much grief as to others it would have brought pleasure. He was at his wits’ end to discover some strategy whereby to escape from the Queen’s mad fancy. In his bewilderment only one idea occurred to him: on the

night assigned for his interview with Elizabeth, he would plead illness as a polite excuse, remembering that disease is sometimes healed by disease and, that one hopeless condition is sometimes counteracted by another. But who can restrain the madness of passion? Elizabeth, disregarding her throne, oblivious of her majesty, lost to all but love, hastened to the bedside of Francis and, greeting him graciously, promised to admit him to the closest intimacy and to give him a place at once among the first nobility of England. Our invalid professed the deepest gratitude to the Queen and, in token thereof, offered to Elizabeth for her sole benefit the whole of his estate, all, excepting only his conscience. This repulse was highly displeasing to the Queen; she gave free vent to her anger and, lashing Francis with her tongue, she accused him of cowardice and finally, still not cured of her passion, she retired from his bedside, hoping that at the restoration of his health, she would accomplish her desires.

“Thinking over these wiles of Satan and perceiving obvious peril to his soul, Tregian was tossed on a sea of cares. ‘If,’ he reflected, ‘I withdraw from the Queen’s unlawful pursuit, I shall be expelled from the Court and incur the odium of the Palace; if I yield, serve her lust and betray my religion, I shall become the object of envy and animosity and it will mean the final ruin of myself, which I might risk, but also of my family, which would be worse. Of two evils let us choose the lesser; at daybreak, without a word to the Queen, I will steal from the Court. Assuredly, in such a contest, to flee is to conquer.’

“In pursuance of this plan Tregian stole secretly away. But the traces of his virtue were not so easily concealed, as witness a miracle afterwards discovered by his wife and testified by his sister. One night, when the wife and sister of Francis were retiring to bed, on the upper and lower sheets and on the pillow, in that part where he used to sleep, sixty-five crosses were seen, so vividly and artistically drawn, that they seemed the finished work of some skilful artist. And, though the pillow was washed repeatedly, these crosses, with miraculous persistence, were there, resplendent, for six months.

“Tregian’s Piety in Prison.

“When Elizabeth heard of Tregian’s departure, thinking herself deceived by him, she flew into a most unroyal rage: with an oath she asserted that the traitor had left to plot some crime against her royal person; called him a perfidious criminal and declared that, being a Catholic, nothing but evil could be expected of him. She ordered the laws against Catholics to be published without delay and further commanded the Knight Marshall to proceed against the said Francis, his family and dependents with all rigour, and promised their property and goods to him for his pains. The Queen’s behests were carried out with zeal. Letters of Commission were despatched to the Sheriff of Cornwall giving orders to place Francis and all his household under strict arrest. With the assistance of a military force of a hundred armed men, the mandate was promptly executed on the eighth day of June, 1599 (6).

“So, bound in charge, he appeared before the heretical Bishop of Exeter. The heresiarch took cognisance of the acts of Francis and, since he, as a Roman Catholic, was opposed to the sect and conduct of the Queen, he was greeted with ridicule and treated with contempt, as a man bereft of his wits. After bail had been accepted for him, he was kept in close confinement, the chief reason alleged for his imprisonment was that he had supplied a priest with the requisites for saying Mass.

“When the Assizes came on, Francis was summoned to stand his trial for himself and his household. Francis appeared before the tribunal without fear, for his conscience acquitted him of all guilt. Innocent as he was, the Judges raged against him and strove to bring him in guilty of a capital offence on this charge, to wit: that he had insolently carried about with him a Bull (7), the tenour of which was conspiracy against the State. A second charge was that Francis and many of his friends never set foot within the Queen’s churches, evidence not only of disobedience to the royal command, but also of contempt. With countenance unmoved Francis replied that as to the

Bull he knew nothing of it; as to absenting himself from the Queen’s churches, he freely confessed that he had not entered them, but as a matter of conscience, not from contempt. On this plain statement the Judges decided to adjourn the trial, or rather the conflict.

“Charges Brought Against Francis and his Household.

