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A.D. 385—461

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# THE RISE OF THE PAPACY

A.D. 385-461

BY

WILLIAM ERNEST BEET, M.A.



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## PREFACE

SOME ten years ago, circumstances of which it is unnecessary here to speak first drew my attention to the early history of the Papacy. The extreme interest of the subject cast its spell upon me from the very first ; and I resolved to make it a matter of more detailed study. This I was unable, at the moment, to do ; but for about eight years past this quest has been the companion of the somewhat scanty leisure which pastoral cares in busy centres of population have allowed to me. It was my original intention to have dealt with the whole period from Apostolic times to the death of Leo the Great. This purpose has, however, been modified by a deepening conviction that there is still considerable work to be done before I can present the course of development during the earlier portion of that period with satisfaction to myself, or with due regard to the advantage of the reader.

In the following pages I have therefore confined myself to the events of somewhat less than one hundred years, but years most momentous

in Papal history as being formative to the highest degree. This course I was the more ready to adopt in view of the fact that I have given a more or less detailed sketch of the course of the earlier development of the Roman episcopate in two brochures which I have contributed under the title of *The Roman See in the First Centuries* to Mr. Francis Griffiths' *Essays for the Times* series (Nos. 23 and 36). To these I have given references in the following pages where it seemed desirable so to do, citing as "Beet, R.S. I" or "II." To this earlier period I shall, however, return again, and hope at no distant date to send forth a companion volume to the present, which will link on the story here told with the earliest Christian times.

It will be observed that, in the course of the narrative, I sometimes speak of the Eastern or the Western Empire. This I do solely as a matter of convenience; and the use of the expression does not imply that I have overlooked the fact that, strictly speaking, there were not two Empires, and that at all events in theory the Empire was one and indivisible, though for administrative and executive purposes it consisted of two divisions. This point should not be overlooked by any one desirous of obtaining a just appreciation of the facts of the case.

I have used the utmost care in the correction

of proofs, and trust that my references will be found to be generally correct ; though, as they are somewhat numerous, it is almost too much to hope that no errors have crept in. Only those who have had to correct proofs in which a large number of references are included know how easy it is to pass a misprint. It is perhaps hardly necessary for me to say that, unless it is definitely stated to the contrary, I have myself taken every reference from the authority quoted, and have utterly eschewed the evil practice of taking other men's references on trust.

So far as references to Migne are concerned—and they are many—I have uniformly cited the page, or rather the column. This I find in practice saves not a little time. Where no title is given *Patrologia Latina* may be understood.

I commit my little volume to the reading public with a firm conviction that if it fails to awaken interest the writer, not the subject, must be held to blame.

DEE MOUNT,  
URMSTON, MANCHESTER.  
*April, 1910.*



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**I**N the year 385, while Roman Paganism was engaged in its last expiring struggle for public recognition,<sup>1</sup> the Pontiff Damasus died and was succeeded in St. Peter's chair<sup>2</sup> by Siri-

<sup>1</sup> That paganism, though under the ban, was not entirely extinct as a living factor in the social life of Rome became manifest a few years later, during the period of the Visigothic troubles. As to the character of this paganism, which was of the East rather than the West, reference may be made to Dill's *Roman Life in the Last Century of the Western Empire*, pp. 63 seq.

<sup>2</sup> The chair which tradition, from the second century onwards, alleged to be the veritable chair of the Prince of the Apostles, had recently been placed by Damasus in the baptistery which he himself had added to the old Saint Peter's in Rome. This remarkable seat was now occupied

cius, whose episcopate witnessed the close of the struggle in favour of Christianity. But "in this great contest the Bishop of Rome filled only an inferior part; it was Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan, who enforced the final sentence of condemnation against paganism, asserted the sin, in a Christian emperor, of assuming any imperial title connected with pagan worship, and of permitting any portion of the public revenue to be expended on the rites of idolatry. It was Ambrose who forbade the last marks of respect to the tutelar divinities of Rome in the public ceremonies."<sup>1</sup>

Siricius was a strong prelate, and did not fail to uphold the dignity of his see. His pontificate need not, however, detain us long. Although the word *pope* was already in general use as a respectful term of address,<sup>2</sup> Siricius was the first Roman Bishop to adopt it formally as his

by the Bishops of Rome, and its use as an episcopal throne was of deep significance as giving objective expression to the now growing claim of those who proudly sate therein to be the successors of him whose name it bore. This chair is still in existence, and is uncovered and exposed to public view upon rare occasions. Cf. Gregorovius, *Rome in the Middle Ages* (Eng. tr.), vol. i, p. 95.

<sup>1</sup> Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, i, p. 101. See also art. "Ambrose of Milan" by the present writer in *P.M.Q. Rev.*, July, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> It was early applied as a general name to all Greek presbyters and Latin bishops. Cf. Döllinger, *Fables respecting Popes of M. A.*, p. 112. On the origin and early use of this title see Stanley, *Eastern Church* (Everyman edn.), p. 129; *Christian Institutions*, p. 267; and cf. Döllinger, p. 113.

title.<sup>1</sup> His historical importance is, however, mainly due to the fact that he is the author of the first admittedly genuine decretal,<sup>2</sup> or letter of the Bishop of Rome, regarded as having the force of law for the Western Church.<sup>3</sup> It was addressed to Himerius, Bishop of Tarragona, and was apparently written by Siricius in the year of his accession in response to a letter of the former to his predecessor making inquiry with reference to certain matters as to which the Spanish Bishop was in some perplexity. The opportunity of self-assertion thus presented was not suffered to escape; and Siricius, rising to the occasion, dispatched to his correspondent a reply "couched in language implying that the usages of Rome were to be considered as precedents for *all* other Churches. The subject of the decretal related to the celibacy of the clergy: marriage was to them peremptorily interdicted."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* vi, Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 13, p. 1164.

<sup>2</sup> For further information reference may be made to arts. "Decretal" and "Canon Law" by Cheetham and Shaw in *D. C. A.*; or under same headings in *Encyc. Brit.* (ninth edn.). Interesting arts. also in *Cath. Encyc.* and *Prot. Dict.* Some information may usually be found in the general histories.

<sup>3</sup> This is what it amounted to in practice. In theory, however, in the first instance, the decretals were in all probability regarded as letters of advice rather than command. Cf. the interesting remarks in Bury, *St. Patrick*, pp. 61-2.

<sup>4</sup> W. H. Wright, art. "Popes," *Protestant Dict.*, p. 519. For the text of the decretal see Siric., *Ep.* i (Migne, 13, pp. 1131-48).

The pronouncement thus made by Siricius has an additional interest as a sidelight upon the state of manners prevailing in ecclesiastical circles at this period. It implied, for instance, the ascendancy, in Rome, of a monastic ideal of life, a perhaps not unnatural rebound from the extreme licentiousness and luxury which ran riot under the pagan régime, and from which even the Christians of the capital were not altogether free;<sup>1</sup> but at the same time it revealed also the fact that this ideal met with by no means universal acceptance, and that there were great numbers of the clergy who could only be controlled into celibacy by law, and a law which, even in its promulgation, was forced to make some temporary and grudging concessions.<sup>2</sup> Its ultimate consequences were, however, far-reaching to an extent that could hardly have been foreseen at so early a period as the closing years of the fourth century. The institution of celibacy operated to render the clergy a class apart, severed from all earthly ties save that which bound them to the Church, with the glory and interests of which they more and more identified themselves, finding in the institution itself rather than in the spiritual purpose which it was intended to subserve the alpha and the omega of their existence. To

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gregorovius, *Rome in M. A.*, vol. i, pp. 137-147.

<sup>2</sup> Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, pp. 97-98.

this separation of its ministers, and a caste conception of the priesthood which resulted therefrom, was not a little due the splendour and the strength of the Western Church as a world-power in the Middle Ages; and of this power her Chief Pastor became more and more the executive and the expression.

That the grip of ecclesiastical Rome was tenacious had already received illustration. In 379 the political diocese of Illyricum was separated from the Western and assigned to the Eastern division of the Empire. Damasus, however, had insisted upon its remaining ecclesiastically subject to Rome, and had constituted Ascholius<sup>1</sup> Bishop of Thessalonica, and after him Bishop Anysius, as his Vicar. To the latter Siricius renewed his vicariate, as likewise Anastasius, who, in 398, became Bishop of Rome.

The episcopate of Anastasius was, by comparison, short and uneventful. But great events were at hand—events destined, amid prevailing ruin and distress, to raise the chair of the Roman Bishops to a height hitherto unattained, and perhaps undreamed of. The clouds which portended the coming storm already lay dark upon the

<sup>1</sup> Ascholius baptized the Emperor Theodosius. Cf. *Soc. H.E.*, v, 6; *Soz. H.E.*, vii, 4, where may be found some interesting remarks upon the religious condition of the province which are not without significance in this connexion.

political horizon ; broken for a moment by the valour and genius of Stilicho, they were not dispersed but gathered again darker and more menacing than ever. For while Anastasius ruled the Roman Church the fifth century began, a century which must ever stand forth as an epoch in the history of Europe, and of the world. It witnessed the collapse of the Western Empire, weakened by its own vices,<sup>1</sup> under the repeated shock of waves of barbarian invasion which broke upon it again and again ; it witnessed the passing of the hegemony of Europe from the Roman, eviscerated by immorality, to the virile and war-like Teuton ; and, last but by no means least, it also witnessed the rise of the spiritual imperium of the Roman Pontiffs upon the wreck of an effete Caesarism. Already when the century began the soil of Italy shook beneath the tread of the armies of the Goths, at whose presence, within a decade, Rome herself, erstwhile the Queen of the World, as if smitten with a palsy, rocked to her very foundations.

In the year 402 Anastasius died, and was succeeded by Innocent I, upon whose mind “ appears first distinctly to have dawned the vast conception of Rome’s universal ecclesiastical supremacy, dim as yet and shadowy, yet full and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, vol. i, pp. 504-22, and the references there given.

comprehensive in its outline” ;<sup>1</sup> his claims were indeed such, and so far made good as to justify us in applying to him the title of Pope, the earliest Roman bishop that can with propriety be so called. The position of high authority to which he attained was, no doubt, in part achieved by Innocent’s own high moral qualities and strength of will, but not by any means entirely so ; circumstances were all in his favour, and the course of public events was such as inevitably to strengthen the seat of the Bishop by undermining the throne of Caesar, and by finally driving him from the ancient imperial capital. It therefore appears to be necessary, before entering upon any discussion of the pontificate of Innocent, to give some indication of the social and political conditions, and to outline briefly the general course of those events which contributed not a little, though perhaps indirectly, to shape his destiny, and to open up a line of development by way of which his bishop’s chair became, in course of time, the most august of thrones.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, i, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> For a fuller account of the events of this most interesting period, many works are available. Special reference, however, may be made to the three excellent chapters in Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, vol. i, pp. 277-389 ; Milman, *Hist. Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, pp. 121-135 ; Gregorovius, *Rome in Middle Ages*, vol. i, pp. 114-169 ; and, of course, Gibbon, cc. 30, 31 in Bury’s edition. Interesting light upon the general characteristics of the period may be obtained from

Originally set in motion by the pressure of the Huns, a savage Asiatic tribe, upon their own territory so far back as 376,<sup>1</sup> the Goths, in their turn, had already been pressing heavily upon the frontiers of the Empire for some time, when at length, in 400, they violated the soil of Italy, and began to threaten the capital itself. Alaric, their leader and king, had already invaded Greece, where he had been confronted, with a skill and conduct more than equal to his own, by the imperial general Stilicho, whose hand, however, had been stayed by some palace intrigue at Constantinople; whereupon the Gothic King appears to have come to terms with the Eastern Court, himself receiving some official position under the Emperor in Illyricum.<sup>2</sup> But, still unsatisfied, and no doubt seeking a settlement in that country, Alaric in the closing year of the fourth century descended with his tribesmen upon Italy itself. The Emperor Honorius, unworthy son of a noble sire, dismayed and powerless in face of the threatening peril, was, for the moment, saved from the shame and horror of a barbarian conquest by the

Dill's *Roman Life*, already referred to in an earlier note. In all these works abundant references to the original authorities are given, the most important of which are readily accessible in English translations.

<sup>1</sup> Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 257, points out that the title "Master-General of Illyricum" given to Alaric by Gibbon is a conjecture only, but a probable one.



sword of Stilicho, who barred the progress of the invading hordes on the hard-fought fields of Pollentia<sup>1</sup> in 402, and Verona in the following year. In the year of this second victory, after the lapse of exactly a century, Rome witnessed a triumph, that of the Emperor Honorius for the victories of another man; in which, however, Stilicho, the true hero of the day, was graciously permitted by his miserable master to share. Rome, breathing freely once more, was all *en fête*, rejoicing, after a long desertion, to welcome an emperor into her palaces again; though, had she but known the truth, there was little cause for real rejoicing. In the words of one of her foremost historians, the city "had decked herself as a bride to meet her long-expected wooer; but the bride was old and the wooer feeble."<sup>2</sup> But, for the moment, it meant that her desolate palaces would once more be gay with all the splendour of a court, and her public places boast the outward signs of imperial pomp. And beyond the present moment she did not care to look. It is, however, significant as a sign of the times, and as an indication of the place which the Christian

<sup>1</sup> The details of the battle of Pollentia are involved in much obscurity; it has been variously represented as a Gothic defeat, a Roman defeat, and a drawn battle. On this point see Freeman, *Western Europe in the Fifth Century*, p. 14, and Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 296.

<sup>2</sup> Gregorovius, *Rome in M. A.*, vol. i, p. 116.

Church had come to occupy in the public life of the city of Rome, that, upon the approach of the Emperor to the ancient capital, Bishop Innocent, at the head of a procession of his priests, went forth with crosses and banners to meet the Head of the State.

Rome did not long retain the presence of her lord. Honorius remained there for one year only, and then forsook the city, never to return. In the meantime ill news had come to hand ; a mingled barbarian horde under the standard of the pagan <sup>1</sup> Radagaisus, who had swept down from the Baltic to the Danube, whether as the ally or the rival of Alaric it is difficult to say,<sup>2</sup> was threatening the defenceless frontier. Upon receipt of this intelligence, deeming Rome no longer safe, the imperial craven fled to hide himself in morass-girt Ravenna. Nearer and nearer drew the peril ; Florence was besieged, Rome threatened ; but once again, in her hour of need, Stilicho stood forth as the bulwark of Italy. In a great battle in the neighbourhood of Florence, the Roman general met and overthrew Radagaisus, thus averting the second woe ; but the third woe was destined to come quickly ; and when it came the former defender of Italy was no more. For the

<sup>1</sup> Aug. *Civ. Dei.* v, 23 ; Orosius, vii, 37 (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 31, p. 1158 *seq.*), or Zangmeister's handy little edition (Lips. 1889), p. 289.

<sup>2</sup> Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

heroic Stilicho had in the meantime fallen a victim to the dark intrigues of the palace and the envy which his pre-eminence and services had inspired.

The story of the fall of this great minister and general is so obscure and contradictory that it is almost, if not quite, impossible to get at the exact truth of it ; and any detailed criticism of current narratives would here be out of place, as somewhat alien to the purpose which we have more especially in view. The slightest indication of what appears to have occurred must therefore suffice.

After his defeat at Verona Alaric had withdrawn from Italy, having apparently come to some sort of understanding with the Roman general ; thus affording a starting-point for the suspicion which jealousy is always so ready to entertain against the great, on however slender grounds. The former at all events had found employment in Illyricum, and may have been acting in collusion with the latter, who seems to have desired to filch that province from the Eastern Empire. Then, early in 408, Alaric appeared on the north-eastern frontier of Italy, demanding payment for his unfinished enterprise. Thus the Gothic question again became acute at the Western Court ; and the Senate was assembled in Rome to consider the demand, and to take measures for dealing with the crisis which it,

of course, precipitated. Rome was not entirely unmindful of her past, and many voices were raised in favour of war rather than disgraceful concession. Stilicho, however, advocated peaceful settlement, and finally prevailed upon the Senate to pay an indemnity of £160,000 to the ambassadors of the Gothic king. But this was not done without arousing resentment in certain quarters,<sup>1</sup> and raising some question as to the ultimate aims of the great captain, who now proposed to buy off the enemy whom he had already more than once chastised.

At this juncture Arcadius died, and the Eastern throne passed to his infant son Theodosius, a fact which was at once turned to account by the enemies of the Western chieftain, who industriously bruited abroad the suggestion, though apparently without the least justification, so far, at least, as the available evidence and the general character of Stilicho affords any indication, that he was conspiring to oust the child-emperor from his throne in order that he might seat his own son Eucherius thereon ; and thus, father of one emperor, father-in-law of the other, and the real power behind both thrones, to make himself the *de facto* sovereign of East and West alike. The soldiers, who feared the stern discipline of Stilicho

<sup>1</sup> This resentment was voiced by the Senator Lampadius in the indignant exclamation, *Non est ista pax sed pactio servitutis !* Zos. v, 29.

lent ready ears to treasonable counsels, and at Ticinum rose against his friends, and could not be appeased until many illustrious victims had been slain—one of them, Salvius the Questor, vainly pleading for mercy, at the very feet of Honorius himself, whose complicity in this intrigue against his ablest minister and near relative is thus established.

The rumour, however, got abroad that the Emperor himself had fallen a victim in the outbreak ; upon hearing which Stilicho immediately proposed to march upon the mutineers as his avenger. But when a more correct version of the facts came to hand, the significance of which the General could not misunderstand, he resheathed his sword, and declined to be the avenger of his own supporters, now that he knew that the Emperor was safe. Stilicho's attitude at this crisis affords a strong presumption of his loyalty. He saw clearly enough that his imperial son-in-law, now completely alienated from him, was in league with his bitterest foes ; his fellow generals gave unequivocal signs that they saw it too, and openly shrank away from their former chief as a man under the ban. Sarus, eager for the reward of Olympius, Stilicho's rival and foe, sought the tent of the General only to find that he had already fled. Now fully alive to his peril, the great soldier hastened to Ravenna, and took

sanctuary in a church there, whence, however, he was eventually dragged from the very altar to the death of a felon, the victim, in the main, of his own pre-eminence and services.<sup>1</sup>

The murder of Stilicho not only removed the one man who was capable of holding Alaric in check, but appears to have directly contributed to the difficulties with which the Western Court was beset by affording to the Gothic leader a pretext for the invasion of Italy and the march on Rome.<sup>2</sup> At all events Alaric now crossed the Alps, after some pretence at negotiation with Honorius,<sup>3</sup> and pressed on towards Rome. The Gothic chieftain either felt or pretended to feel himself to be the instrument of a Higher Power. To a monk, who by entreaty or persuasion strove to change his purpose and to stay his march, he is reported to have said: "I am urged on this course in spite of myself; for there is a something that irresistibly impels me daily, saying, 'Proceed to Rome and desolate that city.'"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An unfavourable view of Stilicho is presented in Philostorgius *H.E.*, xii, 1, 2; Oros., vii, 38; for the opposite see Zosimus, v, 34; a middle view is that of Soz. *H.E.*, ix, 4. The best modern authorities are decidedly favourable in their judgement.

<sup>2</sup> So Niebuhr, *Lectures on Hist. Rome*, cxlviii (Schmitz' ninth edition, p. 790).

<sup>3</sup> Soz. *H. E.*, ix, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Soc. *H. E.*, vii, 10. See also Soz. *H. E.*, ix, 6; and cf. Claudian, *De Bell. Pollent.*, 544-48.

