canonist Gerson. In an anonymous tract published shortly afterwards *(Risposta di un Dottore in Teologia)* he laid down principles which struck at the very root of the pope’s authority in secular things. This book was promptly put upon the *Index,* and the republication of Gerson was attacked by Bellarmine with a severity which obliged Sarpi to reply in an *Apologia.* The *Considerazioni sidle Censure* and the *Trattato dell' Interdetto,* the latter partly prepared under his direction by other theologians, speedily followed. Numerous other pamphlets appeared, inspired or controlled by Sarpi, who had received the further appointment of censor over all that should be written at Venice in defence of the republic. His activity registers the progress of mankind, and forms an epoch in the history of free discussion. Never before in a religious controversy had the appeal been made so exclusively to reason and history; never before had an ecclesiastic of his eminence maintained the subjection of the clergy to the state, and disputed the pope’s right to employ spiritual censures, except under restrictions which virtually abrogated it. In so doing he merely gave expression to the convictions which had long been silently forming in the breasts of enlightened men, and this, even more than his learning and acuteness as a disputant, insured him a moral victory. Material arguments were no longer at the pope’s disposal. The Venetian clergy, a few religious orders excepted, disregarded the interdict, and discharged their functions as usual. The Catholic powers refused to be drawn into the quarrel. At length (April 1607) a compromise was arranged through the mediation of the king of France, which, while salving over the pope’s dignity, conceded the points at issue. The great victory, however, was not so much the defeat of the papal preten­sions as the demonstration that interdicts and excommuni­cations had lost their force. Even this was not wholly satisfactory to Sarpi, who longed for the toleration of Protestant worship in Venice, and had hoped for a separa­tion from Rome and the establishment of a Venetian free church by which the decrees of the council of Trent would have been rejected, and in which the Bible would have been an open book. But the controversy had not lasted long enough to prepare men’s minds for so bold a measure. The republic rewarded her champion with the further distinction of state counsellor in jurisprudence, and, a unique mark of confidence, the liberty of access to the state archives. These honours exasperated his adversaries to the uttermost; and after citations and blandishments had equally failed to bring him to Rome he began to receive intimations that a stroke against him was preparing in that quarter. On October 5 he was attacked by a band of assassins and left for dead, but the wounds were not mortal. The bravos found a refuge in the papal territories. Their chief, Poma, declared that he had been moved to attempt the murder by his zeal for religion, a degree of piety and self-sacrifice which seems incredible in a bankrupt oil-merchant. “ Agnosco stylum Curiae Romanae,” Sarpi himself pleasantly said, when his surgeon commented upon the ragged and inartistic character of the wounds, and the justice of the observa­tion is as incontestable as its wit. The only question can be as to the degree of complicity of Pope Paul V., a good man according to his light, but who must have looked upon Sarpi as a revolted subject, and who would find casuists enough to assure him that a prince is justified in punishing rebels by assassins when they are beyond the reach of executioners.

The remainder of Sarpi’s life was spent peacefully in his cloister, though plots against him continued to be formed, and he occasionally spoke of taking refuge in England. When not engaged in framing state papers, he

devoted himself to scientific studies, and found time for the composition of several works. A Machiavellian tract on the fundamental maxims of Venetian policy *(Opinione come debba governarsi la repubblica di Venezia),* used by his adversaries to blacken his memory, though a contemporary production, is undoubtedly not his. It has been attributed to a certain Gradenigo. Nor did he complete a reply which he had been ordered to prepare to the *Squitinio della Lbertà Veneta,* which he perhaps found unanswerable. In 1610 appeared his *History of Ecclesiastical Benefices,* “ in which,” says Ricci, “ he purged the church of the de­filement introduced by spurious decretals.” In the follow­ing year he assailed another abuse by his treatise on the right of asylum claimed for churches, which was imme­diately placed on the *Index.* In 1615 a dispute between the Venetian Government and the Inquisition respecting the prohibition of a book led him to write on the history and procedure of the Venetian Inquisition; and in 1619 his chief literary work, the *History of the Council of Trent,* was printed at London under the name of Pietro Soave Polano, an anagram of Paolo Sarpi Veneto. The editor, Marco Antonio de Dominis, has been accused of falsifying the text, but a comparison with a MS. corrected by Sarpi himself shows that the alterations are both unnecessary and unimportant. This memorable book, together with the rival and apologetic history by Cardinal Pallavicini, is minutely criticized by Ranke *(History of the Popes,* appendix No. 3), who tests the veracity of both writers by examining the use they have respectively made of their MS. materials. The result is not highly favourable to either, nor wholly unfavourable; neither can be taxed with deliberate falsification, but both have coloured and sup­pressed. They write as advocates rather than historians. Each had access to sources of information denied to the other ; so that, although it may be true in a sense that the truth lies between them, it cannot be attained by taking the middle way between their statements. Ranke rates the literary qualities of Sarpi’s work very highly. “ Sarpi is acute, penetrating, and sarcastic; his arrangement is exceedingly skilful, his style pure and unaffected. In power of description he is without doubt entitled to the second place among the modern historians of Italy. I rank him immediately after Machiavelli.” Sarpi never acknowledged his authorship, and baffled all the efforts of the Prince de Condé to extract the secret from him. He survived the publication four years, dying on January 15, 1623, labouring for his country to the last. The day before his death he had dictated three replies to questions on affairs of state, and his last words were “Esto per- petua.” His posthumous *History of the Interdict* was printed at Venice the year after his death, with the disguised imprint of Lyons.

Sarpi’s services to mankind are now acknowledged by all except the most extreme Ultramontane partisans ; and of his general character it is enough to say that even thcological hatred has been unable to fix the least personal imputation upon him. To the highest qualities of the scholar, the statesman, and the patriot he added charity, mag­nanimity, and disinterestedness. The only point on which his con­duct may be thought to require apology is the reserve in which ho shrouded his religious opinions. Great light has been thrown upon his real belief and the motives of his conduct by the letters of Chris­toph von Dohna, envoy of Christian, prince of Anhalt, to Venice, pub­lished by Moritz Ritter in the *Briefe und Acten zur Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Krieges, vol.* ii. (Munich, 1874). Sarpi told Dohna that he greatly disliked saying mass, and celebrated it as seldom as possible, but that he was compelled to do so, as he would other­wise seem to admit the validity of the papal prohibition, and thus betray the cause of Venice. This supplies the key to his whole behaviour; he was a patriot first and a religious reformer after­wards. He was most anxious to obtain liberty of Protestant worship at Venice, but scarcely proceeded beyond good wishes, partly from prudence, partly from being “ rooted ” in what Diodati described to Dohna as “the most dangerous maxim, that God does not regard externals so long as the mind and heart are right before