“When the court opened on September 16th there were brought before the tribunal with insult and outrage, Cuthbert Mayne, massing priest of Francis and fifteen of his household, and Francis also. You would have wept to see Francis standing to answer the charges adduced against him and the priest especially. Seven heads of high treason were alleged:

First, that he (*Mayne*) had obtained from the Holy See a Papal Bull containing conditions of absolution which Bull commenced: ‘Gregorius servorum Dei’.

Second, that he had several times promulgated the said Bull and secured a willing hearing from Francis and his friends.

Third, that by acknowledging the supreme power of the Pontiff he involved the Christian State in utter confusion.

Fourth, that he had brought from Rome ‘Agnus Deis’(8) and that although Francis and his household knew of this, no information was lodged.

Fifth, that in token of friendship he had given ‘Agnus Deis’ to Francis and his servants and had made no mention thereof.

Sixth, that he had celebrated mass in the presence of Francis and his household.

Seventh, that the friends of Francis and moreover he himself, did not frequent the churches of the Queen and the heretics, nor abjure the Catholic Faith.

“Of these, the first three the priest refuted without any trouble. The fourth he countered thus: ‘It is true that I brought ‘Agnus Deis’ from Rome, but I never gave them to Francis or his servants to keep.’

“The sixth nobody could substantiate by real proof.

“The last he acknowledged willingly and with utmost constancy.

“The unjust judges of the English Court condemned Cuthbert to death as guilty of high treason. First he was to be hanged for a short while on a gibbet, then to be cut down while still living, mutilated, his heart and entrails to be drawn and cast into the fire to burn, and the body itself to be divided into quarters and hung in high places of the city in witness of his depraved loyalty. And so it was done.

“All the servants were punished by forfeiture of their goods and condemned to be imprisoned for life. Francis, though absent, was included in the same sentence. The influence of his friends procured a delay of execution by an adjournment, but they could not obtain for him any alleviation of the close confinement wherein he was kept in iron chains.

“The Display of Tregian’s Patience.

The day fixed for the new trial had now dawned and Tregian’s was the chief cause. He was brought before the Judges, guarded by a double file of soldiers. Here the malice of the heretics broke out afresh. They heap abuse on him and, as by common consent, bring against him not charges but calumnies which all amount to this: that he had outraged law and order, that he had grievously offended the Queen to whom he had been frequently reported as guilty of serious misdemeanours; That now the time had come when he must completely clear himself of all.

To this Francis quietly retorted: ‘That I am falsely accused is evidence, not of my guilt, but of the malice of my enemies: Therefore grant me the option that the law allows in such cases: let this indefinite charge be deferred for a time that it may be formulated by legal experts at leisure.’ Reasonable as this was, it had little weight with the Judges, who called in to finish the case men versed in wickedness rather than skilled in the law. And, as Francis was unable to explain the most important items of his cause in the presence of the cut-throats who guarded him, neither his innocence,

of which they were well aware, nor his humble entreaties, nor the rights of the law, could prevail with them to set him free from prison, or at least from his manacles for a time, for he was already treated by them as one doomed to die.

“Meanwhile, the Judges, ready for any iniquity, deputed a number of men of small legal skill and less rectitude, to pass sentence on Francis, in peril of his life, according to their whim. And although the lawyers without knowledge of the law were steeped in ignorance and cunning, yet, knowing him to be innocent of all guilt, they dare not condemn him to death. They posed as his friends, waiting for him to agree to frequent the Queen’s churches and forsake the Catholic faith. If he would consent to this, they promised to set him free, both him and his household, including even his chaplain and his condemned servants. If not, the law must take its course against him. The noble soul of Francis neither yielded to these promises, nor failed under his sufferings until the lawyers, wearying of his constancy, though they could not convict him on any point of law, or prove the shadow of a crime, or even make up a coherent case from the evidence of his enemies, finally passed sentence on the trumped-up charges, of which Francis knew nothing and of which the iniquitous Judge was the author.

“Francis, in defiance of truth, is proclaimed a traitor, his goods forfeited to the Treasury, himself condemned to perpetual imprisonment. In prison, following his bent for prayer, he passed his days in contemplation of the Life and Passion of Christ his Saviour. Meanwhile some miscreants, deputed by the Judges, hastened down to Golden, his home. There, at dead of night, like an invading army, they battered at the gates, broke down the walls and, devoid of all sense of pity, loaded Mary, Tregian’s wife, the children and the servants with abuse, tore off their ornaments and finally, with barbarous cruelty thrust them forth from the house. In such calamities what could Mary do? An abundant flood of tears was her only resource, her only consolation.