In the autumn of the same year, 408, Alaric was at the gates of Rome, while fear, famine, and pestilence held sway within. In vain the Romans attempted a policy of bluff; the Goth replied to their empty bluster with the laconic brevity of supreme contempt. In the hour of their despair some of the citizens, seeking perhaps to disguise even from themselves the fact that they were now sternly bidden to a banquet of the dead-sea fruit which had sprung up with rank luxuriance from seeds which they, and their fathers before them, had diligently sown, were inclined to attribute their calamities to the prevalence of Christianity,<sup>1</sup> and to the anger of the ancient gods on account of the comparative neglect into which their several cults had fallen. This feeling found expression in a certain recrudescence, very limited however, of pagan rites which now took place.<sup>2</sup> But such devices were of no avail, nor did any sign of help appear; and Rome, once the mistress of the world, was reduced to buying off the barbarian foe whom she could no longer face in the high places of the battle-field, sending the very images of her old-time gods to the melting-pot in order to raise the necessary ransom.

<sup>1</sup> Augustine in his great work, *City of God*, expressly controverts this explanation of the disasters of 408-10, and remorselessly lays bare the real significance thereof. See especially Book I.

<sup>2</sup> Soz. *H. E.*, ix, 6; Zos., v, 41.

But the future was still all uncertain. Alaric's relation to the city he had spared remained undefined; and, upon reference to Ravenna on the subject, Honorius declined—perhaps he was unable—to effect an accommodation, with the natural consequence that the blockade was renewed in the following year. Alaric, still anxious to come to terms, was moderate in his demands, and endeavoured to attain the object which he had in view by securing as his ambassadors the bishops of the cities through which he had passed on his Romeward march,<sup>1</sup> Innocent, meanwhile, having been dispatched by the Senate to Ravenna on their behalf. This selection of ecclesiastics as diplomatic agents, on the part alike of the Roman and the Goth, bears striking testimony to the growing influence of the Church in social and political life. But all these well-intentioned efforts were in vain; the Emperor was impracticable, and would do nothing; upon him therefore largely rests the responsibility for the second siege of Rome, which now began.

Despairing of Honorius, hard pressed by Alaric, Rome at length began to think of making terms on her own behalf, renounced her allegiance, and bestowed the purple and the diadem upon the City Prefect, Atalus,<sup>2</sup> the nominee of Alaric, who was

<sup>1</sup> Zos., v, 36, 37.

<sup>2</sup> Soz. *H. E.*, ix, 8; cf. Soc. *H. E.*, vii, 10.



appointed Commander-in-Chief forthwith, while his brother-in-law, Atawulf, became Commander of the Household Troops. The puppet-emperor, half-Arian, half-pagan, popular with none, did not long remain seated upon his mock throne. After a short trial the impossibility of the new order of things clearly revealed itself; and Atalus was promptly degraded by the hand which had exalted him, whereupon he sank back into the insignificance which was his proper sphere.

On the failure of his plan of reconstruction, Alaric once again addressed himself to the well-nigh impossible task of arranging terms of accommodation with Honorius, but, as almost might have been foreseen, without success; and then marched upon the capital. Once more face to face with the Goth, Rome closed her gates and made a show of defence, but it was neither protracted nor heroic. The assailant appeared before the walls, and the city fell. Of the actual details we know but little; and whether entrance to the city was gained by treachery at the Salarian gate, or whether the gate was carried by assault it is now impossible to decide.<sup>1</sup>

But however that may be, Rome at last saw

<sup>1</sup> Procopius, *De Bell. Vand.*, i, 2; Oros., vii, 39. The former of these writers hints at treachery, while the latter, a contemporary, rather suggests assault. Cf. also Soz., ix, 9.

the enemy within her gates, and underwent the horrors of a sack. Outrage and pillage were, of course, the order of the day,<sup>1</sup> though the actual damage done to the city itself was perhaps less than might have been expected.<sup>2</sup> Amid the widespread ruin inseparable from such an event and the almost universal collapse of all civil institutions, the Church alone remained erect; and the power of Christianity was seen to be a thing to be reckoned with, still able, when every other check had broken down, to impose some restraint upon the passions of an infuriated soldiery in the wild hour of their triumph. For the Christian churches, notably the two great basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul, were, for the most part, spared; and in their shadow a measure of security was to be found when security there was none elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> Happily the tribulation of those days was shortened, for Alaric, as though in awe of his own achievement, withdrew his forces with an immense spoil at the end of three days.

The impression made throughout the empire by the tidings of the fall of Rome, the horrors of

<sup>1</sup> Soc. *H. E.*, vii, 10; Soz. *H. E.*, ix, 9; Aug. *Civ. Dei.*, bk. i, see especially cc. 7, 10, 12, 14, 16.

<sup>2</sup> On this point see Gregorovius, *Rome in M. A.*, vol. i, pp. 158 *seq.*, and the references there given.

<sup>3</sup> Augustine dwells upon this point in tones which are almost triumphant, *Civ. Dei*, i, 4, 7.

which lost nothing as the story passed from mouth to mouth, was profound. Jerome, for instance, in far-off Palestine was filled with horror, and paints the scene in the darkest colours.<sup>1</sup> And the event, in very truth, was such as might well appall the imagination of the fifth century. For, since the far-off days of Brennus, which lay beyond the reach of sober history, and whose memory was imperfectly preserved in legend and in myth, this was the first violation of that proud mother-city, whence had sprung the mighty race which had awed and ruled the world; and from whose gates the "dread" Hannibal himself, when at the very summit of his career of conquest and of glory, had turned impotent away. The spell of ages was broken, the invincible was conquered at last! Queen of the world for ages, at length her own hour had come, and Babylon the Great had fallen, less by the valour of the Goths than her own inherent weakness, and the utter incapacity of her lord; undermined by luxury and vice she had become an easy victim; the glory of the city had departed indeed! Rome the Spoiler of cities had herself become the prey of the spoilers, and the Ravager of the world was ravaged with an unsparing hand!

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Epp.*, 127, 12-13; 128, 4; 130, 5f. (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, xxii, pp. 1094-5, 1099, 1109 f.); *Comm. in Ezech*, i, præf. (Migne, xxv, pp. 15-16).


The fall of Rome marks an epoch in the history of the West. It made absolute the divorce between the old seat of empire and the headquarters of the imperial administration, now definitely transferred to Ravenna, which city, until the middle of the eighth century, continued to be regarded as the seat of government and the capital of Italy. The old imperialism was in fact passing away, and what remained was unsubstantial enough, the mere after-glow, so to speak, of a sun which had already really set. But a new day was dawning, and the transference of the imperial headquarters to Ravenna, by leaving him without a rival, only served to smooth the progress of her Bishop, now the leading citizen of Rome, in the path to power. Thus the place of secular authority, vacated by a waning empire, was gradually assumed by a waxing papacy. The city of Caesar no longer, Rome was in future to be known as the City of the Pope, and as such to become the seat of an authority farther reaching and more abiding than any that the ancient world had ever seen.<sup>1</sup>

It is now time to return to Innocent I. Alaric was already upon Italian soil, and the shadow

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the striking remark of Hobbes in which the Papacy is described as the "ghost" of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof. *Leviathan*, c. 47, p. 313 (Morley's edn.).

of impending disaster rested heavy upon Rome—a shadow, however, somewhat lightened, for the moment, by the victorious arms of Stilicho—when this great prelate ascended the chair of St. Peter, among the occupants of which history must ever regard him as occupying a foremost place. What he did, and how, amid political collapse and national ruin, he succeeded in enlarging his authority and strengthening his position, now demands some consideration.

At the opening of the fifth century the succession of the Roman bishops from the Prince of the Apostles was generally accepted; and this belief, coupled with the fact of the uniqueness of the position which Rome had held among the cities of the world, did not a little to secure, as by a double right, to the Bishop of that city a deferential consideration unexampled elsewhere throughout the whole of Christendom. The primacy of Peter, and the pre-eminence of Rome, indeed, reacted each upon the other. “The Church of Rome would own no founder less than the chief Apostle; and the distance between St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles, even St. Paul himself, was increased by his being acknowledged as the spiritual ancestor of the Bishop of Rome.”<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, p. 106; to which further reference may be made for a clear and interesting statement on this point.

In the West, of course, the Roman See unquestionably stood alone. In importance and dignity none other could for one moment compare with it; it alone boasted an apostolic origin, and shared, moreover, in the prestige of the imperial city whose name it bore. In the East, it is true, there were great and ancient apostolic sees; but the succession of their bishops had been confused and broken by the conflicting claims of rival prelates, and their dignity impaired by imputations of heresy, or controversy and strife which undermined the very foundations of the Christian society. From the metaphysical and doctrinal disputes which had rent and torn Eastern Christendom Rome had wisely stood aloof, abiding calmly and generally unswerving in a position of strict orthodoxy. By contrast with Antioch or Alexandria, for instance, Rome appeared as a strong rock, upon which broke in vain the swirling tides of changeful opinion, by which other great historic centres of Christian life were swept and worn down until they lost all semblance of either stability or dignity. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that the East looked to the West for assistance in its controversial warfare, and that of all allies the Bishop of Rome came early to be held in esteem as the most effective and reliable. By a very natural progress, from enjoying high consideration as

an ally, the mere fact of whose countenance did not a little to secure success to the party whose cause he espoused, the Bishop of Rome was soon in the way of being regarded as something more than that, the chief judge of a sort of supreme court of ecclesiastical appeal whose pronouncements were of decisive authority in matters alike of faith and discipline. The action of the bishops assembled in Council at Sardica <sup>1</sup> sixty years before the opening of the period with which we are now more immediately concerned, affords sufficient evidence of the trend of events in this direction, even so early as the middle of the fourth century; and the position of Innocent was, it perhaps need hardly be said, far stronger than that of his predecessor Julius. Ambrose was now dead, and the death of that mighty prelate had removed the one ecclesiastic in the Western world whose personality, coupled with high, though inferior, position, might have availed to overshadow that even of the Bishop of Rome.

Once seated in the Bishop's chair, Innocent, as a matter of course, re-commissioned the Bishop of Thessalonica as his Vicar for the Illyrian provinces,<sup>2</sup> and lost no time in showing what manner of man he was, and that he was

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Beet, *R. S.*, ii, pp. 33-35.

<sup>2</sup> *Inn. Ep.*, i (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 20, p. 463).

thoroughly resolved never to neglect an opportunity of extending the authority of his see.

For such opportunity he had not long to wait. In 403, the year following his accession, Victricius, Bishop of Rouen, applied to him for information, on certain points, as to the discipline and practice of the Roman Church. Innocent replied in the tone of a Pope, and forwarded to his Gallic correspondent a letter containing fourteen rules, the fourth of which is especially noteworthy as setting forth the writer's claim to the power of deciding as superior judge in all more important cases "as the Synod has decreed."<sup>1</sup> Sweeping as is the claim thus made, and eloquent the testimony which it bears to the far-reaching ambition of the prelate who made it, it is not without significance that the claim itself is based upon custom and the decree of a Synod,<sup>2</sup> and not upon any supposed relation of succession

<sup>1</sup> The text of this rule runs as follows:—*Si majores causae in medium fuerint devolvae, ad sedem apostolicam, sicut synodus statuit, et beata consuetudo exigit, post judicium episcopale referantur.* Cf. *Inn. Ep.*, ii, 3 (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 20, p. 474).

<sup>2</sup> The synod in this case is that of Sardica, cf. Beet, *R. S.* ii, pp. 33-35. The canon in question, however, was not unfrequently misrepresented as Nicene in the interests of the Roman See. Of such misrepresentation Innocent appears to have been guilty, or else stands convicted of serious inconsistency or grave ignorance, for in a letter to Theophilus of Alexandria, with reference to the case of Chrysostom, he speaks of the canons of Nicaea as alone entitled to obedience. *Inn. Ep.*, v, cf. also vii, 3 (Migne, pp. 495, 505); *Soz.*, *H. E.*, viii, 26.



between the claimant and the Prince of the Apostles, directly commissioned by our Lord Himself as the earthly Head of His Church ; and this in spite of the fact that the Roman episcopate of St. Peter was very generally accepted throughout Christendom. In other words, at this stage of its development, the authority of the Holy See was treated, by a possessor who was quite prepared to make the most of it, as a matter of Church order and public convenience rather than as one of revelation and direct divine appointment. Innocent apparently claimed a prescriptive right to be regarded as the Chief Bishop of the Christian Church, but did not as yet claim his prerogative as the successor of St. Peter. The significance of this last point should not be overlooked, though for the moment we pass it by without further comment.

Two years later, in 405, Innocent was consulted by another Gallic bishop, Exsuperius of Toulouse. This prelate was commended by the Pope in still loftier tones for referring doubtful matters to the Roman chair without presuming to decide them for himself.<sup>1</sup> Not the least interesting feature of this letter is the attempt made by the writer, in response to his correspondent's appeal, perhaps somewhat unwillingly,

<sup>1</sup> For the questions involved and the advice given, see Inn. *Ep.*, vi (Migne, pp. 495-502).

for the subject appears to have been one in which he personally had no very deep interest, to determine the question of the canon of Holy Scripture, though without success.<sup>1</sup>

By this time, however, Innocent had become involved in a much more famous case. The names of the Gallic bishops, Victricius and Exsuperius, are forgotten, but that of the great John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, is still a household word. Elevated by acclamation, but contrary to his own desire, to the imperial see of New Rome, the great preacher had not occupied that great position for any length of time ere he found it to be a very bed of thorns. The man being what he was, and the condition of religious affairs in Constantinople what they were, trouble for the former was indeed inevitable. Chrysostom's ideal of the Christian life was simple and austere; Constantinople was magnificent, luxurious, and immoral. Entirely unfitted by temperament and conviction to play the part of a time-server or sycophant, despite the flattery of the Empress Eudoxia, which at times dropped strangely from his lips, the new Patriarch found himself almost immediately confronted with the simple alternative of martyrdom or moral suicide. His

<sup>1</sup> Inn., *ib.* c. 7; cf. Reuss, *History of the Canon*, p. 207.

choice was bravely made. The splendid eloquence of the "Golden-Mouth" was unsparingly used in denunciation of pleasant vices in high places, and even in the imperial Court itself, which he confronted with a spirit as heroic as that of Ambrose himself. Constantinople was in a ferment, and became a very hotbed of faction and intrigue, which indeed reached far beyond the confines of the city itself. Chrysostom became an object of bitter hatred to the imperial Eudoxia, and to Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, perhaps the most relentless of all his persecutors; under the presidency of Theophilus,—the defendant by a sudden turn of fortune become a judge—he was condemned by the Synod of the Oak, and its sentence of deposition and banishment was accepted by the feeble Emperor Arcadius. When the sentence was already being carried into effect, he was for the moment saved, as it must have seemed to himself and his supporters by the direct interposition of heaven. A few months later the affair of the porphyry column and the silver statue led to a new and more violent outbreak of discord between the Bishop and the Empress, whom the former is reported to have publicly denounced with more force than good taste, thundering forth in his anger and sense of wrong, "Again Herodias is dancing, again she demands

the head of John in a charger." A new Council met in Constantinople which deposed the bold prelate for the second time, with the result that, in June 404, he was dragged into distant exile, and harried into his grave three years later, though not until he had written those letters which still remain among our cherished literary possessions.<sup>1</sup>

In the course of this bitter and protracted controversy both parties to the dispute evinced an unmistakable desire to enlist the support of Innocent, who received letters alike from Theophilus and Chrysostom. This fact, especially as one of the appealing prelates occupied, as Bishop of New Rome, a position which seemed almost to rival that of the Bishop of the ancient capital itself, while the other was Patriarch of a great and venerable apostolic see, has not unfrequently been regarded as notable evidence in favour of the papalist interpretation of history. This, however, so far from being actually the case, tells rather in the opposite direction when the facts are clearly understood. Chrysostom,

<sup>1</sup> For further information reference may be made to *Vit. Chrys.*, attributed to, and not improbably the work of Palladius, certainly that of an eye-witness—our principal source. See Migne, *P. G.*, 47, pp. 5 *seq.* See also Soc., *H. E.*, vi; Theod., *H. E.*, v. 27-36; Soz., *H. E.*, viii; Gibbon, c. xxxii; Hefele, *Councils*, ii, pp. 30-39. For a popular account, Farrar, *Lives of the Fathers*, ii, pp. 615-706. Cf. especially § xviii.

it is quite true, appealed to the West for sympathy and assistance, on being forcibly deposed for doing what he conceived to be his duty ; but there is not a shred of real evidence for supposing that he appealed to Rome in the sense that St. Paul, as a Roman citizen, appealed unto Caesar, or for a single moment regarded himself as carrying his case to the final court of appeal, from whence might be obtained an authoritative decision upon all matters of ecclesiastical dispute, a decision which even the Empress and her minions must respect. His letter was addressed, not to a Supreme Pontiff, but to the three great prelates of the West, of whom, of course, Innocent was the first, the others being Venerius of Milan, and Chromatius, of Aquileia.<sup>1</sup>

So far from being a formal appeal to an official judge, the letter of Chrysostom simply entreats the friendly interposition of the Western prelates to effect the calling of a General Council which should thoroughly sift the whole matter. Not, therefore, in the Bishop of Rome, but in a General Council did the supreme power of ecclesiastical administration, as Chrysostom conceived it, reside. That the latter was no papalist his own writings abundantly show. Doubtful questions

<sup>1</sup> So in the copies preserved by the Greek writers, though, for obvious reasons, in the Latin versions the letter is represented as being addressed to Innocent alone. Cf. Migne *P. G.*, 52, pp. 529 *seq.* For a second letter, p. 535.

in matters of faith must be decided by reference to the teaching of Scripture, and in cases where the precise meaning of the sacred writing does not appear to lie immediately upon the surface the true interpretation must not be sought by mere acceptance of the verdict of another, but by employment of the individual's own sense and judgement in the quest of truth. Herein is asserted not only the right but the duty of private judgement, the very antithesis of the papal spirit. Chrysostom stands for spiritual freedom; if further witness of this fact be required we need not to go beyond the one brief saying: "We have no 'masters upon earth'—God forbid! We have 'One Master that is in heaven.'"<sup>1</sup> Chrysostom rendered homage before a throne loftier than St. Peter's chair.

Innocent meanwhile had received the letters of the mutually opposed patriarchs with diplomatic reserve, and hesitated to commit himself irrevocably to either side. He replied to the Bishop of Alexandria to the effect that he must present his charges before a properly constituted Council;<sup>2</sup> and to Chrysostom with kindly sympathy, urging him not to lose heart, and adding some pious platitudes about the support of a

<sup>1</sup> Chrys., *Homilies on Acts*, xxxiii, pp. 462-7 (Parker's edn.) see especially pp. 463, 464, 466.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, v. (Migne, p. 493).

good conscience, but saying nothing at all definite with reference to the matter immediately in question.<sup>1</sup> The hesitation shown by Innocent is not without significance, and can hardly, under the circumstances, be explained as that of a man awaiting fuller information as to the merits of the case before making up his mind. His attitude appears rather as that of a man uncertain of his power, willing to intervene, yet cautiously feeling his way. As such it throws an interesting light upon his own consciousness, that the sphere of authority wielded by the Roman Chair was vague and ill-defined ; hence he was unwilling, by rashly pressing it too far, to act in a manner calculated to lay it open to a sudden check. But, whatever its cause, the indecision of Innocent did not last long, and his letter to the persecuted patriarch was speedily followed by one addressed to the clergy and people of Constantinople in which he dwelt upon the guiltlessness of the exiled but unconvicted bishop, the iniquity of the intrigues to which he had fallen a victim ; he insisted further that Arsacius, who had supplanted him, was no true bishop ; and that the only remedy for the evils of the time lay in a General Council, with the convocation of which he charged himself, so

<sup>1</sup> Soz., *H. E.*, viii, 26 ; Inn., *Ep.*, xii (Migne, p. 513).

soon as a favourable opportunity presented itself.<sup>1</sup>

Innocent, conscious of the limitations of his own power and sincerely desirous to assist Chrysostom in his hour of need, now had recourse to what promised to be a more effective means of obtaining the end which he had in view than any letter of his own could be. He invoked the imperial power, and so successfully brought to bear upon Honorius such influence as he possessed that the Western Emperor himself wrote to his brother Arcadius, the last time under the advice of a Council convoked by the Pope, openly espousing the cause of Chrysostom and urging the need for calling together a General Council at Thessalonica to deal with the case.<sup>2</sup>

But Arcadius remained unmoved; for the power of Honorius was paralysed by the threatening attitude of Alaric and Radagaisus; and the deputation of bishops, named by Innocent at his request, which he sent to represent his own views and those of the Pope, was insulted and imprisoned. The effort of the West had broken down, and the great preacher and prelate was left to his fate.

