of the abbey of La Trappe, whose nominal abbot he had been for nearly thirty years. Associating himself with other personages who desired to revive the Cistercian dis­cipline, he made two journeys to Rome to obtain papal sanction for their plans, and after considerable delay a brief was procured from Alexander VII. authorizing the abbot of Citeaux, as general of the Cistercians, to hold a grand chapter of the order to discuss the proposed reforms, which actually did meet in 1667. But De Rancé’s ideas went much beyond the mere re-establishment of the strict observance; and, though he judged some details of the original rule unsuited to his own day, and blended with it some particulars borrowed from the Benedictine rule, yet he was so far from diminishing its general austerity that he added to the protracted fasts, the total abstinence from flesh-meat, fish, eggs, and wine, the laborious manual occupations, the hard beds, and the severe asceticism, even in the church services, which made part of the original rule, also the obligation of perpetual silence, save at prayers (to which eleven hours daily are devoted), and save also the “ Memento mori ” with which the Trappists greet each other on first meeting, which is the distinguishing feature of La Trappe, a rule from which none are dispensed save the abbot and the guest-master, as obliged to hold some degree of intercourse with outsiders; and he further or­dained that each monk should spend some time each even­ing digging his own grave, and should sleep on straw in his coffin for a bed. These austerities, though cheerfully embraced by the monks of La Trappe, and attracting enthusiasts from without, were far from being approved generally, even in the Cistercian order itself, and, when a decree was issued by the council of state in 1675 giving the abbot of Citeaux absolute authority over all Cistercians of the strict observance, De Rancé took alarm, and, think­ing it possible that an attempt might be made to mitigate the severities he had introduced (particularly as the mor­tality amongst the members of his society had been very large, and was currently attributed to insufficient nutri­ment), induced them to renew their vows and to pledge themselves against the admission of any relaxations. Nor was he content with opposing this kind of resistance to the bishops, abbots, and others who remonstrated with him upon the subject, but he also took up his pen in defence of his views, and published in 1683 his treatise *De la Sainteté et des Devoirs de la Vie Monastique,* which involved him in much controversy, notably with the learned Benedictine Mabillon, who replied to him in his well-known work *Traite des Études Monastiques,* published in 1691. Advancing years and unremitting asceticism told even on the strong constitution of De Rancé, and he found himself unable to take his share of the manual labours of the house, or even to be present in chapter, so that in 1695 he felt obliged to resign the abbacy, and pro­cured the nomination of the prior Zosimus to succeed him, but he died before the arrival of the bulls for his instal­lation, and Dorn Francis-Armand was substituted in his room, and inducted into office in 1696. He proved a failure as a ruler, and La Trappe broke up into two fac­tions during his headship, some holding to him and others to De Rancé, till the new abbot resigned in a fit of disgust of which he soon repented, but could not succeed in recalling his abdication. Dorn Jacques de la Tour, a man in sympathy with De Rancé, was then nominated by the crown, and while he was still abbot De Rancé died, on October 20, 1700, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

De Rancé was a tolerably copious author, though most of his writings were little more than occasional pamphlets suggested by the controversies in which he was engaged, short devotional treatises, and notices of deceased members of his community, but his reputation for ability and scholar­ship was never contested. He was a successful admini­strator, and, though the extreme severity of his institute resulted in the failure of fully six-sevenths of the postu­lants who presented themselves, he gathered round him during his government of the abbey no fewer than three hundred ascetics, French, Belgians, Germans, Italians, and Irishmen, one-third of whom were drawn from less austere communities or from the ranks of the parochial clergy and candidates for the priesthood. Of lay outsiders who joined him, the largest proportion consisted of rural artisans and labourers, and of soldiers, from officer to private (a class for which La Trappe has always continued to have attrac­tions), with a small sprinkling of the legal profession ; while two physicians and a single tradesman complete the tale of those who persevered out of the two thousand or so who presented themselves. No daughter houses were founded from La Trappe during De Rancé’s life, for, though he was ready enough to send some of his monks for a time or even permanently to revive the Cistercian discipline in other monasteries, he was opposed on principle to every scheme which tended to drain the resources of La Trappe itself, and it was not till 1705 that the first offshoot of the Trappists was planted at Buon-Solazzo, near Florence, at the solicitation of Cosmo III., grand-duke of Tuscany.

No remarkable events occurred in connexion with La Trappe till the French Revolution, when the order was included in the general suppression of monastic societies by the Constituent Assembly in 1790. Even then the high character borne by La Trappe, and honourably distin­guishing it from too many monasteries at that time, seemed likely to exempt it from the common fate, and great efforts were made to obtain its exclusion from the operation of the decree. A petition addressed by the Trappists to the National Assembly was referred to the council-general of the department of the Orne at Alençon, which reported against it to the ecclesiastical committee of the assembly, though admitting that all the local municipalities which they had consulted were in favour of sparing the abbey. Dorn Augustin (Louis Henri L’Estrange), at that time master of the novices, foreseeing the result of the inquiry, went to Switzerland to provide a refuge for the brethren, and obtained permission from the authorities of canton Freiburg to take possession of Val-Sainte, an unoccupied Cistercian monastery, and to bring no more than twenty- five persons thither. This necessitated leaving more than a hundred at La Trappe to await the coming storm, which burst upon Trinity Sunday, June 3, 1792, when com­missioners seized all the movable goods scheduled in their inventory, and compelled the inmates to disperse. Some betook themselves to Soleure ; a few retired singly into private dwellings ; but various groups set out together to found colonies in Spain, Germany, England, and Canada ; while the earlier Swiss and Tyrolese houses were compelled to break up and seek refuge elsewhere from the French invaders. But amidst all difficulties and discouragements the order not merely maintained itself, but grew and strengthened, and in 1808 ventured to plant anew two houses in France itself. This same year, however, saw the division of the order into two congregations, because the Trappists of Darfeld, under their prior Eugène de Prade, resisted what they considered to be the excessive demands made upon them by the abbot of the order, that very L’Estrange who had led out the colony of Val-Sainte (and who had been constituted its head, and that of the whole society, by a brief of Pius VI. in 1794), and the dispute was appealed to Rome, with the result that in June 1808 judgment was given against L’Estrange, and Darfeld was erected into an independent abbey under De Prade as abbot, and subjected to the jurisdiction of the bishop of Münster. Nearly every Trappist house at this date was