To London therefore, Mary made her way, in the hope of redeeming part at least of the loss she had suffered. For a whole year she wept and pleaded before Elizabeth, but not a farthing could she wring from the heartless Queen for the support of her husband and children. She was told that Francis was regarded as a Papist and herself as the wife of a traitor and, therefore, unworthy of any compassion or assistance. Meanwhile the enmity of the heretics towards Francis increased in shamefulness and intensity. They even contemplated his secret assassination and fixed on a price among themselves to be paid to the man who would do away with him in prison. When Francis heard of this, his constancy was in no wise shaken. In this happy peril he had only one fear, that if he were secretly murdered in prison, his enemies would circulate the report that he had laid violent hands upon himself, to the no slight scandal of Catholics and loss to their cause.

“Proofs of Tregian’s Piety.

“On this account he took the best means he could devise to escape the threatened danger and, relying on the help of a lad who waited upon him, he had every hope of success. And while the youth was making all preparations for flight, Francis, under the movement of divine grace gave himself wholly to meditation and prayer. At this time he composed an exceedingly devout prayer which afterwards he and many others used to recite daily. He also wrote a letter of comfort to his wife, in which he exhorted her to patience, prayer and constant meditation of the Life and Passion of Christ, dwelling most admirably on the benefit thereof.(9)

“The Sublimity of Tregian’s Virtue.

“Meanwhile, when all preparations had been completed for his escape from prison, the whole design was discovered through the imprudence of a friend. Thereupon his enemies rush on him with fierce shouts and unbridled brutality, rain blows and insults upon him, remove him to a darker dungeon, double his heavy manacles and replace the fetters with which he had been loaded until then with

others more weighty by thirty pounds. And thus, for three months, with those who had favoured his flight, especially the serving lad, who endured much for him, in sighs and tears, he was left to lie in a filthy cell.

“Abusing his patience, the gaolers strove their utmost, now with flattery, now with threats, to shake the loyalty of Francis to the Catholic Faith; but as men who buffet the wind, they soon drew off, baffled and breathless. Still adding evil to evil, they removed him, always laden with his chains, from that prison to another even worse, wherein, as in a horrid labyrinth of misery, an abyss of human calamity, amid murderers, thieves, brigands and the scum of criminals, he passed his days with incredible patience.

“Ye heavens, to what lengths was the shameless license of the gaolers here carried! I refrain, lest modesty should turn away her face. To move him to anger, to disturb his wondrous meekness, in insult and derision, they forced filth against his mouth and nostrils. Finally, to leave nothing untried, they resolved to remove him by slow starvation. And so they gave him, once a day, some morsels unfit for a dog to eat. And Francis, with unruffled countenance, understood and endured it all. Three months passed thus, then Francis was taken back to his former prison until, through the unwearied pleading of his wife and friends, he was transferred to the royal keep(10) in London. Change of place however brought him little alleviation. Within a few days the fury of his persecutors broke out again, and he was thrust into the common gaol where he spent another six months of the utmost misery. However, he besought the Queen that something, however small, might be assigned to him for his nourishment, or that he be removed to a place where, if only among the lowest of the people, the necessaries of life might be supplied to him.

“Not indeed that the lowest in rank are the lowest in reality. Poverty is a condition not a crime. As a result of this petition he was transferred to the closest possible confinement. So rigorous was his treatment, so utter his destitution that, at the end of three years, his

of his age, on the 26th September A.D. 1608(15), in the House of the Society (*of Jesus*) in Portugal named after St. Roch and there, near the pulpit, he abides incorrupt. A man worthy to be kept ever before the eyes of the most illustrious heroes, an example and a mirror of the most sublime virtues. And for lesser men an occasion to admire at least that which so noble a hero accomplished in charity and for the Catholic Faith.