This correspondence throws an interesting sidelight upon the claims and position of Inno-

<sup>1</sup> Soz., *H. E.*, viii, 26. Cf. Inn., *Ep.*, vii, 4 (Migne, p. 505).

<sup>2</sup> For this letter see Inn., *Ep.*, ix (Migne, p. 511).



cent. The tone of the latter in his dealings with the clergy and people of Constantinople is, as we have already observed, many degrees less self-assertive than that adopted by him in his correspondence with the bishops of Gaul. It is therefore necessary that this fact should be taken into account as corrective of any false estimate of his actual position, to which consideration of the Gallic letters alone might lead us. He is far from bearing himself as the spiritual dictator of Christendom, indeed his letter to Chrysostom is that of an equal to an equal, and quite brotherly in tone. He does not appear to possess the least consciousness of any authority, vested in himself alone, to give a judicial utterance upon the matter in dispute. He speaks rather of a General Council as the sole authority capable of dealing with the affair in a final way. In other words, though, as we have already seen and shall see again, he was prepared to give his authority the widest extension possible, his claims, as compared with those afterwards preferred by his successors, were moderate indeed; Innocent makes no pretence of flinging an imperial mantle over his bishop's robe. But, while avoiding all extravagance, and fully recognizing the existence of a purely ecclesiastical authority higher than his own, a certain measure of authority he does claim. He declares the deposition of his brother

of Constantinople to be illegal, and, in substance if not in form, deposes the prelate by whom he had been supplanted ; and in precise terms lays down the law with respect to what canons are entitled to obedience. But, on a general view of the whole case, in his relation to this painful episode, Innocent, whether judged from the standpoint of justice and morality or that of ecclesiastical order, was in the right ; the public conscience was on his side, with the inevitable consequence, to quote the words of the historian of Latin Christianity, “ that the Bishop of Rome, the head at least of the Italian prelates, could not but rise in the general estimation of Christendom.”<sup>1</sup>

It is a far cry from Constantinople to Spain, and it must have been at least flattering to the Bishop of Rome’s sense of his own growing importance that, alike on the eastern frontier and the western verge of Europe, his intervention was courted and his aid eagerly sought after. The Church of Spain had been for some time distracted by the Priscillianist heresy,<sup>2</sup> and in the

<sup>1</sup> Milman, vol. i, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> This sect, so called from the name of its founder, Priscillian, flourished in Spain and Gaul from the fourth to the sixth century. The views of the followers of Priscillian formed a strange amalgam of unitarian and dualistic elements, and in some points recalled the Gnosticism of the second century. For all details the reader must be referred to Histories, both general and special, the names

closing year of the fourth century a Council had been held at Toledo, the ecclesiastical capital of the province, to settle as to the treatment to be accorded to the returning heretics. The conditions determined upon were liberal, and those who evinced a desire to abjure their errors and to re-enter into communion with the Catholics found an open door officially set before them. But the religious troubles of Spain were not to be so easily overcome; for though the majority of the orthodox party was quite willing to communicate with the restored, certain members thereof, including at least two bishops, declined to do so, and the Church, the seamless robe of Christ, was in danger of being rent asunder. Under these circumstances, Hilary, a Spanish bishop,<sup>1</sup> one of the signatories of the Toledan decree, bethought himself of invoking the aid of Innocent, and forthwith departed to Rome, to lay the matter before the Pope, together with some complaints as to certain laxities in the administration of Church discipline.

of which it would be unnecessary and tedious to quote, and to works of reference, e.g. Cowell's art. "Priscillianus (2)" in *D. C. B.*, Vogel's art. "Priscillianists" in *Schaff-Herzog Cyc.* A clear and succinct account of the characteristic features of Priscillianism may be found in Green, *Handbk. of Ch. Hist.*, p. 332. See further p. 199 *infra*.

<sup>1</sup> There is some uncertainty as to his see, which, however, is stated to have been Cartagena by Gams, *Series Episcoporum*, p. 23. He there stands as first bishop of the see named.

It is not by any means certain that Hilary adopted this course as the commissioned representative of the Toledan bishops; he appears rather to have acted entirely on his own initiative in the matter. Innocent, however, as might have been expected, interpreted his coming in the former sense, and his reply therefore took the form of a letter addressed to the bishops who had taken part in the Toledan Council. The tone of his communication was more or less that of a justice of appeal; but, with admirable prudence, he refrained from flaunting the authority of his see. His attitude was such that, let the Spaniards put upon it what construction they might, Christendom at large would almost certainly regard him as having uttered a final verdict upon Spanish ecclesiastical affairs. He passed his condemnation upon those who refused to communicate with the reconciled Priscillianists, and dealt with the then burning and ever-recurring question of ordination, more particularly with reference to candidates who had married widows or married for the second time.<sup>1</sup> In this incident we note that union of opportunism and discretion which has characterized the policy and done not a little to advance the power and secular prestige of the papacy.

The political outlook in Italy was, meanwhile,

<sup>1</sup> Inn., *Ep.*, iii (Migne, pp. 485-93).

continually growing darker. The craven Honorius had forsaken Rome, and was hiding himself under cover of the ramparts of marsh-girt Ravenna. There took place the intrigue which assassinated Stilicho, a crime which robbed Italy of her last bulwark against the Goth, and left the capital exposed to the vengeance of Alaric, whose power ever became more formidable and threatening. The murder of Stilicho occurred in 408, and in the autumn of that year Alaric was at the gates of Rome. To the terror which now fell upon the populace must be attributed the feeble recrudescence of pagan superstition which, as we have already seen, now appears to have taken place.<sup>1</sup> On the invitation, in all probability, of Pompeianus, the City Prefect, Etruscan diviners were present in the capital and undertook, by their arts, to call down fire from heaven as a most effective weapon against the foe. Innocent himself has been accused—though it must in fairness be admitted that the authority for the accusation is far from strong—of having permitted or at least connived at the design.<sup>2</sup> The event, how-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 15 *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Zosimus (v, 41), a pagan writer, maintains that Innocent permitted, though he did not approve, the design; Sozomen (ix, 6) mentions the fact, but does not name Innocent in connexion with it, contenting himself with the remark, "Events, however, proved the futility of this proposition."

ever, but served to show that paganism had ceased to be a living force. No one dared to be present at the sacrifice, and the diviners were dismissed.<sup>1</sup>

That the Bishop of Rome had now become a political personage of much importance was made manifest in the course of the negotiations which followed upon the withdrawal of Alaric from the capital. Strenuous attempts were made by the Romans to induce Honorius to come to terms with the Gothic chieftain, and two deputations were sent to Ravenna to press the matter upon the imperial mind. The second of these was accompanied by Innocent,<sup>2</sup> in order that the exhortations and entreaties of so great a prelate might effect what the first appeal had failed to do. All efforts, however, were in vain. Honorius could not render any effective help to his subjects, and would not come to terms with the invader. The doom of Rome was sealed.

Innocent, happily for himself, was absent from the capital at the period of its fall, and was thus spared the horrors of the sack, an event which, terrible as it would have been to witness, in reality served the temporal interests of his see and smoothed his path to power. Humiliated

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gibbon, c. 31; Gregorovius, *Rome in M. A.*, vol. i, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Soz., *H. E.*, ix, 7.

as the city was, and no longer the head quarters of civil authority, her instinct for rule was not extinguished, and now again strove to realize itself, though in a form widely different from that of ancient times. Amid the wreck of old institutions the Christian Church alone stood firm; <sup>1</sup> her Bishop became, in consequence, the foremost citizen of Rome, in the person of whom, if at all, her imperial traditions must henceforth find expression.

While, in himself, Innocent was a man who, more than any of his predecessors, was well fitted for the task of building up a spiritual imperium, he was now therefore situated in a position more favourable than that which any of them had occupied for the effectual assertion of the largest claims. The mere fact that, from the disasters and humiliations of such a time, the Christian Church in Rome had alone come forth with undiminished strength; and that, while thrones were tottering and civil authority was but an empty name, the seat of her bishop still abode in strength; and that, on the utter failure of the imperial power to afford protection, the spiritual power of which she was the repre-

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, delights to dwell upon this point, and is at considerable pains to show in detail how the influence of Christianity and the Church availed to mitigate the horrors of the time. Cf. especially Book I, written within four years of the event.

sentative had, even at so dread a crisis, availed to place some check upon the rapacity and lust of an infuriated soldiery drunk with victory and wine ; and to mitigate, to a degree unexampled in those barbarous times,<sup>1</sup> the horrors incident to the sack of a captured city, could not fail to impress the imagination of men far and near with a sense of the greatness and inherent strength of that solitary institution which, apart from all resources as men count such, was more strong than an army with banners ; and which, when her feet were wetted by the rising tide of victorious war that threatened to engulf all things, in effect had said, and not in vain : “ Thus far shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.”

Thus did the sack of Rome, while it sent a thrill of awe throughout the length and breadth of the empire, serve to reveal, under the most impressive circumstances, the elements of real stability and unconquerableness possessed by the Christian Church in general and that of Rome in particular. The Bishop of the stricken city, now without a rival in real power and public estimation in the widowed and dishonoured Queen of the World, rightly enjoyed the largest share in what was really a victory wrested out of defeat. This, coupled with the fact

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, i, 5-7.



that throughout Christendom he was recognized as the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, paved the way for his progress to a position of advantage to which, overshadowed by the immediate presence of a strong emperor, he could never have attained. The Bishop of Rome was saved by Alaric from becoming a mere Court chaplain and the nominee or victim of some dark palace intrigue, as his brother of Constantinople was too often destined to become.

Within three years of the fall of Rome we have evidence that the claims of Innocent had already advanced one step. Among his letters is one<sup>1</sup> to Aurelius, Bishop of Carthage and Primate of Africa, written perhaps early in 413, bidding him announce in Synod the date on which the Easter of 414 should be observed. The matter itself may appear to be trivial, but it is significant, for it reveals that Innocent was now indeed a Pope who claimed to lay his commands upon a Provincial Council, and to make it the mouthpiece of his will.

Meanwhile, in this same year, 413, Augustine, who, more than any other man, contributed to shape religious thought in the West, had already begun his great work *The City of God*,<sup>2</sup> which,

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* xiv (Migne, p. 517).

<sup>2</sup> There is an excellent English edition of this Father's works prepared under the editorial supervision of Dr. Marcus Dods (T. & T. Clark).

however, was not completed before 426. Taking as his starting-point the fall of Rome, in which he almost glories as a revelation of the power of Christianity, the greatest of the Latin Fathers works out, with much fullness of detail, his vast conception of the City of God which confronted, with full assurance of victory, the City of this World. The general theological position of Augustine we cannot here discuss ; for the limitations of our study render it impossible to do more than touch upon it in so far as it bears upon our immediate subject.

Augustine's conceptions of Christianity rested upon a somewhat narrow and strictly ecclesiastical foundation. That the saving grace of Christ might reach beyond the straitened frontiers of the Catholic Church, to which alone the Holy Spirit's operations were confined, did not even enter into his mind ;<sup>1</sup> and the City of God, as he conceived it, was to all intents and purposes identified with the organized Church. This Church, so far as its activities were concerned, was represented almost exclusively by a sacerdotal caste subject to an autocracy of bishops, and was the sole channel through which divine

<sup>1</sup> This position is unambiguously assumed by Augustine in his treatise *On Baptism, Against the Donatists*, book i, chap. ix ; bk. iii, chap. xvi ; see vol. *The Donatist Controversy* (Dods), pp. 15, 69.

grace was brought to bear upon the individual. Hence it was justified in calling in the aid of the secular power to enforce its dogma and discipline. Such then was the City of God upon earth, and such as it was it seemed to require an official head. To a Western mind, at any rate, it would appear impossible that, if such head there was to be, he could be found anywhere but in the Bishop of Rome. That Augustine himself felt this, if he did not formulate it in explicit terms, is more than suggested by his own oft-quoted expression, "Rome has given her verdict, the case is at an end."<sup>1</sup> At all events, to say the least of it, the writings of this great Father reveal the trend of contemporary Western thought as already setting strongly in the direction of Popedom, and in this respect the Bishop of Rome was not behind the thought of his age.

With the lapse of time the tone of Innocent steadily mounted higher. How high it had become in 414, four years after the sack, and how large was the measure of authority allowed to him, at any rate in certain quarters, is indicated both by the fact that it was sent and the subject-matter of a letter which he received from a Council of Macedonian bishops, and his

<sup>1</sup> "Roma locuta causa finita." As a quotation this is not quite correct; but it fairly paraphrases the words used by Augustine, *Sermo*, 131, 10 (Migne, *P. L.*, 38, p. 734).

reply thereto. Among other matters<sup>1</sup> submitted to his decision by the Macedonians was included a request that they might be allowed to raise to the episcopate Photinus, who had been condemned by his predecessor in St. Peter's chair, and to depose a certain deacon Eustatius, a request which reveals a growing sense of dependence on the part of the Macedonian clergy upon the imperial and apostolic see of the West. Some of the questions now brought forward had apparently been the subject of previous inquiry, and Innocent severely rebuked the Macedonian bishops because they had dared to consult him a second time with reference to a matter upon which he had already given a decision. In respect alike of his prohibitions and concessions the tone of Innocent upon this occasion was that of a supreme judge whose decision was final and admitted of no reconsideration.<sup>2</sup>

In the following year came an appeal from the East, represented by Alexander of Antioch, who laid before the Pope the disputed question of the extent of the jurisdiction of his patriarchal see; to whom Innocent gave reply that it was co-extensive with the political diocese, taking occasion, however, to point out that these pre-

<sup>1</sup> For a summary cf. Barmby's art. "Innocentius," *D. C. B.*

<sup>2</sup> *Epp.*, xvii, xviii; cf. especially Migne, p. 539.

rogatives were yielded to the see, not because Antioch was the civil capital of the *Dioecesis Oriens*, but by reason of the fact that St. Peter had temporarily occupied that see before finally establishing his chair at Rome.<sup>1</sup> By this decision Cyprus was placed under the patriarchal jurisdiction of Antioch, a fact which should be clearly borne in mind, as the matter will claim our attention again in connexion with the findings of the General Council of Ephesus held sixteen years later.

In a letter to Ducentius, Bishop of Eugubium, dated 416, his claims are no less strongly asserted by the Pope, based this time, however, upon the bequest of the Prince of the Apostles, in connexion with which claim he sweepingly asserts that "all the churches throughout Gaul, Spain, Italy, and Africa owe their existence to priests ordained by Peter and his successors."<sup>2</sup> The Pope therefore, as the successor of their common

<sup>1</sup> Inn., *Ep.*, xxiv (Migne, pp. 547-51). It may perhaps be interesting to note, in passing, that in this letter Innocent lays down the rule that when a province is divided by the Emperor, this shall not involve the creation of a new metropolitan. In other words, the ecclesiastical organization shall not be subject to alteration at the Emperor's discretion in view of new civil arrangements. This appears to be the first edict of a Christian bishop which ventured to assert that ecclesiastical decisions and order were independent of the will of the civil sovereign. On this point see Riddle, *Hist. Papacy*, vol. i, pp. 154-55.

<sup>2</sup> Inn., *Ep.*, xxv (Migne, 551-64).

founder, claimed to give law to all, and insisted upon the observance of certain Roman usages.

Shortly before the sack of Rome a Celtic monk, Pelagius<sup>1</sup> by name, appeared in the metropolis, where at first he made a very good impression and won wide respect.<sup>2</sup> In the memorable year 410, in company with many others, he fled from Rome and found his way to Carthage, where he was kindly received. Among those who had given him a welcome on this occasion was Augustine, from whom a letter, at once respectful and affectionate, to the later object of his strenuous attacks, is still preserved; <sup>3</sup> a letter, however, which the writer, owing to the untoward course afterwards taken by events, subsequently endeavoured somewhat disingenuously to explain away.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Said to be a classicized form of the Cymric patronymic Morgan—"sea-born." Pelagius is usually represented as a Briton; Zimmer and others, however, regard him as an Irishman, cf. Lambert, art. "Pelagianism" in *Prot. Dict.*, while Bury thinks that he was born of Irish parents settled in West Britain, and originally bearing some Irish sea-name, as Muirchu—"hound of the sea." See Bury, *St. Patrick*, pp. 43, 296, and references there given.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Augustine, *De Gest. Pelag.*, 46, and other references, which will be cited later.

<sup>3</sup> *Letters of St. Augustine* (ed. Dods), vol. ii, 146—probably written in 413.

<sup>4</sup> Augustine, *De Gest. Pelag.*, 51—probably written early in 417. It is perhaps only fair to add that, even in the heat of controversy, Augustine still speaks respectfully of his opponent. Cf. *De pecc. merit. et remiss.*, ii, 25; iii, 1, 5 (*Anti-Pelagian Writings*, vol. i).

Pelagius was accompanied in his flight from Rome by Coelestius, a lawyer of family, who had thrown in his lot with the British monk at the capital, and soon surpassed his master in the naked crudity and offensiveness with which he set forth the points of doctrine that they held in common to the scandal and indignation of the orthodox.

The details of the Pelagian heresy need not detain us here ;<sup>1</sup> sufficient be it to say that the doctrinal position of Pelagius was the very antithesis of the narrow official and forensic ecclesiasticism of Augustine ; and the former was so far in the right when he asserted that man is not unmixedly corrupt within and absolutely depraved, and in bringing into clear relief the fact that he is a moral agent, and not a mere passive recipient of divine grace conveyed by official and what are after all external channels, and operating in what is little better than a purely mechanical way.

It was, however, not upon the head of Pelagius, but that of Coelestius, that the storm first broke. The former did not tarry in Carthage, but passed on to Palestine. Coelestius remained in Carthage,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. any good history of doctrine, and arts. in *Schaff-Herzog* (Moeller) and *Dict. Christ. Biog.* (Ince). See also Tennant, *Origin and Propagation of Sin* (Hulsean Lectures), pp. 13 *seq.* ; Bethune-Baker, *Int. Early Hist. of Christian Doctrine*, c. xvii.

where his teaching soon attracted much attention and indignant criticism; and when it became known that he was aspiring to the presbyterate the trouble began. A charge of heresy was brought against him, and a provincial Council, presided over by the Metropolitan Aurelius,<sup>1</sup> was convened early in 412 to deal with the case. Augustine himself was not present at this Council, which condemned and excommunicated the accused, who appealed therefrom to Rome, but apparently without any definite result, though, in the meantime, he succeeded in getting ordination at Ephesus.

