

THE CATHOLICS THE FIRST TO SPEAK AGAINST THE CHARGES OF WITCHCRAFT.—The honor of being the first to speak out against the injustice, brutality, and futility of the prevailing treatment of witches falls to a Catholic priest, Cornelius Loos by name. He was followed by the Jesuit, Adolph Tanner, and more strenuously and efficaciously by Friedrich Spee, whose hair had grown prematurely white while attending to those to whom he was appointed to minister at the time of their torture and execution. His work was published anonymously in 1631, and created an immense sensation. The practice had become too deep-rooted, however, to yield immediately to the influence of his words, but he had the satisfaction of seeing one Prince at least, the Elector John Philip Schönborn, of Mayence, abolish the proceedings against witches. Other Catholic Princes followed his example. In none of the Protestant States does the practice appear to have been given up throughout the whole of the seventeenth century. The most celebrated case in the annals of Sweden (called the trial of Borra) took place so late as 1670. Benedict Cerpzov, (died 1650,) who is called the lawgiver of Saxony, not only would have witches executed, but also those who denied the existence of witchcraft.—*Notes and Queries*

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