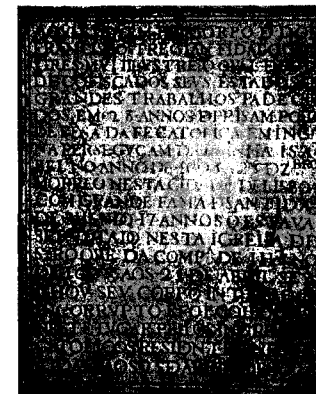
Interior of Saint Roque Church

“The Miracles of Tregian’s Body.

“Seventeen years had passed when, on opening his marble tomb, the body of Francis was laid open to view, incorrupt and untouched by worms(16). The clothing wherein he had been committed to the grave, hungry Time had eaten away, with the exception of that portion which natural modesty used as a covering. This was as fresh as if it had just been put on. From the tomb breathed a fragrance that suggested, not a bed of ashes, but rather the grove of Hybla. This small cloth was taken to Ireland as a relic(17) and there, to her mingled joy and sorrow, handed to the lady Philippa, the noble wife of James Plunket.”(18)

The remaining thirteen pages of the book give details of the miracles wrought by Tregian and contain verses in his honour, no doubt written by Plunket and are omitted here. There is a tradition that his cause was sent to Rome as a candidate for canonisation. Both the incorruptibility of the body and the authenticated miracles are part of the evidence necessary in such a process. It has been suggested furthermore that this process was halted after the Great Earthquake of 1755.....

Tregian’s tomb, (unusually, he is buried erect and stands ‘hard by the Preacher’s Chair,’ in fact beneath the pulpit on the left, or Gospel, side of the Church) bears the following inscription:



AQUI ESTA EM PE O CORPO DE DOM FRANCISCO TREGIAN FIDALGO INGRES (sic) MUI ILLUSTRE O QUAL DEPOIS DE CONFISCADOS SEUS ESTADOS E GRANDES TRABALHOS PADECIDAS EM 28 ANNOS DE PRISAM POILA DEFESA DE FE CATOLICA EM ING^a NA PERSECUÇAM DA RAINHA ISABEL NO ANNO DE 1608 A 25 DZBRO MORREU NESTA CIDADE DE LISBOA COM GRANDE FAMA DE SANTIDADE AVENDO 17 ANNOS Q ESTAVA SEPULTADO NESTA IGREIIA DE S. ROQUE DA COMPANHIA DE IHS NO ANNO DE 1625 AOS 25 DE ABRIL SE ACHOU SEU CORPO INTEIRO E INCORRUPTO E FOI COLOCADO NESTE LUGAR PEILOS INGRES CATOLICOS RESIDENTES NESTA CIDADE AOS 25 DE ABRIL DE 1626.

This may be translated: 'Here lies the body of Sir Francis Tregian, an illustrious English gentleman who, after having had his estates and great possessions confiscated, suffered 28 years in prison in England during the persecution of Queen Elizabeth; he died in the year of 1608 on the 25th December with a great reputation for sanctity. After 17 years, during which time he was buried in this church of S. Roque of the Company of Jesus, in 1625 on the 25th April, his body was found to be entire and incorrupt and was placed in this spot by the English Catholics resident in this city on 25th April 1626'.

NOTES.

1. 'Pronounced Trudgeon'. (Boyan)
2. *St. Cuthbert Mayne, the first of the Forty Martyrs, canonised in 1970, who suffered in penal times for the Catholic Faith.*
3. *The Marshall was Sir George Carey, whose father, Lord Hunsdon, was first cousin to the Queen. He was to prove a ruthless opponent to the hapless family; he stood to gain personally from their ruin as he was given tenure of Tregian's land if he could bring him down.*
4. 'Plunket has evidently confused Sir Richard Grenville, Sheriff in 1577, died in the 'Revenge' 1591; with Sir Richard Grenville,

b.1600. General of the West during the Civil War; disgraced and imprisoned, 1646; escaped and fled abroad; died in great want at Ghent in 1658'. (Boyan).