Under such circumstances did the Pelagian controversy become acute, and it is now necessary that we should follow the fortunes of Pelagius himself. On his arrival in Palestine the accused monk associated himself with the Origenists, who appear to have enjoyed a much larger measure of popularity in Palestine than perhaps anywhere else, and, as previously in Rome and Africa, made a favourable impression upon the mind of John, Bishop of Jerusalem, who at all events regarded the man with kindly feelings, and to all appearance did not fully appreciate the perilous possibilities of the doctrine which he upheld. But Jerome, who already some twenty

<sup>1</sup> To Aurelius, some five years later, Augustine inscribed his famous work, *De Gestis Pelagii*. Cf. *op. cit.*, 62,



years before, under the influence of Epiphanius, had cut himself off from communion with the Origenists, was violent in his opposition, identifying the teaching of Pelagius with that of Origen, and, after his usual fashion, was sparing neither of invective nor abuse. The dispute waxed hot, and in the summer of 415 John called a conference of his presbyters to hear and settle the whole case. This Bishop sided with Pelagius, but on the instance of Orosius, a Spanish presbyter and the emissary of Augustine, the matter was eventually referred to the Pope, on the ground that Pelagius was a Latin monk—another instance of the wide-reaching patriarchal authority which was now recognized as vested in the Bishop of Rome.

But the enemies of Pelagius could not await the slow process of appeal, and before the year came to an end a Council of Palestinian bishops was in session at Diospolis under the presidency of Eulogius of Caesarea, metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province. Before this Council Pelagius was formally accused of heresy by two deposed Western prelates;<sup>1</sup> but he succeeded in satisfying his judges, and secured his acquittal on the heresy charge, though apparently only at the price of a good deal of toning down and explaining away of certain points in his teaching

<sup>1</sup> Aug., *De Gest. Pel.*, 62; *De Pecc. Orig.*, 2, 3, 4.

which had most aroused objection. Augustine reiterates again and again, with a persistence that is quite wearisome, that by fraud Pelagius obtained acquittal from a Council which, in the same breath condemned his doctrine.<sup>1</sup> At all events the fact remains that his disciple Coelestius was condemned, and in that condemnation Pelagius himself was compelled to acquiesce. It was not, therefore, without a show of reason that Augustine could urge that Pelagius was virtually self-condemned.

The Africans were now thoroughly aroused, and in the course of 416 two important Councils met in Africa to consider the situation. The first assembled in Carthage under the presidency of the Primate Aurelius, at which were present sixty-eight bishops of Proconsular Africa. Shortly afterwards the second Council was held at Milevis, attended by fifty-nine Numidian prelates, among whom of course was Augustine. The Councils agreed in condemnation of Pelagius, and further expressed much dissatisfaction with the findings of the Council of Diospolis in the previous autumn. Both alike were impressed with the importance of gaining the support of Innocent, but were a little apprehensive as to what attitude he would

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *De Gest. Pelag.*, 44, 45, 60, 62; *De Grat. Christ. et de Pecc. Orig.*, bk. ii, 9, 10, 12, 15. Cf. Hefele, *Hist. Councils* (E. T.), vol. ii, pp. 451-5.

finally adopt; for a rumour seems to have got abroad that he had been, to a certain extent, won over by the persuasions of the opposite side. Letters were therefore sent from the Councils to the Pope "asking him to anathematize any one who should teach that man is able by himself to overcome sin, and fulfil the commandments of God, or who should deny that by baptism children are raised from a state of perdition, and made heirs to eternal life."<sup>1</sup> A similar letter was also addressed to Innocent by five African bishops, of whom Augustine was one.<sup>2</sup>

Innocent, not unnaturally, was flattered by these appeals, as he chose to call them, and interpreted them as expressing a larger measure of dependence upon the Holy See on the part of the Africans than the latter either intended or would have allowed. This the tone in which they wrote to Popes Zosimus and Boniface I a few years later makes quite clear.<sup>3</sup>

In his reply the Pope availed himself to the

<sup>1</sup> Moeller, art. "Pelagius" (*Schaff-Herzog*). For an interesting account of the several councils referred to above, see Hefele, *Councils*, ii, pp. 446-58.

<sup>2</sup> *De Grat. Christ.*, ii, 10. This letter is, unfortunately, with some other important letters bearing upon this controversy, not included in the Dods' edition of *The Letters of St. Augustine*. It may be found in Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 33, *Ep.*, 177. Innocent's reply, to which reference will hereafter be made, is, however, quoted in part.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. pp. 68, 71, 91-2; cf. also p. 94 *infra*.

full of the opportunity thus afforded to him of making large claims to general authority on behalf of "the see from which all episcopal authority was derived." He declared himself, however, in perfect accord with the African bishops and condemned Pelagius. With reference to the proceedings of the Palestinian bishops which had given so much umbrage to his correspondents, Innocent displayed not a little of that diplomatic caution and discreet reserve which are well calculated to advance the progress of a developing power. He declined to express either approval or the reverse of the action of the Eastern bishops, pending fuller information. The first Pope was in fact far too astute a man to jeopardize his growing authority by reckless criticism of the findings of a Council composed of bishops little under the influence of Western ideas, and in consequence little likely to be profoundly moved even by the strongly expressed disapproval of the Chief Bishop of the West.<sup>1</sup> He did, however, so far assert himself in the case of individuals as to inform Jerome, who had been attacked by ruffians, an attack which was attributed to Pelagian hate, and if really so was certainly not unprovoked, that he would exert the whole authority of the Apostolic See against the

<sup>1</sup> Inn., *Epp.*, xxvi-xxxii (Migne, pp. 564 seq.); Aug., *Ep.*, 177; *De Grat. Christ.*, ii, 10.

offenders; and wrote also to Bishop John of Jerusalem reproving him in the authoritative tone of an official superior for allowing such atrocities to be perpetrated within the limit of his jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup>

Pelagius, following the example of his adversaries, himself forwarded a confession to Innocent; but before it reached him the great Pope was no more, and it fell into the hands of his successor Zosimus, with results which will hereafter claim our notice.<sup>2</sup>

In the spring of 417 Innocent died, after a memorable reign of fifteen years, in the course of which he had raised the pontifical throne to a height of power and influence such as it had never before enjoyed. He it was who shaped the after policy of the Holy See, and fixed, if he did not exactly open up, that line of development by which it attained in the Middle Ages to something very like the lordship of the world. Innocent it was who first seems to have dreamed of the universal ecclesiastical supremacy of Rome, a dream vague and ill-defined perhaps, as dreams are wont to be, and very imperfectly realized by himself; but destined to be translated into fact by his successors, who followed in that pathway the direction of which he set.

<sup>1</sup> Inn., *Ep.*, xxxiv, xxxv (Migne, pp. 600-02); cf. Aug., *De Gest. Pel.*, 66.

<sup>2</sup> Aug., *De Pecc. Orig.*, 19.

Without going into any details, some of which lie outside the scope of the present volume, it may be mentioned that, between the close of the apostolic age and the period at which we have now arrived the Roman see had undergone a purely natural process of development such as that through which any institution may pass, given the requisite conditions. A study of its earlier history suggests nothing less than that it was the outcome of direct divine appointment and a definite commission from the great Head of the Church to the Bishops of Rome as his lieutenants, by reason of which the evolution of the papacy must be regarded as something quite different in kind from the many other cases of institutional development with which history has made us familiar. It is sufficiently explained by the facts of the case as history reveals them to the careful student. In the early centuries it gives no indication of its own self-consciousness of the unique origin and almost superhuman destiny which have since been claimed for it. Signs are not wanting that, while Innocent sat in the Roman chair, a certain change was taking place in the character of its claims, a change no less real because impalpable and vague. It is, perhaps, scarcely an exaggeration to say that this great pontiff found an episcopate in Rome and left a papacy. This was due to the dis-

covery of no new historical facts ; the facts, real or assumed, remained unchanged, but a new interpretation was now being put upon them, and new inferences, in consequence, drawn.

We have already observed that, even before Innocent ascended the Roman chair, the Petrine succession of the Bishops of Rome was generally accepted throughout Christendom, and that this widespread belief contributed an additional element of greatness to what, independently of any such belief, must have been a sufficiently exalted position. Of this Innocent cannot but have been perfectly aware ; and the whole trend of his policy as Bishop of Rome makes quite plain that he was not the man willingly to let slip any opportunity of magnifying the authority of his office. It is interesting therefore to note that when writing to Victricius in the year following his accession, although he speaks in a tone of high authority, he does not justify himself for so doing by any reference to spiritual prerogatives which were his as the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, but pleads rather a conciliar decree. The Pope falls back upon a Council as the supreme authority in ecclesiastical matters. We see therefore that, although the Roman episcopate of the Apostle Peter was received as an unquestioned fact at the opening of the fifth century, no conclusion was at first drawn therefrom as

to a spiritual autocracy vested in the Bishop of Rome.

Twelve years went by, years full of great events and startling change, and in 415 we find Innocent letter-writing once again. This time he is writing to a great Eastern prelate, Alexander of Antioch, whom he confirms in the largest prerogatives of his see, expressly on the ground that St. Peter had sate a while as Bishop there before he transferred his chair to Rome. The Petrine Episcopate is thus revealed in a new light, not merely as an interesting historical fact, not merely as conferring prestige and a certain honorary rank, but as bestowing an increased measure of executive authority, even where it had been exercised but for a short season and in a transitional kind of way.

Still more definite is his letter to the Italian bishop Ducentius, written in the following year. Once more does the Roman Bishop assert his claims to a large authority, but on this occasion they are directly based upon the bequest of the Prince of the Apostles, to whom and his successors all the Churches throughout the West trace their origin ; and as the successor of their common founder in the bishopric of the ancient capital of the world the writer claims to exercise a plenary authority over all. Innocent, it is true, does not exhaust the largest possibilities



of the Petrine claim ; that was still to come : but what he does is significant enough ; and the contrast between these letters written at the beginning and the end of his episcopate bears eloquent witness to the gradual development of his own conception of the powers entrusted to him. The theoretical basis of the pontifical authority had, in his hands, undergone a change which rendered it, in appearance, a holier and more rightful thing, and afforded a show of logical reason for regarding it as the proper appanage of the Holy See.

So far as the man himself is concerned, his own personal qualities and the circumstances of the time were both factors of his success, if success it rightly may be called. In Innocent we find united in exact proportions boldness and diplomatic caution ; readiness to seize every opportunity of advancing the power of his see, and skilful avoidance of pushing that authority too far in any direction in which there seemed to be any possibility of its meeting with a check. He was, so far as the available data enable us to form a judgement, a man of infinite tact, who gauged exactly both the possibilities and the limitations of his position. He possessed, moreover, another quality almost indispensable to the successful leader of men : he was emphatically the man of his time, and in himself and in his

policy its feelings and its spirit found expression, so far at least as the West was concerned. In doubtful cases he always, with happy insight, adopted the point of view which generally commended itself as right and orthodox, at the same time giving the impression that he was above all mere party prejudice.

Augustine, of course, was the great formative influence in contemporary Western thought, the moulder of its theological ideas ; and the Augustinian conception of the Church as sacerdotal and hierarchical, the sole fount of divine grace, which flowed only through the formally appointed channels,<sup>1</sup> combined with the deeply-rooted Roman feeling for law and order, resting upon an imperial basis, to favour the development of an autocratic ecclesiastical organization ; while the constantly-recurring disorders and differences, whether in the form of heresy or schism, seemed to call for the establishment of some recognized governing power within the Church which should be above all party, and could effectively direct and regulate the whole. If such head of the Church there must be, it appeared to all Western minds, and not to Western minds alone, that he could be found nowhere but in the occupant

<sup>1</sup> Cf. for instance Augustine, *Against two letters of the Pelagians*, bk. ii, 7, 16, iii, 5 ; *On Original Sin*, 44 ; *On Marriage*, bk. i, 22.

of the chair of the Prince of the Apostles and the foremost citizen of that historic city which for so long had awed and ruled the world.

Thus favoured by circumstances and freed from the overshadowing rivalry of an imperial court—the head of that Church which had stood unshaken as though founded upon an eternal rock, against which the waves of barbarian invasion had broken in vain, alone surviving while all other political and social institutions had crumbled into ruin—the greatness of Innocent was partly thrust upon him ; but it was also in part due to his own capacity for greatness and his own inherent powers of mind and heart which made him equal to his opportunities, and enabled him to write his name in large letters upon the page of history as one of the master-builders of the mighty fabric of the papal power, which was destined, in the days to come, to exercise, both for good and evil, so commanding an influence over the fortunes and the progress of mankind.

In some sense, then, the papacy may be said to have begun with Innocent I ; but in order to guard against any possible misunderstanding in this connexion, a word of caution may be advisable. In speaking of the papacy at this early date we must not lose sight of the fact that the

term is used in a somewhat limited sense, and that it had not yet acquired that fullness of meaning which it came to possess at a later period. It is sometimes said that Leo I, who entered upon his pontificate some twenty-two years after the death of Innocent, was the true founder of the papacy. In some sense this is true, and his position, doubtless, does mark a great advance upon that of Innocent. Still, the fact remains that Leo did but tread in a pathway already marked out by his predecessor, and the impetus to the papal movement given by that predecessor must not by any means be overlooked. Our study of the pontificate of Innocent, though far from being exhaustive, should have at least sufficed to reveal that this great prelate was something more than a bishop, something more even than Patriarch of the West ; and it seems therefore both desirable and not incorrect to speak of the papacy, in its earlier form, as beginning with him. The title *Pope*, moreover, was now coming into very general use as distinctive of the Bishop of Rome. At the same time we must not disregard the fact that the papacy of Innocent was of a very restricted type as compared with what the papacy afterwards became. In no sense can we speak of him, for instance, as a Sovereign Pontiff, a title which, however, becomes applicable, at the close of the following

century, to Pope Gregory the Great, who was in act and influence, if not in name, and formal rank, a powerful sovereign, and as such marks a new stage in the development of the papal monarchy.

## CHAPTER II

### AUTOCRACY AND INDEPENDENCE : ZOSIMUS, BONIFACE I

Zosimus Pope—The Pelagian Difficulty—African Opposition—Imperial Intervention—The Pope in Check—Incipient Gallicanism—Apiarius—What Powers did the Nicene Fathers confer upon the Pope?—Zosimus' Death and Character—A Contested Papal Election—Boniface I Pope—A Doubtful Inheritance—African Independence—Antony of Fussala—Gallic Affairs : Zosimus' Policy Reversed—The Pope and the Vicar : Perigenes—Shall the Bishop of New Rome enjoy Appellate Jurisdiction?—Victory of the Elder Rome—Death of Boniface—His Character and Policy.

**T**HE great bishop Innocent was now no more. His successor Zosimus, who found himself upon the throne of St. Peter early in 417, was by no means equal to his position. "For the further development of the spiritual authority of Rome two things were necessary—tact and imperial support. Bishop Zosimus possessed neither, and his brief pontificate did as much as could be done within two short years to injure the prestige of the apostolic seat. . . . But his in-

glorious pontificate remains a landmark, because he was the first to make a strenuous attempt to exercise sovran rights which the Western Churches had never admitted or been asked to admit—rights which a more competent pontiff afterwards secured.”<sup>1</sup>

On the death of Innocent the Pelagian question still remained as far from final settlement as ever, and the adjustment of the difficulties arising therefrom of course formed a portion of the inheritance which the new pope received from his great predecessor. Zosimus was thus, at the very outset of his pontificate, involved in controversy, with results most unfortunate both for his own reputation and the prestige of the great see over which he had just been called to rule.

To Zosimus, a Greek by birth, the question at issue between Pelagius and his opponents did not perhaps appeal with quite the same force and interest as it possessed for the Western mind, and when Coelestius appeared in Rome and, “throwing himself, as it were, at the feet of the Pontiff, declared that he was ready to submit to a dispassionate examination and authoritative judgment on his tenets,”<sup>2</sup> the Pope, possibly flattered by this appearance of submission to his authority, was inclined to regard the accused with

<sup>1</sup> Bury, *Life of St. Patrick*, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, p. 157.

a certain measure of favourable consideration. At all events, a Roman Synod was called together forthwith,<sup>1</sup> before which Coelestius, in general terms, condemned what Innocent had already condemned, but apparently did not enter into any details respecting the views for the promulgation of which he had been reproached at Carthage ; at the same time he appears to have expressed himself as being eager for correction if he should be proved to be in error upon any point, in which declaration he may of course have been perfectly sincere. Augustine, however, condemns his action as evasive and deceitful,<sup>2</sup> though in reality it was probably less so than the great Latin Father, who places the worst possible construction upon every detail of his opponent's action, would have it to be believed. But, be that as it may, it is certain that Coelestius received a friendly hearing from Zosimus and his Synod ; for, although a final pronouncement appears to have been withheld for the moment,<sup>3</sup> the Pope declared that he found no fault in the accused, while the conduct of his accusers, Heros and Lazarus, was referred to in terms of considerable severity. Both parties, however, were alike warned to have done with

<sup>1</sup> For details cf. Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. ii, p. 456.

<sup>2</sup> *De Pecc. Orig.*, 8 ; *Contra duas ep. Pel.*, ii, 5, 6. Cf. Dods, *Anti-Pel. Writings*, vol. ii, p. 53 ; vol. iii, pp. 274-77.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Augustine, *De Pecc. Orig.*, 8.



such idle and unprofitable questions as those under dispute, which, he suggested, were at best of so uncertain a character that prolonged discussion of them would be productive of more harm than good.<sup>1</sup>

The letter of Pelagius to the Pope, with which was enclosed the former's confession of faith, and which, as we have already seen in an earlier chapter, was already upon its way to Rome when the death of Innocent occurred, now came to hand.<sup>2</sup> The confession itself was in its general tone elaborately orthodox, great stress being laid upon certain matters of doctrine of much intrinsic importance, but which were not, however, now under discussion. The metaphysical heresies relative to the nature of the Godhead, by which the East had been so deeply agitated for many years past, were solemnly repudiated; but the more distinctly Western points of controversy whence all the present trouble had immediately arisen, were to all intents and purposes ignored. The effect of this question-begging document upon the mind of the Greek Zosimus was, as one can readily understand, many degrees more favourable than that which it would have produced upon the thoroughly Western mind of Innocent had he lived to receive it. In matter of fact, the

<sup>1</sup> Zos., *Ep.*, ii (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 20, pp. 649-54).

<sup>2</sup> See Inn., *Ep.* 42 (Migne, pp. 608-11).

Pope was quite won over to the side of Pelagius and Coelestius, and the favour with which he regarded their case was not a little strengthened by a letter, received just about the same time as their *apologia*, from Praylius, the recently appointed successor of John as Bishop of Jerusalem, in which the orthodoxy of Pelagius was positively asserted. Zosimus was quite triumphant, and immediately wrote again to the African bishops (September 417), informing them that Pelagius had completely justified himself, and, with Coelestius, fully recognized the necessity of divine grace; while Heros and Lazarus were denounced in still stronger terms as turbulent and wandering prelates and sowers of sedition.<sup>1</sup>

That Zosimus himself was blind to the very partial character of the admissions of Pelagius and his companion, and to the irrelevancy of much that they asserted by way of vindication of their own orthodoxy, is not probable; it is likely, however, that he was willing to accept what they did acknowledge as sufficient, and to leave the abstruse and controverted questions of grace and free-will undefined by authority.

Modern liberal thought may perhaps regard such an attitude as being, under the circumstances, wise and temperate; but that fifth-cen-

<sup>1</sup> Zos., *Ep.*, iii (Migne, *ib.*, pp. 654-61).

tury opinion could so regard it was a sheer impossibility. In adopting it, moreover, the Pope had departed from the line of policy which his predecessors, whether instinctively or of set purpose, had almost invariably followed, and which had contributed not a little to the rapid increase of the authority of their apostolic see. Rome had long been regarded as a model Church, as voicing the religious thought and feelings of the whole West, and as an example of orthodoxy to the entire Christian world ; hence the very high estimation in which it was almost universally held. Zosimus now threw himself violently counter to the whole trend of Western opinion, and in so doing broke away from that traditional position of the bishops who had sat in St. Peter's chair before him which had been one of the most important sources of their strength. The new policy of the successor of the great Innocent served, however, to make manifest how little of the idea of divine right as yet clung to the authority of the Bishop of Rome. The far-reaching claims of the boasted successor of St. Peter might be heard without protest, and indeed made use of by those who were glad to avail themselves of his assistance, but so soon as the papal authority was exercised in favour of a small minority in opposition to the general consensus of opinion it was strenuously resisted, and openly set at defiance.

On receipt of the second letter of the Pope the African bishops immediately assembled at Carthage, and sent off to Rome a synodal epistle, in which they declared in the most explicit terms that they should hold to the sentence pronounced by Innocent upon Pelagius and Coelestius until both of them acknowledged that for every righteous action men are dependent upon the grace of God through Jesus Christ. Of the same general tenor as the foregoing were, no doubt, the quite considerable number of letters which appear to have passed and repassed between Rome and Carthage at this juncture of affairs.<sup>1</sup> Although this correspondence is, unfortunately, for the most part no longer extant, the fact that it was not without effect is apparent enough from a remarkable letter, dated March 21, 418, addressed by Zosimus to Aurelius and the members of the Carthaginian Council.<sup>2</sup> The letter opens proudly enough with a lengthy and pompous assertion of the authority of the See of Peter, an authority so august that none might lawfully pretend to dispute its judgement,<sup>3</sup> and now legitimately devolved

<sup>1</sup> Aug, *Contra duas ep. Pel.*, ii, 5; Dods, *Anti-Pel. Writ.*, vol. iii, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Zos., *Ep.*, xii (Migne, *Ib.*, pp. 675-8).

<sup>3</sup> The opening sentence of this letter has been appealed to as affording early evidence that the popes have *always* taught that they were above councils—a contention which the general purport of the letter, and the Pope's own attitude at this very time, renders very unconvincing. See Chapman, *Bishop Gore and Catholic Claims*, p. 115.

upon himself, the writer, as heir of the Prince of the Apostles. But even so, and the fact that he had already given the matter in dispute his mature consideration notwithstanding, he was still prepared to consult with his brethren. Indeed, he had been somewhat misunderstood ; he did not entirely approve of Coelestius, and wished to do nothing rashly ; and, in a word, a final settlement of the affair had not yet been reached. The lofty and authoritative terms in which his letter is couched cannot entirely disguise the fact that Zosimus, in face of the strong opposition with which he found himself confronted, an opposition more persistent and unyielding than he had reckoned on, was beginning to show signs of backing down.

Some six weeks later a General African Council, attended not only by the bishops of the African provinces but even by some from Spain, numbering two hundred or more in all, met at Carthage. The members assembled in a spirit of determination, and speedily passed nine doctrinal canons condemning in detail all the distinctive doctrines of the Pelagians, besides eleven others dealing with Donatism and general matters. The anti-papal spirit of their deliberations is aggressively shown in Canon 17, which deals with the right of appeal to superior authority on the part of aggrieved members of the clerical body, the last

appeal allowed being to the provincial primates and African Councils. Having allowed so much the canon concludes with the grave warning, "But whoever appeals to a court beyond sea may not be received into communion with any one in Africa."<sup>1</sup>

The whole circumstances of the case make it abundantly clear that the "Court beyond sea" which the framers of this canon had in view, and against whose interference they wished to guard themselves and the churches which they represented, was none other than that of ecclesiastical Rome. Its promulgation, therefore, is a fact of no small historical significance, for it can only be interpreted as a solemn repudiation, on the part of the African bishops, of any claims to the right of final decision in respect of matters of faith and Church discipline, beyond the limits of the Roman patriarchate, put forth by the Bishop of the Apostolic See. This matter of appeals to Rome had become a burning one in Africa, not only as a result of the Pelagian controversy, for it had meanwhile been brought, if possible, into yet sharper relief by the affair of Apiarius, which will shortly claim our attention. For the moment, however, it will be well to confine ourselves to Pelagian affairs.

<sup>1</sup> For the full text of this canon see Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. ii, p. 461; and for the several Councils referred to above, *ib.*, pp. 446-62.

The African bishops had now uttered their feelings with no uncertain voice, and had very pointedly expressed themselves as resolved to maintain their independence against the encroachments of the reputed throne of St. Peter, somewhat inconsistently perhaps with their own attitude, adopted not long before, when Roman authority appeared likely to be exercised in harmony with their own desires and to co-operate with them in forwarding the ends they had in view. In other words, the power of these earliest popes is revealed as being in that vague and inchoate condition which readily allowed it to be treated as a reality when anything was to be gained thereby ; but at the same time suffered it, with equal facility, to be set at nought as an unwarranted encroachment upon all occasions when its exercise appeared likely to be an inconvenience.<sup>1</sup>

But now another and more potent voice was heard, the sound whereof revealed the *de facto* seat of final authority in all ecclesiastical matters. From marsh-girt Ravenna, addressed to the Praetorian Prefect Palladius and bearing the date

<sup>1</sup> An interesting parallel to this position may be found in that of the native princes of India a century and a quarter ago. The circumstances of the two cases are, of course, quite different. In that of ecclesiastical Rome in the first quarter of the fifth century we have to deal with a rising power ; in that of Hindustan in the last quarter of the eighteenth, with one in the last stages of decay. But the comparison is interesting nevertheless. See Macaulay, *Warren Hastings*.

April 30, 418, came forth an imperial rescript ordering the banishment of Pelagius, Coelestius, and their adherents. Craven as he was, Honorius had intervened, and the word of the Augustus was law.<sup>1</sup> Zosimus, at all events, was cowed; he could hardly fail to see that the Africans had gained the ear of an authority before which his own must bow as a reed beneath the strong north-east wind, and acted accordingly. Once again the Pope bade Coelestius before him, but the latter, shrewdly guessing that matters had taken an evil turn so far as he was concerned, hastened to get away from Rome,<sup>2</sup> leaving judgement to go against him by default. Zosimus, thankful possibly for the pretext thus afforded, thereupon anathematized the doctrines of Pelagius and Coelestius, demanded their abjuration of them under pain of excommunication, and addressed a circular letter condemnatory of the Pelagian heresy to all

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Aug., *Ep.*, 201; Dods, *Letters of St. A.* vol. ii, pp. 376-7.

<sup>2</sup> Aug., *Contra duas Ep. Pel.*, ii, 6; Dods, *Anti-Pel. Writ.*, vol. iii, p. 277. It is at least probable that Coelestius shrank from anything that could be construed as an act of defiance towards the imperial authority, rather than that his heart failed him at the prospect of a farther examination by the Pope, as Augustine would have us believe. Augustine, indeed, in his whole treatment of Zosimus' relations with Pelagius and Coelestius, strives very hard to save the face of the Pope, and puts the best possible construction upon his halting and uncertain policy; a construction, however, which the letters of Zosimus himself hardly bear out.



the bishops of Christendom, to which their subscription was required.<sup>1</sup>

All the fair words and special pleading of Augustine notwithstanding, the fact cannot be concealed that Zosimus, despite his brave speaking and proud assumption of the lofty title "Supreme Pontiff,"<sup>2</sup> had suffered a serious reverse, and been forced to eat his own words—like Pilate, in a more tremendous moment and dealing with a greater case, not daring to abide by his own decision. It is indeed significant that, while a strong pontiff like Innocent, who was diplomatic enough to refrain from setting himself in direct antagonism to the general trend of public opinion, could effect much, the weak Zosimus utterly failed to maintain himself in an unpopular rôle. So long as his policy was in harmony with the spirit of his time, the assertions of an Innocent might be suffered to pass without contradiction, and even be re-echoed by those who hoped to serve the more effectively some interest which they had at heart with the aid and under the patronage of the Bishop of Rome ; but when a Zosimus threw himself into a position of opposition similar assertions were at once repudiated with a vigour and persistency which proclaimed throughout Christendom, by the humiliation of a Pope, on how

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *App. ad op. Zos.*, Migne, *ib.*, pp. 690 *seq.*, and refs.

<sup>2</sup> *Zos., Ep.*, i, 2 (Migne, *ib.*, p. 644).

insecure a foundation his power rested and how uncertain was his tenure of authority. The Pope was, at all events, not yet in a position to mould public opinion and to fetter thought even in the West ; while emperors and prelates evidently had no conception of such a thing as a spiritual dictatorship vested, by direct divine appointment, in the successors of St. Peter.

The course of events in Africa had indeed taken a very ill turn so far as the prestige of the would-be ecclesiastical sovereign of the West was concerned ; it may, however, be well at this point to postpone any further consideration of them until we have briefly reviewed the relations of Zosimus with the leading bishops of Southern Gaul, among whom the Roman Pontiff found a similar unwillingness to defer to his authority when it ran counter to their interests to do so, and the same disposition to exalt it where it appeared possible to derive any personal advantage thereby.

For some time past the Gallic provinces had been the scene of a more or less sordid strife for personal power on the part of the principal prelates of that political diocese. It was only during the last quarter of the fourth century that Christianity can be said to have completely prevailed in Gaul, and the fact that it had at length done so was very largely due to the influence and labours

of the saintly Martin, Bishop of Tours. The ecclesiastical constitution of Gaul was therefore still in a somewhat unsettled condition, the mutual relations of the local primates were at best doubtful, and the Churches suffered from the lack of any generally recognized supreme ecclesiastical authority. Under such conditions the contests and rivalries of the Gallic metropolitans almost inevitably drove them to Rome for settlement; thus affording an excellent illustration of the way in which the custom of appeals grew up, not as the outcome of any theory as to the imperial rights of the see of Peter, but purely out of the circumstances of the case and local conditions.

Arles and Vienne had almost from the first been rival claimants for general jurisdiction over the other Gallic provinces, when the removal of the civil head quarters of the Prefect of Gaul, threatened by the proximity of the Franks, from Trèves to Arles afforded to the Metropolitan of this latter city a pretext for claiming the supreme authority as his own. The removal of the Prefect took place about the year 400, and the dispute had already waxed so hot that in the first year of the fifth century the Council of Turin<sup>1</sup> was already busied

<sup>1</sup> For the findings of this council see Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. ii, pp. 426-7. Cf. also Moeller, *Hist. Chr. Church*, vol. i, 329-30.

with the question, without, however, effecting anything which could be regarded as materially contributing to its final settlement. The result was that the Metropolitans of Vienne, Narbonne, and Marseilles steadfastly declined to take the same view of the case as their brother of Arles, and continued to claim for themselves the independent right of ordaining bishops in their respective provinces. In this dispute Zosimus had meanwhile become involved. Proculus of Marseilles, himself the recipient of exceptional treatment at the Council of Turin, had ordained Lazarus as Bishop of Aquae Sextiae; against this, as a violation of the supreme jurisdiction which he claimed, Patroclus of Arles appealed to Rome. The Lazarus with reference to whose ordination the dispute had arisen was, it should be remembered, one of the two wandering prelates who had taken up their parable against Pelagius, and had subsequently been so bitterly denounced by Zosimus himself; while Heros, the companion of his wanderings, had, five years before this date, been replaced by Patroclus in the see of Arles. The Pope, who, under the circumstances, could hardly have approached the matter with a perfectly open mind, immediately wrote to the bishops of Gaul and Spain, and also to Aurelius and the Africans, asserting the authority of Arles over Vienne and

the two Narbonenses ; and gave forth sentence to the effect that all who should ordain bishops or submit to ordination apart from the concurrence of Patroclus, should be degraded from the priesthood. He further intimated that no Gallic ecclesiastics travelling to Rome would be received at court, unless provided with *litteratae formatae*, or commendatory letters from the Metropolitan of Arles, whom he had appointed Vicar of the Apostolic See. In support of this decision he referred to the alleged dispatch from Rome of Trophimus as 'first Bishop of the See of Arles, whence, consequently, all Gaul had received the stream of faith. This letter to Gaul bears the date of March 417.<sup>1</sup>

Rome had now spoken, but the case was far from being at an end. Simplicius of Vienne so far deferred as to send a legate to the Pope ; and Zosimus, by way of recognition, granted him permission to go on ordaining bishops in the neighbouring cities of his province. Proculus, however, set the sentence of Rome at defiance and continued to ordain and to maintain his position in spite of formal deposition and papal exhortations addressed to his clergy and people.

The affair was still unsettled when the short

<sup>1</sup> This question is treated at length in the correspondence of Zosimus. See *Epp.*, i, iv-vii, x, xi (Migne, pp. 642-45, 661-69, 673-75 ; cf. also p. 704).

pontificate of Zosimus came to an end. It is interesting, however, to note in passing that the spirit of independence in ecclesiastical Gaul refused to be stifled by the growing power of the papacy, and that, in the early fifth century, the phrase, "Gallican liberties" had already a meaning intelligible enough—a fact which the immediate successor of Zosimus was wise enough to recognize.

It is now time to turn our attention once more to Africa, where, meanwhile, an incident had taken place which raised the whole question of appeals to Rome in so acute a form that several councils were held to determine upon the matter. One Apiarius, a presbyter of Sicca, in proconsular Africa, had, on account of various offences, been deposed by his bishop, Urban. Despairing of any other remedy, the deposed priest forthwith betook himself to Rome and appealed to Zosimus, who, as not infrequently happened in such cases, received the appeal with favour and demanded the restoration of the appellant. That this known tendency of the Roman Court did not a little to encourage and develop the system of appeals, and consequently to enlarge its sphere of influence, is hardly open to doubt; but this never could have come to pass save for the fact that the policy of Rome was marked by extreme caution, and that, usually speaking, her assistance was never given unless the applicant had at

any rate the semblance of a case. The Roman verdict weighed much throughout Christendom, not as being that of a duly constituted Supreme Court of Appeal, to which the right of final decision in all such cases lawfully belonged, but simply because of the widespread confidence of all men everywhere in the orthodoxy of her belief and the correctness of her opinions.

That Zosimus was neither cautious nor astute the method of his handling of Pelagian affairs has already made us sufficiently aware; and his relations with Apiarius were quite in harmony with his previous behaviour. Apiarius appeared in Rome under something more than suspicion of the gravest offences; but the Pope, nevertheless, without inquiring, hastily took the accused under his protection. The Africans, as might have been expected, were much displeased, and not at all inclined to defer to the ill-considered judgement of the Bishop of Rome. Their feelings found voice in the seventeenth canon of the General African Council of 418, to which attention has already been drawn,<sup>1</sup> and which restricted the appeals of priests and inferior clergy to the local prelates, with a last appeal to their primates and an African Council; while excommunication was expressly threatened against any one who

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. *ante*.

ventured to appeal to a "court beyond sea." This pronouncement was almost certainly directly due to the action of Apiarius, and the disregard of local feeling manifested by the then occupant of the Roman chair.

His letters appearing to effect but little, Zosimus now dispatched Bishop Faustinus, of Picenum, and two presbyters to confer with the Africans.<sup>1</sup> The legates were directed to treat with reference to four points: (1) The appeal to Rome; (2) The frequent visits of bishops to the Roman Court; (3) That the case of presbyters and deacons unjustly excommunicated by their diocesans should be referred to the neighbouring bishops; (4) That unless Bishop Urban reconsidered his position he would be either himself excommunicated or summoned to Rome.<sup>2</sup>

The claims put forth by Zosimus under these several heads, as we gather from the interesting response of the Africans thereto, were ostensibly based upon the canons of the Nicene Council, that most venerable and authoritative of ecclesiastical assemblies since the time of the Apostles. The Pope contended with much assurance that the Canons of Nicaea had conferred upon the Bishop

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zos., *Ep.*, 15 (Migne, pp. 681-2).

<sup>2</sup> See the letter of the Council of Carthage of 419 to Pope Boniface I, Zosimus' successor. Bonif., *Ep.*, ii, 3 (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 20, pp. 753-4). Cf. also Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. ii, p. 463.



of Rome the right of final decision upon all such matters of dispute. The Africans stated in reply that they could not discover the canons in question, which were, of course, in reality, Sardican,<sup>1</sup> and not Nicene, a fact of which it is very difficult to believe that Zosimus was altogether ignorant. Still, they declared that, though they could not discover the canons to which he appealed in their copy of the acts of the Council of Nicaea, out of respect for Rome, they would for the present, pending inquiry, observe the supposed canons as genuine.<sup>2</sup>

At this juncture, just when he had succeeded in putting himself hopelessly in the wrong, Zosimus was spared further humiliation by his death, which took place upon the morrow of Christmas Day, 418. Short as his pontificate had been, this unhappy pope had yet brought as much of abasement as the time at his disposal allowed to the power of the great see over which he ruled, the power which his predecessor Innocent had built up with consummate tact and skill. In all those qualities in which the latter was pre-eminent, and in a lesser degree have been very generally characteristic of those who have directed the

<sup>1</sup> See Beet, *R. S.*, ii, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> This letter is no longer extant, but its main contents are preserved in that to Boniface, quoted above. See Migne, *ib.* pp. 752-6.

policy of the Roman See, a fact which contributed largely to its remarkable development as a world-power in the Middle Ages, Zosimus was glaringly deficient. In him caution was replaced by rashness, while he lacked that sensitiveness to the impalpable influence of the mental forces at work around him necessary to enable him to be an effective leader of religious thought in the West, and the exponent of its general point of view. Impressive as the power of the incipient papacy at this period appeared in many respects to be, it was in reality strictly limited, and was conditioned by the fact that in its policy it gave expression to the prevailing Christian opinion of the time. The action of Zosimus, hasty and ill-considered as it was, has at all events rendered to history one important service by throwing into sharp relief the vagueness and unsubstantiality of the foundation on which the power of the self-styled heirs of St. Peter really rested, and by making quite clear how impossible it was, in the early fifth century, to push that power indefinitely beyond a certain point, and to how great an extent it was the natural outcome of contemporary religious and political conditions. In these conditions the power wielded by the early popes found its real basis, rather than in any theoretical recognition of a divinely instituted ecclesiastical authority vested in the Bishops of

Rome. In other words, the Pope, during the first quarter of that most important century with the events of which we are now concerned, so far from being a spiritual dictator, exercised authority, really if not admittedly, as the representative and mouthpiece of current Western thought in ecclesiastical affairs. In the endeavour to be more than this, and to impose his own personal judgement upon the Churches, Zosimus failed miserably at every point. In the case of Pelagius and his adherents the Chief Pontiff was, as we have seen, compelled to eat his own words, and to go back upon his own deliberate decision. In that of the Gallic bishops his judgement was reversed by that of his successor ; while the case for Apiarius, which he had made his own, eventually broke down utterly in consequence of the confession of the defendant. Through such a questionable channel as this has the clear stream of spiritual enlightenment which finds its outward expression in the *ex cathedra* pronouncement of an infallible Pope, trickled down to modern times.

Upon the death of Zosimus the city of Rome was, for the third time, the theatre of a contested papal election, and witnessed an outburst of disorder and party spirit which recalled the evil days that followed upon the passing of Liberius.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Beet, *R. S.*, ii, p. 48, and refs.