5. *Of the family of the Arundells of Lanherne and Wardour. Boyan & Lamb give her name as Katherine, the Arundell family tree names her as Elizabeth and states that she was previously married to a Sir Richard Edgcombe.*

6. *This date is clearly wrong. If Tregian spent 27 years in prison and died in 1608 after release and exile in Iberia, he must have been incarcerated for the first time in the 1570s. Boyan & Lamb give the date as September, 1577. This is confirmed by A.L. Rowse in his book, 'Tudor Cornwall' p. 347.*

7. *A Papal Bull is a solemn document issued by the Pope. The possession of such a document constituted a crime in Elizabethan England.*

8. *Agnus Dei. A medal or waxen disc, consecrated by the Pope and stamped with the figure of a lamb supporting the banner of the cross. It was supposed to possess great virtues.*

9. *The prayer and the letter, which both take verse form, were written with a pin, using lamp black for ink and cover five and a half pages of typescript. They are omitted here.*

10. *The Tower. Though from Boyan & Lamb's account, this appears to have been the one prison he was not to endure. Tregian's constant moves from prison to prison and the different types of treatment he received, from solitary confinement, dungeons with the common criminals, to more reasonable quarters, are most confusing. Boyan & Lamb state (p.70) '...he was first interrogated in June, 1577, then released on bail; summoned to London and kept in the Marshalsea from September, 1577 until June, 1578; then conveyed into Cornwall and imprisoned at Launceston, where he remained until April, 1579. He was convicted in September, 1577 in his absence; he was again convicted in September, 1578; but on both occasions judgement was respited on account of irregularity of proceedings. He was finally condemned in the fourth week of Lent, 1579'. He was then moved to London in August of that year, to the Queen's Bench prison. In 1580 he was removed to the Fleet prison, where he was allowed, after a time, to have his own room, to live*

with his wife, to keep a servant and to send out for food and books, all of which had to be paid for. He was allowed out 'on parole' in 1601. Upon the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603 he petitioned to be allowed free and this wish was granted upon condition that he went into exile.

11. Francis and his wife, Mary are said to have had eighteen children, at least two of whom died in early childhood. Two of the sons, Francis and Charles, died unmarried, prisoners in the Fleet; about a third, Adrian who died young, practically nothing is known apart from his name. Of the seven daughters whose names we have, four, Sybilla, Dorothy, Katherine and Elizabeth remained unmarried. Mary, the first-born of the family married a Thomas Yate of Bedford and had five daughters. The second daughter (name unknown) married Richard Haweis of Treworgy, near Redruth and may not have had issue. The third, Philippa, married an Irishman, James Plunket and had two sons, one of whom, Francis, was the author of the text.

12. Tantalisingly, Plunket gives us no date for Tregian's release. Boyan & Lamb put it at 1603.

13. Philip III of Spain and II of Portugal (1598-1621). Portugal was ruled by the Spanish Habsburg Kings from 1580-1640.

14. How this figure is arrived at is a mystery. We have learnt already of twenty seven years' imprisonment. His tomb speaks of twenty eight. He certainly did not survive eighteen years after his arrival in Iberia.

15. The inscription on his tomb reads 'no anno de 1608 a 25 Dzbro. (thus Christmas Day) morreu nesta cidade de Lisboa...' However the entry in the records of the Church gives the date as 25th September.

16. 'His grave being yesterday opened, his body was found incorrupt and entire, without corruption in any part, so much as in nose, ears or stomach, or any other part most subject to corruption; yea, even his bowels were whole, neither did any evil savour or smell proceed from it. His hair is upon his head and beard, his flesh soft, and being pressed down riseth up again; his arms, fingers and legs, flexible..... It is seventeen years since he was buried, and some five years ago there was buried in this same grave a young youth....who is altogether consumed.' From a letter by an English Jesuit priest

resident in Lisbon...to his friend Fr. Forcer in Madrid, quoted by Boyan & Lamb p.125. *The preservation of a body in this way is regarded by Catholics as one of the signs of sanctity. Immediately the people of Lisbon rushed to see and to take, if possible, relics of Tregian's body.*

17. Ms. Boyan adds: 'It has recently been brought to my notice that a portion of this cloth is preserved in a case of relics at Stonyhurst. It measures about one square inch and is of woollen texture, dark brown or black, with white flecks and inscribed 'De Panno Francisci Trudgian.'

18. *The author's parents.*

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Andrew Bull is the Secretary of the Society and has written and edited many articles for the Report in past years.