That the vacancy of the Roman chair should some times have led to intestine troubles, though no doubt a matter for grave regret, can hardly awaken surprise ; for the circumstances, indeed, were such that one rather wonders that electoral contests were not more frequent and more serious than appears to have been the case during this and the preceding period. The chair of St. Peter had, in matter of fact, now become a place of so much real power and influence as to awaken ardent desires to possess it on the part of both the basest and the noblest of mankind.<sup>1</sup> In the primitive Church, while the Christian community was still insignificant in point of numbers, election by the whole body of members need have presented no very great difficulty. But under vastly changed conditions, now that the place to be filled was, at any rate in all the elements of real power, the loftiest in Rome, a place the filling of which had become a public matter of the first importance, some form of popular election still survived from an earlier and simpler time. Who exactly the electors were, and what their rights, are matters of some uncertainty. How

<sup>1</sup> The remarks of the pagan historian Ammianus Marcellinus (*Rev. Gest.*, xxvii, 3, <sup>11-14</sup>) with reference to the Roman chair as the object of ambition, would apply with still greater force at the period now under consideration than they had done half a century before. Cf. Beet, *R. S.*, ii, p. 49.

far the clergy could exercise effective control upon the choice of the electors ; to what extent, if any, the senate enjoyed special privileges or weight ; and what the position of the City Prefect at such a time—these are all matters about which one could fain wish for further light.<sup>1</sup> But the mere fact of the existence of these various and often conflicting interests, coupled with the greatness of the prize at stake, is sufficient to account for the presence, at such times, of all the elements of civil discord, whence at any moment might readily arise bitter and protracted strife.<sup>2</sup>

Zosimus had scarcely breathed his last when a small body of the clergy assembled in the Lateran, and nominated Eulalius, the archdeacon, to the vacant see. On the same or perhaps the follow-

<sup>1</sup> An interesting sidelight upon episcopal elections at this period may be found in a letter of Augustine, and in the record of a memorable meeting convoked by that Father to provide for the filling up of the see of Hippo without contest upon his own decease. Both are in Dods' *Letters of St. Augustine*, vol. ii, and are numbered 209 and 213. See pp. 384-6, 405-10. These letters serve at least to reveal that in the smaller provincial cities, such as Fussala and Hippo, the clerical influence determined the issue, the part of the people being little more than that of accepting without question the clerical nominee. The order of procedure may have been somewhat similar in the larger cities, and even in Rome itself.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, pp. 171-3. Cf. also the remark of Gregorovius (*Rome in M. A.*, vol. i, p. 181) : "After political life had passed away from the Roman people, the choice of their bishop, as being their only independent action, became an event of the greatest importance."

ing day a larger number met in St. Theodore's and chose the presbyter Boniface, who was consecrated forthwith by nine bishops attended by a large body of the clergy, while three bishops only could be found to officiate on behalf of his rival. Thus two candidates were in the field; party feeling was widely excited, and the Roman populace prepared to take its part in the election after a manner which recalled the tumultuous scenes of the municipal elections of elder Rome, and promised a return of the disorder and bloodshed through which Damasus had passed to St. Peter's chair rather more than half a century before. Symmachus, the City Prefect,<sup>1</sup> and representative therefore of the civil power, now intervened. Although the Lateran gathering had been held in defiance of the Prefect's prohibition, the latter, for reasons which are not quite clear, reported to the Emperor in favour of Eulalius, and Boniface was bidden to quit the city. Fresh from his election as Chief Priest of Rome and Patriarch of the whole West, Boniface was not unnaturally far from eager to obey, and his partisans, whose zeal and readiness to appeal to force far outran his own, fell upon and

<sup>1</sup> This Symmachus was son of the orator of the same name, the champion of the pagan cults of old Rome, and antagonist of Ambrose. See Beet, "Ambrose" (*P. M. Q. Rev.*, July, 1909, p. 423).

maltreated the officers of the Prefect. The Pope-elect now deemed it wiser to withdraw, and betook himself to St. Paul's outside the walls of Rome. Eulalius, triumphant for the moment, took possession of the see.

The followers of Boniface, meanwhile, were by no means idle. They petitioned Honorius to reconsider his decision and to bid both the rivals to his presence. The Emperor agreed to reconsideration of the whole matter, and summoned an assembly of bishops, it can hardly be called a Council,<sup>1</sup> to meet at Ravenna; by this informal gathering of bishops at the imperial court was to be finally settled the momentous question of the succession to the Roman chair. The bishops, however, failed to accomplish a settlement, and the matter was still left in the Emperor's hands.

The Easter festival was now approaching, and, as the headship of the Roman Church was unsettled, the Emperor commissioned Achilleus, Bishop of Spoleto, to conduct the services in connexion therewith. Eulalius, bitterly resenting this slight upon his pretensions, intervened by force, and, having gained possession of the Lateran, himself celebrated the festival in defiance of the imperial commission. This act of violence alienated even his patron Symmachus; its author was, in consequence, expelled, and Boniface was

<sup>1</sup> See Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. ii, p. 478.

permitted, without further contest, to seat himself in St. Peter's chair.

The new Pontiff was evidently deeply impressed with the scandal of the conflict which had cast its shadow upon his own election to the highest office in the Church ; and it is creditable to his good feeling and sense of the fitness of things that his first thought was to guard against any possibility of its recurrence for the future. Unlike his predecessor, Boniface, however, did not commit himself to any hasty action, and it was only after having given a full year to consideration of what was best to be done under the circumstances that he addressed a petition to the Emperor, requesting that he would take such action as would safeguard the Roman chair against the intrigues of the ambitious, and the disorder which had been witnessed in the past. Acting upon the suggestions which the Pope had made, Honorius issued a rescript to the effect that, in the event of a disputed election, both the rival candidates should be alike disqualified for the position which they sought, and a third person appointed to the vacant see.<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that this transaction can only mean that " the imperial power assumed, and was acknowledged to possess, full authority

<sup>1</sup> For the letter of Boniface and Honorius' reply see Bonif., *Epp.*, vii and viii (Migne, 20, pp. 765-9).



to regulate the elections of the Bishops of Rome.”<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, fresh from the anxieties and turmoil of his election, the new Pope had found himself face to face with the by no means easy task of unravelling the ecclesiastical entanglement which Zosimus had left behind him as a very unwelcome inheritance for his successor. The latter, an old man of mild disposition and orthodox opinions, appears to have been genuinely anxious to get into amicable relations with the African bishops, who had become much estranged from Rome by the unfortunate character of their intercourse with the late Pope ; and was so far successful that some degree of friendly feeling was soon established between himself and them.

Though no longer exactly a burning question the Pelagian controversy was still dragging on its weary length. Boniface, of course, espoused the side of orthodoxy, and was on terms of close alliance with Augustine, to whom he forwarded two calumnious Pelagian letters which had come into his hands in order that the great champion of African orthodoxy might himself reply thereto. The answer of Augustine, accompanied by a letter in most affectionate and respectful terms, was addressed to Boniface, and has been preserved to form an important source for the history of

<sup>1</sup> Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, p. 175.

this controversy ;<sup>1</sup> it was carried to Rome by Bishop Alypius, of Tagaste, one of the more prominent members of the African patriot party, who appears while in the city and the papal court to have busied himself in pushing forward, with some success, still stronger measures against the Pelagians.

In the matter of Apiarius, however, though of course personal relations between the new Pope and the Africans were upon a much more friendly footing, the former was inclined to take his stand, as Zosimus had done before him, upon the pretended Nicene, but really Sardican, canons. The Africans, on their part, were still firmly resolved that claims resting upon what was, at best, a doubtful basis should not be allowed to pass unchallenged, pending a full and impartial investigation. On May 25, 419, therefore, they again met in council at Carthage to consider further of the matter.<sup>2</sup> When the papal legates asserted, in due course, the right of an appeal on the part of an accused cleric to the Bishop of Rome as having been decided at Nicaea, Bishop Alypius at once suggested

<sup>1</sup> Augustine's reply is, of course, the work entitled *Against two Letters of the Pelagians*, to which reference has already been made more than once. The covering letter is printed among those of Boniface (*Ep.*, vi) by Migne, *ib.*, pp. 763-5.

<sup>2</sup> For an adequate account of the proceedings at this, the so-called sixth Council of Carthage, see Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. ii, pp. 466-7, and refs.

that, in view of the fact that this canon was wanting in the Carthaginian copy of the acts of that Council, reference should be made to the original acts at Constantinople, and also to the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch; and that a letter should be addressed to the Pope requesting him to do the like, the disputed canons being observed in the meantime, but that the Carthaginian copy be regarded as the basis of discussion. The legate Faustinus disputed the right of the Council to pronounce against the Roman Church because Alypius considered the authority of the canons doubtful. The proper course of the African bishops, he contended, was to write and ask the Pope himself to institute an investigation with reference to the genuine canons of Nicaea, on the result of which he should again enter into negotiations with them. The Council finally decided that the findings of the Nicene Council were to be accepted as authoritative, and that the President, Aurelius, should write to his brethren of Constantinople, Alexandria, and Antioch, for such information as would lead to a settlement of what those findings actually were. In addition, a series of older African decrees were repeated and renewed. These form what is now known as the "Codex Canonum Ecclesiae Africanae," canon 28 of which reproduces canon 17 of the previous year with the

addition of a further appeal from the primates to a General Council.<sup>1</sup>

The Africans, while thus resolute to maintain their independence and the right of provincial judgement upon the matters in dispute, were by no means anxious to break with the new Pope, of whose fairness they seem to have had some hopes, and whose authority they were quite prepared to admit within certain somewhat narrow limits. For, while expressing their confidence in the reason and good feeling of Boniface, they made perfectly clear that they would neither endure nor tolerate any arrogant pretensions to overlordship or right of interference on the part of the Apostolic See.<sup>2</sup> The Roman version of the canons of Nicaea moreover was disputed, and the Pope requested to check his own copies by reference to those in the archives of the patriarchal sees, to which the writers had already decided to have recourse for their own information.

But whatever confidence the African bishops

<sup>1</sup> Details of the Codex may be found in Hefele, *Councils*, vol. ii, pp. 468-76, but the remarks of this learned writer upon canon 28 can only be accepted with some reserve and after due allowance for the point of view from which he must necessarily regard the question involved. For canon 17 of 418 cf. p. 79 *ante*.

<sup>2</sup> Bonif., *Ep.*, ii (Migne, *ib.*, pp. 752-6). Cf. also the general tone of Aug. *Contra duas ep. Pelag.*, addressed to this Pope.

may have had in the fairness and honourable dealing of Boniface, they were yet more confident in the strength of their own case ; and with good reason. The subsequent course of events demonstrated that they were doubly in the right. They were right as to the disputed canon, which inquiry showed to be not Nicene but Sardican ; a result which inevitably impaled the Roman Pontiff on one or other horn of a dilemma, as being convicted either of the grossest ignorance or the most impudent imposture ; two painful alternatives, the acceptance of either of which was sufficiently humiliating. They were in the right also in respect of their judgement as to the actual matter under consideration, ample proof of which was presently forthcoming from the lips of Apiarius himself. Although in so doing we somewhat anticipate the actual course of events, it may perhaps be desirable at once to follow this matter to its conclusion. In 424 Apiarius, long upheld by the Court of Rome as the victim of injustice, made a full and public confession of the crimes with which he had been charged, crimes so dark and shameful as to fill with shuddering horror the judges by whom his confession was received. A Council, meanwhile, was sitting at Carthage for the purpose of investigating the case<sup>1</sup> ; from which a letter was

<sup>1</sup> Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. ii, 480-81.

addressed to Celestine I, who had succeeded Boniface in 422, informing him of what had taken place, and requesting that, in view of the grave error which had been committed, the Pope would, for the future, refrain from listening so readily to fugitives from Africa to his court,<sup>1</sup> and abstain from receiving into communion excommunicated persons. They urged moreover that the mere receiving of appeals at Rome constituted an attack upon African rights, and was a practice for which no genuine Nicene authority could be adduced. Then, complaining bitterly of the insolence of the legate Faustinus, they peremptorily demanded that no more judges should be sent to Africa from Rome.<sup>2</sup>

The whole transaction thus turned out to be an unfortunate one for the prestige of the Apostolic See, which had become involved, by the rashness of Zosimus in the first instance, in a thoroughly bad case foredoomed to failure. The manner in which the case, so blindly taken up, was handled was furthermore so tactless and absurd that even a good case would have been greatly prejudiced thereby. The advantage thus

<sup>1</sup> The African bishops based their protest in this particular upon the fifth canon of Nicaea, of which they regarded the Roman attitude as being a breach. For canon 5, see Beet, *R. S.*, ii, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Celestine, *Ep.*, ii (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 50, pp. 422-7).

given to the Africans they were quick to press to the very uttermost, eagerly seizing so fair an opportunity of declaring themselves independent of all external control.

It is interesting, however, to turn from the case of Apiarius to that of another African delinquent, Bishop Antony of Fussala; for a comparison of the two cases affords a significant illustration of the actual unsettledness of the relations subsisting between the African Churches and the Roman See, and suggests to how large an extent the tone adopted by the former was conditioned by circumstances.

Without going into unnecessary detail it may be briefly stated that, on the occasion of the excision of a portion of the see of Hippo to form a new see which was to take its name from Fussala, the Numidian Primate, owing to the unexpected withdrawal of the intended candidate, and acting on the somewhat hasty nomination of Augustine, consecrated the inexperienced Antony to the new office. The choice of this man was, as the event showed, most unfortunate. In no long time Fussala was in a ferment, and a rapid succession of charges were brought against the recently appointed bishop. On investigation, it is true, the gravest charges were not substantiated, but enough remained to demand severe disciplinary action. Wishing to combine mercy

with justice, Augustine and those engaged with him upon the case decided to allow the accused to retain the title of bishop, but at the same time prohibited him from exercising the functions of his office at Fussala. Basing his protest upon the contention that his sentence was illogical and a contradiction in terms, and that if found fit to retain his rank as a bishop he could not consistently be deprived of the right to act as such in his own see, Antony won over the aged Primate to his side, and through him made his appeal to the throne of St. Peter. Boniface heard what the accused prelate had to say upon his own behalf with considerable favour, and reinstated him conditionally upon the statement of the case as it had been presented to him turning out to be correct. This was at best only a decree *nisi*, but Antony boldly treated it as being absolute, and threatened the Fussalians with the intervention of the civil power to enforce the carrying out of the papal decision. Boniface, meanwhile, had passed away, and Augustine, in great distress and with something more than hints of resignation, appealed to the new Pope Celestine in very deferential terms; and, laying before him the whole history of the case, earnestly implored for his assistance. The great African Father did not plead entirely in vain, and the end of the matter was that the



see of Fussala was suppressed, and again merged with its mother-see of Hippo.<sup>1</sup>

That Boniface was determined to maintain rigid ecclesiastical discipline and to insist upon strict adherence to the Nicene decrees was made manifest in his dealings with the affairs of Gaul. Thus, when the case of Maximus, Bishop of Valence, who was charged on several counts, was brought before him, he insisted that the accused should take his trial before the bishops of his own province, and that a provincial synod should be assembled within five months for the settlement of the case<sup>2</sup>—the decision thus given being quite in the spirit of the fifth canon of Nicaea.<sup>3</sup> Similarly he insisted, when the see of Lodève was vacant, on the observance of the Nicene decree which enjoined that each metropolitan should enjoy supreme authority in his own province with respect to all such matters.<sup>4</sup>

To this effect he wrote to Hilary, Archbishop of Narbonne, the metropolitan immediately concerned, charging him to take the matter into his own hands “relying upon our injunctions.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For this interesting story in Augustine’s own words, see *Ep.*, 209; Dods’ *Letters of St. Augustine*, vol. ii, pp. 384–90; cf. also *App. ad Ep. Bonif.*, x, xi (Migne, 20, pp. 788–90).

<sup>2</sup> Bonif., *Ep.*, iii (Migne, *ib.*, pp. 756–8).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. i, pp. 386–7; Beet, *R. S.*, ii, p. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hefele, *Ib.*, pp. 381 *seq.*; Beet, *R. S.*, ii, pp. 21–2.

<sup>5</sup> Bonif., *Ep.*, xii (Migne, *ib.*, pp. 772–4).

The historical significance of Boniface's relations with the Gallic Churches is considerable, and should not be overlooked. This Pope knew of no *ex cathedra* utterance from the chair in which he sate, which, once it had gone forth, for ever precluded all further discussion; nor did he scruple openly to reverse the judgement of his predecessor, treating the supreme jurisdiction conferred upon Arles by Zosimus as null and of none effect, because contrary to the received canons of the Church.<sup>1</sup> In this manner, by the verdict of his immediate successor, was another of the works of that very fallible Pontiff quickly brought to nought.

His correspondence with Illyricum reveals Boniface, after the manner of Siricius and Innocent before him, as setting himself resolutely to maintain the supremacy of his see in that quarter. The opportunity of doing so came, however, quite unsought, in connexion with the elevation of an Illyrian bishop, Perigenes by name. Perigenes had already been appointed Bishop of Patras by his metropolitan, the Archbishop of Corinth, But the people of Patras declined to receive the new bishop,<sup>2</sup> who thereupon quietly returned

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zos., *Ep.* i (Migne, *op. cit.*, pp. 642-5), and p. 76 *supra*. For the important bearing of this transaction upon the subsequent relations of Pope and metropolitans, see Gieseler, *Compendium of Ecclesiastical History*, i, § 92, p. 265.

<sup>2</sup> Bonif., *Ep.*, iv, 3; cf. also Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 36.

to Corinth, and on the death of the metropolitan was raised to that important see. The Pope was now asked to ratify the election, a thing which, in itself, he was quite willing, even eager, to do; but he raised objection to the form in which the request had been presented as irregular, because it had not passed through the hands of, and been forwarded to him by Rufus, Archbishop of Thessalonica, to whom, as Vicar of the Apostolic See, he had delegated his authority over the Illyrian provinces. To Rufus therefore he referred the matter in a letter bearing the date September 19, 419. After complimenting the Archbishop upon his effective discharge of duty as Vicar of the Apostolic See—upon the duties of which high office he enlarged in a tone of much authority—and after expressing himself strongly as to the providential character of Perigenes' appointment, the Pope went on to add that, for the sake of order and discipline, he could take no further action in the matter until the question of the appointment had been formally brought before him by Rufus himself, as papal vicar, "in order," as he said, "that both the authority of the Apostolic See, and Your Grace's due meed of honour (*et Dilectionis tuæ honorificentia*) might be conserved."<sup>1</sup> In due course matters were satisfactorily arranged, and

<sup>1</sup> Bonif., *Ep.*, v, 4. The subject of Perigenes' appointment forms the theme of *Epp.*, iv, v (Migne, *ib.*, pp. 760-3).

Perigenes received his confirmation from the Pope.

But, papal confirmation notwithstanding, the elevation of Perigenes did not give universal satisfaction ; and the keen eye of jealousy could readily detect what might plausibly be urged as a fatal objection to his appointment. Of far higher authority, according to the general feeling of the time, than any pronouncement of a Bishop of Rome were the solemn decisions of the Fathers of Nicaea, among whose decrees was one which forbade the translation of a bishop from one see to another.<sup>1</sup> Now, as we have already observed, before his elevation to the metropolitan throne of Corinth, Perigenes had been appointed to the see of Patras ; and, although he had never actually taken possession, the mere fact of the appointment having been made was held by some among the Thessalian bishops to render his subsequent elevation to the more important see of Corinth a mere translation, to which they, in consequence, made strong objection as uncanonical. Despairing of the Pope, an appeal was made by the opposition to the Emperor Theodosius II, a somewhat weak monarch, though

<sup>1</sup> Canon 15, for the text of which see Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. i, p. 422 ; repeated at the Council of Antioch, A.D. 341, can. 21, Hefele, *ib*, vol. ii, p. 72. On this point cf. also Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 36, where, however, there appears to be some confusion between can. 18 and can. 21. Ant. See note *in loc*,

of fair personal character and sincerely interested in religion and ecclesiastical affairs.<sup>1</sup> In response to the appeal of the discontented bishops, the Emperor decreed that such disputes should henceforth be settled by appeal from the provincial synods to the Patriarch of New Rome. Boniface, in fear for the prestige of his own see, which was thus gravely threatened, appealed in his turn to the Western Emperor Honorius, who at once got into communication with his nephew and colleague on the subject. At his uncle's request Theodosius, who apparently was very much open to external influences, annulled the rescript, which was in all probability due less to the initiative of its official promulgator than to the promptings of the females of the palace, behind whom doubtless stood the Eastern Patriarch himself. At all events, to say the least of it, the incident suggests that behind the thrones of the two Emperors, ostensibly acting as principals in the affair, stood the Patriarchs of the East and of the West unobtrusively contesting each for the supremacy of his own see, a contest which issued in a decided victory for the latter.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 22; Theodoret, *H. E.*, v, 37; Soz., *H. E.*, ix, 1; Philostorgius, *H. E.*, xii, 7. The rather severe characterization of this emperor in Gibbon c. 32, may profitably be compared with that of Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, vol. ii, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> See Bonif., *Epp.*, ix, x, xi (Migne, *ib.*, pp. 769-71). Cf. also Buchanan, art. "Bonifacius I" *D. C. B.*

Proposals for a provincial synod were, meanwhile, flying about; and Boniface, wishing to nip in the bud any tendency in the direction of independence, and to put a check upon the growing ambitions of Constantinople, expressed himself in very forceful terms in three letters, all of which bore the same date, March 11, 422.<sup>1</sup> The first of these letters was addressed to the Vicar Rufus, the second to the Thessalian bishops, and the third conjointly to Rufus and the whole body of Illyrian bishops. With many high words and constant references to "the blessed Peter" and the authority directly committed to him by our Lord, an authority which, he claimed, was handed down from the Apostle through the successive heads of the Roman Church, the Pope enforces upon the Primate the necessity of his asserting the authority entrusted to him, which is again confirmed; to the Vicar, in their turn, the bishops are exhorted to render full canonical obedience, and, once for all dismissing the idea of holding a synod for the purpose, to refrain from further discussion of a subject which had already been decided, "since it has never been lawful to reconsider what has once been determined by the Apostolic See."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Epp.*, xiii, xiv, xv (Migne, pp. 774-84).

<sup>2</sup> *Epp.*, xiii, 4; cf. also xv, 5.

Upon this occasion the authority of Rome prevailed, and Perigenes was left in possession of his archbishopric, willing doubtless for the time to recognize the supremacy of the Pope as represented in the person of his Vicar, but destined at a later period to find himself at loggerheads with the ecclesiastical authority of Rome.

Little more need be said of Boniface ; in the following September the Roman See was rendered vacant by his death. This Pontiff presents, in some respects, a decided contrast to his immediate predecessor Zosimus ; moderation and caution rather than rashness being characteristic of his policy considered as a whole. It is interesting, however, to note that in his letters to the Gallic bishops, the general substance of which is already familiar to us, he appears to ground his authority upon a basis somewhat different from that which is assumed in his correspondence with Illyricum. That this is not to be explained by a change in the views of the writer himself upon this point is sufficiently clear from the fact that the letters to Gaul and Illyricum do not fall into two well-defined groups, each belonging to its own separate period of his pontificate, for the correspondence in both cases is somewhat extended, ranging from the beginning to almost the end of his reign, which was indeed so short as hardly to admit of its being broken up into

two or more distinct periods. The explanation, therefore, must rather be sought in the peculiar circumstances of each case and the special character of the relation existing between the Roman Court and the provinces involved. The contrast nevertheless is of true historical import as affording a clear indication of the fact that this Pope had formed no very distinct conception of the real nature and true ground of such authority as he claimed.

In his correspondence with Gaul Boniface continually falls back upon conciliar authority and the regulations of the Fathers. In other words he poses not as a supreme legislator, but as the guardian and exponent of ecclesiastical law. He is a great executive officer, clad with formidable authority no doubt, but does not claim to be the law-giver. If he conceives of his position as in any sense monarchic, it is, at most, a strictly limited and constitutional, not absolute, monarchy that he represents. So far also is he from holding any established theory as to the infallibility of the papal office that he does not hesitate for a moment to reverse the decision of his immediate predecessor with reference to the metropolitan rights of the see of Arles, much in the same manner as one high judicial authority may, and frequently does, reverse the interpretation of the law already given by another.



He writes in fact as a Primate of wide-reaching authority rather than as a Pope.

In his letters to Illyricum, however, Boniface rests his authority upon a higher and more personal ground. His first letter opens with the words "The Blessed Apostle Peter,"<sup>1</sup> and continually does that name recur, with frequent mention of the power entrusted by the great Head of the Church to this favoured Apostle, whose authority the writer himself claims to represent; while the power of the Apostolic See is insisted upon again and again in the most expressive terms. But for all that, with some exceptions, notably the very strong statement to which reference has already been made,<sup>2</sup> the tone of the writer is one of calm dignity and studied moderation. Crude aggression and blatant self-assertion are not conspicuous in these letters; by Boniface his apostolic authority is rather suggested or quietly taken for granted than openly striven for. But the calm assurance of authority with which at times he writes is, to say the least of it, impressive, and affords a suggestive indication of the growing power of the papacy.

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, iv, 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Epp.*, xiii, 4; xv, 5; cf. p. 102 *supra*.

## CHAPTER III

### THE NESTORIAN CONTROVERSY: CELESTINE I, SIXTUS III.

Celestine I Pope—Death of Honorius—Valentinian III—Illyrian Claim—Semi-Pelagianism in Gaul: John Cassian—Mission of Germanus to Britain—Ireland enters the Ecclesiastical System of the West—Nestorius—Disturbances in Constantinople—Cyril of Alexandria—The Rival Patriarchs address the Pope—He decides against Nestorius—Council of all Egypt—Theodosius II—The Third General Council—Rival Parties—*Conciliabulum*—Condemnation of Nestorius—His End—Character of Celestine—Sixtus III Pope—Doctrinal Settlement in the East—Bassus—Perigenes Again—Old and New Rome—Death of Sixtus.

ON the death of Boniface, in September 422, Celestine I ascended the Roman chair without contest, a circumstance which, significantly enough, is remarked upon by Augustine in a letter to the new-made Pope as a matter for congratulation.<sup>1</sup>

Augustine and Celestine were not entire strangers, for, previous to the elevation of the latter, some

<sup>1</sup> Aug., *Ep.*, 209; Dods, *Letters*, ii, p. 384.

correspondence of a very friendly character had already passed between them.<sup>1</sup> This being the case the great Bishop of Hippo, in the midst of what was to him an almost domestic trouble<sup>2</sup> would naturally seek the aid of the new pontiff, his former friend. Celestine appears to have responded to the appeal of Augustine by withdrawing from Antony the countenance of the Roman See, which had been conditionally accorded by his predecessor Boniface. But, coming as it did so soon after his accession, the mere fact of his having received an appeal from so great a prelate as Augustine can scarcely have failed to make a deep impression upon the mind of Celestine. Though the circumstances of the case, quite apart from any theory of the Roman supremacy, sufficiently explain why Augustine should have carried this matter direct to Rome, none the less appeals of this kind all contributed to call forth and strengthen that monarchical conception of their office and authority which seems to have been entertained, as a matter of course, by the successive occupants of St. Peter's chair.

In the summer of the year following Celestine's accession Honorius died; and, worthless as he was, the Emperor's death plunged Italy into

<sup>1</sup> Aug., *Ep.*, 192; Dods, *ib.*, p. 374-5.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pp. 95-7 *supra*, and refs.

confusion. This is not the place to tell in detail how the Western throne was usurped by the Chief Notary John, with the support of Aetius,<sup>1</sup> behind whom stood in shadow, grim and threatening, the dread power of the Huns; and how, after some hesitation, the Emperor Theodosius II resolved to confer the lordship of the West upon his child cousin, Valentinian III, the administration being placed in the hands of his mother Placidia, widow of the Gothic King Ataulf, then of Constantius—the father of her boy—whom Honorius had associated with himself upon the Western throne; mother and son at the time of this fateful decision being refugees at the Eastern court.<sup>2</sup> The imperial generals, Ardaburius and Aspar, soon made an end of John's pretensions. The usurper himself fell into their hands, and,

<sup>1</sup> For an interesting account of Aetius and his great rival Boniface, both of whom were destined to write their names in large letters upon the page of Roman history in characters exceeding strange—the former, at first an ally of the Hunnish power, ending as the most renowned champion of Europe against the Huns; the latter, a friend and correspondent of Augustine, for long the empire's shield against barbarians of whatever race, only at last to invite them to take possession of the province committed to his care; each fated to be consigned by violence to an untimely grave—and a full discussion of the obscure historical problems which their rivalry involves, see Freeman, *Europe in Fifth Century*, Appendix I; for a slighter, but suggestive treatment, Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, vol. i, pp. 454–62. Cf. also Bury, *Later Rom. Empire*, bk. ii, c. viii.

<sup>2</sup> For the doubtful position of Placidia and Valentinian at the Court of Constantinople see Bury, *L. R. E.*, vol. i, p. 158.

after suffering the cruelest indignities, was put to death at Aquileia ; and Valentinian, who had left Constantinople as Caesar only, was put in possession of the full imperium.<sup>1</sup>

The civil confusion thus occasioned, extending over the space of two years, may, at any rate partially, account for the long delay in determining the outstanding question between the Pope and the Africans as to Apiarius and the legate Faustinus.<sup>2</sup> Many restrictions must meanwhile have been placed upon freedom of intercourse between Rome and the African Province, where the usurper John, largely as a result of the activity of the great Count Boniface, did not meet with the acknowledgment that was accorded to him in Italy and elsewhere. But, be that as it may, the African reply to a letter of Celestine on behalf of Apiarius can hardly have been dispatched earlier than the summer of 425, and perhaps not until the following year.<sup>3</sup> The general tenor of this letter,

<sup>1</sup> For details reference may be made to Gibbon, c. 33 ; Bury, *L. R. E.*, i, pp. 156-9 ; Hodgkin, *Italy*, i, pp. 425-30 ; Gregorovius, *Rome in M. A.*, i, p. 182 ; and also to the ecclesiastical historians, Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 23-4 ; Philostorg., *H. E.*, xii, 12-14.

<sup>2</sup> So Tillemont, quoted by Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 50, p. 421, note "d."

<sup>3</sup> The absence of any word of congratulation addressed to the Pope on his elevation to that dignity—a customary courtesy, not at all likely to be omitted unless the date of

which was more or less of the nature of an ultimatum, has already been indicated in the previous chapter,<sup>1</sup> and need not further detain us. The sharp contrast which it presents to that of Augustine, written a year or two earlier, is not without significance, and was no doubt the occasion of unpleasant reflections on the part of the recipient.

It will be remembered that, so long ago as 421, there had been some friction between Pope Boniface and Emperor Theodosius II, with reference to the ecclesiastical supremacy of the former over Eastern Illyricum.<sup>2</sup> The political diocese, though attached to the Eastern Empire by Constantine the Great, for ecclesiastical purposes still retained its Western connexion. Theodosius, however, had attempted to transfer to the Patriarch of New Rome that superintendency over the bishops of Illyricum which the Bishop of Elder Rome had entrusted to the Metropolitan of Thessalonica, as his Vicar. The Western Patriarch, however, succeeded in maintaining his authority as against the Eastern Emperor. This claim Celestine was resolved to uphold; and having already intervened, as he himself informed his correspondents, to save a bishop of the province in question from falling a his accession had ceased to be recent—affords strong presumption against an earlier date. See *Cel., Ep., 2* (Migne *P. L.*, 50, pp. 423 *seq.*).

<sup>1</sup> See p. 94 *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 101 *supra*.

victim to partisan prejudice, he addressed a letter to Perigenes of Corinth and eight other Illyrian bishops<sup>1</sup> setting forth, in general terms, his right, as the successor of St. Peter, to nothing less than universal jurisdiction, and specifically directing that all causes should be referred to his Vicar Rufus, without whose sanction they should not presume either to ordain bishops or to meet in Council. It may be observed, in passing, that the position taken up by Celestine with reference to Illyricum was one for which the findings of the Nicene Fathers<sup>2</sup> had left no place. At that memorable Council the metropolitan office received full recognition, but the papal vicar was a person quite unknown—a point which should not be overlooked as one reads Celestine's sententious remarks about the keeping of rules.

It is a far cry from Illyricum to Gaul, whither the next extant letter of Celestine was dispatched.<sup>3</sup> This letter, which, unlike the last, bears a date, July 25, 428, was addressed to the bishops of Vienne and Narbonensis, and deals at some length with various matters of ecclesiastical discipline and conduct, into which, however, it is needless to enter here. The tone of the writer, and his allusion to "our office," is that of recog-

<sup>1</sup> Cel., *Ep.*, 3 (Migne, *ib.*, pp. 427-9).

<sup>2</sup> Especially can. 5 and 6. See Beet, *R. S.*, ii, pp. 22-23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, 4 (Migne, *ib.*, 429-36).

nized and unquestioned authority; and while specifically claiming little for his chair, the writer quietly takes for granted a great deal.

Some years later, after the death of Augustine, which took place August 28, 430, and consequently near to the close of his own life, we find Celestine again in correspondence with the bishops of Gaul.<sup>1</sup> The occasion of his intervention was on this wise. Pelagianism, after its decisive defeat in North Africa, had reappeared in Southern Gaul, though in a somewhat modified or Semipelagian form. This movement is usually ascribed, and apparently with truth, to the teaching and influence of John Cassian, the transplanter into the West of the rules of Eastern monachism—monachism conceived of, not as a life of routine but of renunciation.<sup>2</sup> So far, however, from regarding himself as a disciple of Pelagius, Cassian specifically attacked the Pelagian doctrine in the strongest terms,<sup>3</sup> but none the less he manifestly recoiled from rigid Augustinian orthodoxy, as seeming to involve an arbi-

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, 21 (Migne, *ib.*, 528 *seq.*). The letter is addressed to seven bishops by name, the first name being that of Venerius of Marseilles, with the addition "et caeteris Galliarum episcopis." Cf. Bright's remarks upon this letter, *D. C. B.*, i. p. 588 <sup>b</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Renunciation was one of the ruling ideas of primitive Christianity. On this point reference may be made to Workman's *Persecution in the Early Church*.

<sup>3</sup> *De Incarn.*, i, 3, vi, 14 (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 50, pp. 20, 171).



trary limitation of the mere possibility of salvation, and the fatalism <sup>1</sup> inherent therein.

For his own part, Cassian acknowledged that the grace of Christ is an essential factor of spiritual deliverance, but at the same time held that, generally speaking, the operation of divine grace is dependent upon the operation of the individual will. He thus rejected absolute predestination, admitting only predestination upon foreseen merits and perseverance ; a perseverance, moreover, maintained, not as a special gift, but by the continued exercise of human will. The distinction between these three schools of thought has been happily hit off in the saying that Augustine regarded man, in his natural state, as dead, Pelagius as sound, and Cassian as sick. Semi-pelagian views, in spite of the efforts of the orthodox to suppress them, continuing to spread in Southern Gaul, especially in the neighbourhood of Marseilles, where Cassian seems to have taken up his abode, perhaps as abbot of one of the two monasteries which he had founded, it was felt that something further must be done. An appeal for his assistance on the part of Prosper of Aquitaine, in the form of an important letter which has been preserved among Augustine's

<sup>1</sup> The charge of fatalism Augustine retorts upon his opponents in the case of infant death. *De Don.*, c. 29 ; Dods, *Anti-Pel. Writ.*, iii, p. 197.

own,<sup>1</sup> and Hilary—by some identified with the famous Bishop of Arles, but more probably a layman of the same name—called the aged protagonist of Western orthodoxy, whose work on earth was nearly done, for the last time into the fray; and once more Augustine took up his facile pen.<sup>2</sup> But neither the prestige of his name nor the vigour of his defence of the doctrines of arbitrary election, and of human will determined wholly by divine grace, availed to overpower the objections of the Massilians. The old warrior had fought his last fight bravely enough, but did not achieve complete success; and thus Augustine went his way to find the truth of all vexed questions, and the laurel wreath of victory in the Land of the Morning Calm.

But what the Bishop of Hippo had failed to do, might not the Bishop of Rome accomplish? At all events to some minds there seemed to be a reasonable possibility that the doctrinal opposition which the personal weight of the one had

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, 225, unfortunately not included in Dods' selection, but see Migne, 33, pp. 1002-7; Hilary's letter is 226 in the same collection, pp. 1007-12.

<sup>2</sup> *De Praedestinatione* and *De Dono Perseverantiae* (Dods, *A. P. W.*, iii, pp. 119-170, 171-235), which may be regarded as two parts of the same work, are intended to deal with the two points in Cassian's teaching indicated above, and are addressed to "my dearest sons, Prosper and Hilary." For Augustine's statement of the points of difference between the Massilians, or Semipelagians, and the Pelagians proper see especially *De Praed.*, cc. 2, 38; Dods, pp. 121, 164.

not availed to remove the official authority of the other might repress. Prosper and Hilary therefore betook themselves to Rome.<sup>1</sup> Celestine's response to their appeal was the letter with which we are now concerned. Magisterial in tone, the writer again assumes rather than asserts his official authority, admonishing the bishops to keep their subordinates in order, and vindicating the memory and doctrinal authority of Augustine, who by this time had passed away; with proud self-consciousness clinching his argument with the statement that "he was ever regarded by my predecessors in office as among the best teachers."<sup>2</sup>

Pelagianism, meanwhile, in one form or other, was giving trouble in Britain, whence, be it remembered, Pelagius himself had sprung, though probably of an Irish stock.<sup>3</sup> Alarmed by the spread of heresy, the leaders of the orthodox party in the British Church solicited the assistance of their Gallic brethren, their appeal perhaps being, in the first instance, forwarded to Auxerre.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cel., *Ep.*, xxi, 1 (Migne, 50, p. 528).

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xxi, 2, 3 (Migne, pp. 529, 530). The precepts of the Roman bishops on the doctrine of grace, appended to this letter, are almost certainly not by Celestine, though early ascribed to him. Cf. Migne, 50, *Mon. in Ep.*, p. 523; Bright, *D. C. B.*, i, p. 588<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Bury, *St. Patrick*, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> For the probable connexion between the Church of Auxerre and British and Irish Christianity, see Bury, *ib.*, p.

The actual course of events is somewhat uncertain, and the evidence far from clear. Apparently a Gallic synod was held at Troyes, which decided that Germanus and Lupus, Bishops respectively of Auxerre and Troyes, should proceed to Britain,<sup>1</sup> the matter, however, to be referred to the Pope for his approval and intervention ere they took their departure.<sup>2</sup> Celestine gave his *imprimatur* to the proposed mission, and in 429 Germanus proceeded to Britain as accredited envoy of the Pope, commissioned to uphold the Catholic cause.<sup>3</sup> Two years later Celestine laid his hand upon Ireland, which, though it possessed a Christianity of its own, had hitherto stood outside the ecclesiastical system of Roman Christendom. By his consecration of the deacon Palladius as first bishop of the Christian Irish, this Pope forged "the first link in the chain which bound Ireland—for some centuries loosely—to the spiritual centre of Western Europe."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Constantius, *Vita Germani*, c. 12 (Mombritius, i, fol. 321<sup>2</sup>—Milan, 1480); for some valuable critical remarks upon this work and its various editions, see Bury, *St. Patrick*, p. 247. Cf. also Bede, *H. E.*, i, 17.

<sup>2</sup> So Tillemont, quoting the authority of Prosper, *Mem. Eccl.*, xv; "St. Germain," art. vii. Bury again has some good remarks, *ib.*, p. 297.

<sup>3</sup> Prosper, *Chron.* sub ann., 429 (Migne, *P. L.*, 51, pp. 594-5); Platina, *Popes*, i, p. 102.

<sup>4</sup> Bury, *op. cit.*, p. 57. See Prosper, *Chron.*, sub ann., 431; cf. *Contra Coll.*, xxi (Migne, 51, pp. 595, 271); Platina, *Popes*, i, p. 102.

Palladius' stay in Ireland was brief, and apparently effected little ;<sup>1</sup> his appearance there is, however, of historical significance as the first assertion in that remote island of the authority of ecclesiastical Rome. In 432 Patrick entered upon his life-work, receiving his consecration perhaps at Auxerre ; the later legend that he, too, was consecrated by Celestine in person is apparently without foundation ;<sup>2</sup> indeed it is a matter of doubt whether this pontiff had not already passed away when the Apostle of Ireland entered upon his labours. The question is, however, of little moment ; the really essential point being that, by the sending of Palladius, Ireland had entered into the ecclesiastical system of the West, and like the sister Churches, in practice, if not in theory, looked to the Roman See as the highest spiritual authority in Christendom.

Celestine, in the meanwhile, had become involved in the *cause célèbre* of the time and the occasion of the calling together of the third General Council of the Church ; though the question at issue remained more or less a matter of indifference in the West, and his connexion with

<sup>1</sup> For a somewhat favourable view of Palladius' mission see Bury, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-8.

<sup>2</sup> Bury, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-61, 344-9 ; a clear statement of the whole case, with ample references.

it was external rather than intimate. On the death of Sisinnius in 427, after a short and troubled episcopate, the Emperor Theodosius II thought to terminate the intrigue and disorder by which the Church of his capital was grievously imperilled, by calling in a stranger, Nestorius, to occupy the imperial see of New Rome.<sup>1</sup> Nestorius entered upon his pontificate with an address to the Emperor, couched in terms which might well have become the lips of the proudest of popes<sup>2</sup>; and events soon showed that he came to bring not peace but a sword. The clarion of strife was almost immediately sounded by Anastasius, a presbyter of Antioch, who had accompanied the new patriarch from that city, and was deep in his confidence. The city was thrown into an uproar when Anastasius, in the course of a sermon, publicly proclaimed that it was improper and false to address the Virgin Mary as Mother of God (*Θεοτόκος*). The word

<sup>1</sup> Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 29; cf. Cassian, *De Incarn.*, vii, 31 (Migne 50, pp. 267-8). For a very interesting account of the circumstances of his appointment, from the pen of Nestorius himself, in the recently discovered *Bazaar of Heraclides*, see Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius*, pp. 6-8, which I had not seen at the time when this chapter was written. It is a work of great interest to the student of the Nestorian controversy, though of course it goes much beyond the scope of our present inquiry. Incidentally it raises the question whether the *Bazaar* is the work referred to by Evagrius in his severe account of Nestorius, *H. E.*, i. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Soc., *ib.*; Gibbon; c. 47.

*Theotokos* thus became the watchword of the controversy now begun.<sup>1</sup>

With the doctrinal questions involved in the Nestorian controversy we are not now directly concerned ; for they had but little bearing upon the development of the Roman See, save as affording an occasion to the Bishop of the ancient capital for the exercise of his authority by way of interposition. It will therefore be sufficient to indicate in the broadest outline the question at issue, that of the relation of the two natures in the Person of Christ. Apollinaris of Laodicea (d. 390), who represented one extreme view, taking as his starting-point the Platonic trichotomy, body, soul and spirit, ascribed to Christ possession of the two former but not the last, the human spirit in Him being replaced by the Divine Logos ; whence it follows that the human spirit, not being assumed by Christ as His Incarnation, remains unredeemed.<sup>2</sup> Though repudiated by the Church, this general point of view was largely reproduced in the Neo-Alexandrian theology, which, though it did not go so far as to deny the duality of natures, regarded everything human in Christ as a mere accident of the divine ; Mary is therefore the Mother of

<sup>1</sup> Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 32 ; Evag., *H. E.*, i, 2 ; cf. Cassian, *ut supra*. For Nestorius' use of the term *Theodochos* see Bethune-Baker, *Ib.*, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> Theodoret, *H. E.*, v, 3.

God. The most conspicuous living representative of this school was the Patriarch Cyril.

In sharp opposition to the foregoing view was that of the Antiochian school, the earlier representatives of which had been Diodorus of Tarsus and his more famous disciple Theodore of Mopsuestia,<sup>1</sup> the mantle of whom had now fallen upon Nestorius. As against the Alexandrians, Nestorius strove to preserve the full deity and full humanity of Christ, but only by the sacrifice of any real union of the two natures ; union giving place to a mere mechanical combination, a combination which left unmodified the proper and inherent qualities of the elements combined. The unity of the divine-human Person was thus in danger of being rent in twain. Hence also the term *Theotokos*, as applied to the Virgin Mary, was strongly objected to, though *Christotokos* was regarded as admissible.

When Anastasius, therefore, threw the Eastern capital into confusion by the sermon referred to on a previous page, Nestorius, who himself is said to have fallen much under the influence of Theodore,<sup>2</sup> so far from allaying the excitement and indignation which burst forth on all hands, added fuel to the flames, not only by taking the preacher under his protection, but by himself

<sup>1</sup> Theodoret, *H. E.*, v, 40 ; Evag., *H. E.*, i, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Evag., *H. E.*, i, 2.



taking up the tale and publicly rejecting the *Theotokos*.<sup>1</sup> In face of the tumult thus occasioned, the Patriarch, who, within a few days of his consecration, had won from his enemies the title of "Incendiary" by his persecution of the Arians,<sup>2</sup> endeavoured to lay by violence the evil spirit of disorder which he had raised by indiscretion. Meanwhile affairs in Constantinople went on from bad to worse.

News of these disturbances spread far and wide, and in no long time found its way to Alexandria, where, if anywhere on earth, owing to the bitter rivalry between the two greatest sees of the Orient, any pronouncement of a Patriarch of New Rome, however blameless in itself, was sure of an unfriendly hearing and sharp criticism. As Theophilus had been the persistent foe of

<sup>1</sup> Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 32. Socrates strives to be fair to Nestorius, and represents his attitude as due, less to the perversity of his real opinions than to the ignorant alarm of an illiterate man at a phrase which he did not properly understand. Evagrius (*ut supra*), though quoting Socrates as his authority, is much more bitter in his denunciation. The truth seems to be that Nestorius was neither so illiterate as represented by Socrates, nor so thoroughly evil as pictured by Evagrius. Cf., however, the way in which he is lectured by Celestine in *Ep.*, 13 (Migne, 50, pp. 469 *seq.*). For a defence of the orthodoxy of Nestorius, and his essential agreement with Flavian and Leo, see Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, esp. c. xii.

<sup>2</sup> Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 29; for other examples of his persecuting policy, *ib.*, 31. But see also Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 8. for a not entirely convincing *apologia*.

the saintly, if somewhat tactless, Chrysostom, so his nephew and successor Cyril was quite ready to take up his parable against Nestorius, *ex officio* the object of his hereditary jealousy. Important as is the position occupied by Cyril in several departments of Christian literature, and deeply as his personality impressed itself upon the social and religious life of Alexandria and the Church at large, he is by no means so conspicuous for Christlikeness of character. Almost from the very moment of his consecration in 412, after a conflict which lasted for three days, violence, outrage, and barbarism—the very breath of life to the savage monks of the Nitrian desert who surrounded his patriarchal throne—had run riot in the city; and the splendour of the Archbishop's fame is darkened by the cruelties which he certainly winked at, and for which it is hard not to regard him as still more directly responsible.<sup>1</sup>

Cyril it was who now stood forth to confront, with relentless persistence, the views of Nestorius; and it is impossible to be blind to the fact that the controversy was not doctrinal alone, but, in part at any rate, a contest for supremacy between the two great patriarchates of the East.

<sup>1</sup> Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 7, 13-15. For a brief but excellent characterization of Cyril see Milman, *Latin Christianity*, i, pp. 186-91; and for another estimate of his character cf. Newman, *Historical Sketches*, ii, pp. 353-8.

The Patriarch of Alexandria was quick to seize what appeared to be a favourable opportunity of discrediting his one serious rival for the primacy of the East by branding him as a false teacher, a blind guide, a heretic, and a disturber of the peace of the Church. He opened his campaign in an Easter address, in which, though without naming him, he denounced the doctrine of Nestorius. He then betook himself to letter-writing, addressing in turn his henchmen, the turbulent Egyptian monks, the Emperor, the ladies of the imperial house, and Nestorius himself<sup>1</sup>; whereupon a letter-war between the two Patriarchs broke out, which, in spite of some hesitation on both sides, at its beginning, to push the matter to extremes, eventually became so embittered as to leave but little room for compromise and mutual understanding.<sup>2</sup> Cyril and Nestorius alike now looked to Rome. She held the balance of power, and her Bishop, as compared with either of the rivals, enjoyed an authority admitted and effective. The very

<sup>1</sup> Practically the whole extant correspondence of Cyril is concerned with this controversy. The letters written before the Council, to which reference is made above, are numbered i-xxi in Migne, *Pat. Gr. Lat.*, 77, pp. 9-132. Of the letters so numbered four, iii, v, xii, xv, are addressed to Cyril, two by Nestorius, one by the Pope. Cf. *Evag., H. E.*, 1, 3.

<sup>2</sup> For a clear account of the incidents of this period, cf. Bright's excellent art. "Cyrillus (7)" *D. C. B.*

necessities of the case constrained each of the Eastern primates, in self-defence as against one another, to recognize the validity of one portion of the Roman claim to supremacy ; “ Alexandria that of the descent from St. Peter ; ancient and apostolic origin was so clearly wanting to Constantinople, that on this point the Roman superiority was undeniable. On her side, Constantinople was content to recognize the title of Rome to superiority as the city of the Caesars, from whence followed her own secondary, if not co-equal dignity as New Rome.”<sup>1</sup> In other words Old Rome enjoyed a position of advantage as combining in herself the strongest elements of the respective claims to authority on the part of both Alexandria and Constantinople, apostolic origin and imperial right ; and as these great sees, her two most formidable rivals—for the other apostolic sees were practically out of court—assailed and weakened one another, she remained untroubled and untouched in a position of solitary pre-eminence. Her arbitration was appealed for, and the Roman Pope saw, not without secret gratification, the primates of Alexandria and Constantinople as suppliants on the steps of St. Peter’s chair.

Nestorius found an occasion for writing to Celestine in the presence in Constantinople of

<sup>1</sup> Milman, *Latin Christ.*, i, p. 195.

certain exiled Pelagians,<sup>1</sup> who were then importuning the Emperor for a further investigation of their case. The Patriarch wishes for further information which he requests that the Pope will supply; and then passes on to what was doubtless his real object in writing, the controversy concerning the Incarnation, branding his opponents as heretics akin to the Arians and Apollinarians. This letter, which exhibits no signs of deference and is simply that of an equal to an equal, was written in Greek,<sup>2</sup> and in consequence required translation before it could be read by the Pope, a work said to have been performed by Cassian, who may therefore be the author of the Latin version now extant. This letter was followed by a second, in which Nestorius presses for an answer to his former inquiry, and again recurred to the dispute with reference to the Person of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

Before the translation of the foregoing letters was in the hands of the Pope, a letter from Cyril, to whom he had already written on the subject nearly a year before, had already reached him, together with a series of extracts illustrative of the teaching of Nestorius as compared with

<sup>1</sup> Cel., *Ep.*, vi (Migne, 50, pp. 438-41). The letter is undated, but was probably written in 429.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Migne, 50, *Mon.*, p. 437.

<sup>3</sup> Cel., *Ep.*, vii (Migne, pp. 442-4); cf. *Ep.*, xiii, 2 (*ib.*, p. 471).

that of the recognized doctrinal authorities of the Church.<sup>1</sup> The tone of this letter, which the writer had the foresight to translate into Latin,<sup>2</sup> was in marked contrast to that of Nestorius' letter, which Celestine had yet to read. With studied deference, though not without proper dignity and self-respect, Cyril laid the controverted matter before the Pope as one which ancient Church usage demanded should be referred to him; asking for his guidance as to whether any communion should be maintained with the propagator of such opinions; and concluding with something more than an insinuation that Nestorius, shrinking from a full personal declaration of his opinions, had made another man, one Dorotheus, a Moesian bishop, his tool, and the mouthpiece of his pernicious views. This was probably in the spring of 430.

Under these circumstances Celestine could hardly do otherwise than intervene, though he did not act with precipitation. After some months' consideration he convoked a Roman Synod, early in August, to consider of the matter.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cel., *Epp.*, viii, ix (Migne, pp. 447-58); cf. *Ep.*, xiii, 2 (*ib.*, p. 471).

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, viii, *sub fin.* (Migne, p. 453).

<sup>3</sup> For an interesting fragment of the address delivered by Celestine before this assembly, see Migne, 50, pp. 457-8. For details of the Synod, cf. Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, iii, pp. 25-28.

As might have been foreseen, the feeling of this Synod went strongly against the accused Patriarch. Its findings are embodied in four very interesting letters written by the Pope himself, and apparently despatched by the same post on August 11. Of these letters one was to Cyril,<sup>1</sup> whose zeal was commended in the warmest terms. If it be possible to avoid extreme measures, let that by all means be done. Nestorius is certainly standing upon the edge of a precipice; it is therefore imperative that one last effort should be made to save him from himself, if haply his ruin may be averted. If, however, he persists in his error, he, though in the office of a shepherd, must be treated as a wolf, and driven from the fold. Cyril, therefore, joining "the authority of our see" with his own, is commissioned to give effect to the decision arrived at in Rome; and unless within ten days the offender, abjuring his errors, makes written profession of his adherence to the Catholic faith, the Archbishop of Alexandria is to make provision for the see of Constantinople as *ipso facto* vacant, and to give Nestorius notice of his exclusion from the Church.

A second letter was addressed to four prominent Eastern bishops, the Patriarchs John and Juvenal, Rufus of Thessalonica, and Flavian of

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xi (Migne, 50, pp. 459-64).

Philippi.<sup>1</sup> To these great prelates the Pope makes known the text of the ultimatum entrusted to Cyril for presentation to Nestorius, adding an injunction to the effect that all sentences of excommunication pronounced by the accused Patriarch must be regarded as null and void.

To Nestorius himself a long letter was also addressed,<sup>2</sup> in which the Pope expresses his personal disappointment that an appointment which he had regarded as so promising as that of the recipient to the see of Constantinople had turned out so ill. The writer then goes on to denounce in the strongest terms the teaching of his correspondent, pointing his remarks with many citations of scripture, and presents his ultimatum that, unless within ten days of the notice now given a written condemnation of his errors is forthcoming, he will be formally cut off from all communion with the Catholic Church. Celestine concludes by informing the accused that he has appointed the Bishop of Alexandria as his representative to give effect to the sentence now pronounced.

The last letter of this group<sup>3</sup> was to the clergy and people of Constantinople. It opens with a quotation from St. Paul,<sup>4</sup> like whom the writer

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xii (Migne, 50, pp. 465-70).

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xiii (*ib.*, pp. 469-86).

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xiv (*ib.*, pp. 485-500).

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. xi, 28.



claims to bear a burden of anxiety on behalf of all the Churches—an interesting sidelight upon the writer's own conception of his office and responsibility. The doctrine of Nestorius is again condemned; the faithful are exhorted to be patient in this their hour of tribulation, following the example of Athanasius "of blessed memory," who, when hunted from his official post, found respite by communion with the Roman See,<sup>1</sup> to the authority of which Celestine alludes in lofty terms. As, however, owing to distance and the pressure of other weighty business, the writer cannot be present in person to investigate matters on the spot, he has commissioned Cyril to act for him, and to give effect to his decision, the details of which form the concluding sentence of the letter.

The condemnation of Nestorius by Celestine marks the opening of a new chapter in the dogmatic action of the popes.<sup>2</sup> For the first time a pope had undertaken to determine, by his sentence, the orthodox position in respect of a doctrine which was a matter of controversy. The local Synod may be left out of account; it was apparently entirely subservient to the Head of the Roman Church, and certainly was in no sense representative of the Catholic Church at large.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Beet, *R. S.*, ii, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> On this point cf. Janus, *Pope and Council*, p. 71.

The action taken was really that of the Pope alone, who practically appointed an important prelate as his legate for the purpose of carrying out his decision. Celestine thus set an example which was subsequently followed, under more impressive circumstances, by pontiffs greater than himself.

In the meantime Cyril, who at this crisis displayed a moderation which is in striking contrast with the violence of his courses upon some other occasions, before carrying into effect the instructions of the Pope, assembled a Council of all Egypt in Alexandria to deliberate further of the matter.<sup>1</sup> Here a doctrinal formula was prepared, strongly anti-Nestorian in tone, indeed so reactionary, and perilous in consequence, that Cyril himself was afterwards obliged to put forth explanations of its meaning in order to vindicate his own orthodoxy. To this formula, which was conveyed to him in a letter from Cyril, Nestorius was called upon to give his assent, and at the same time to anathematize his errors. Four bishops were dispatched from Alexandria to deliver the document to the Patriarch of Constantinople in his palace on Sunday, November 30, or the following Sunday.

While these events were in progress Nestorius,

<sup>1</sup> For the proceedings of this Council see Hefele, *Councils*, iii, pp. 27 *seq.*

on his part, had not been entirely inactive ; and before the arrival of Cyril's envoys the result of his negotiations had put quite another complexion on the face of affairs. At the instance of Nestorius the Emperor Theodosius, coupling the name of Valentinian III with his own, had convoked a General Council of the Church to meet in Ephesus at the ensuing Whitsuntide ; and on November 19 sent forth a circular letter to all metropolitans requesting their attendance. The imperial intervention, as Celestine himself tacitly admits in letters <sup>1</sup> which will claim our attention shortly, practically quashed, for the time being, all hostile proceedings against the Bishop of New Rome on the part of any individual bishop, even of the first Bishop of them all. The sentence which the last-named had solemnly put forth at once fell into abeyance, whereby an interesting sidelight is thrown upon the actual limitations of the incipient ecclesiastical world-power which was slowly growing up in the ancient seat of empire.

Nestorius, taking advantage of the new situation which his introduction of the imperial authority into the controversy had created, now again wrote to the Pope <sup>2</sup> with much compla-

<sup>1</sup> *Epp.*, xvi, xix.

<sup>2</sup> This letter is printed among Celestine's own ; *Ep.*, xv (Migne, 50, pp. 499-501).

gency. Diplomatically ignoring the part taken by his correspondent with reference to the matter at issue, the writer preferred to refer to Cyril alone, whom he represented as alarmed at the prospect of having to face a Council, and as being willing to come to terms. So far as he himself was personally concerned, he did not object to the use of the term *Theotokos*, if used with proper caution; but at the same time was of opinion that the best settlement would be found in the adoption of another term, *Christotokos*. To this effect, he informed the Pope, he had written to Cyril, and enclosed a copy of the letter.

As the time appointed for the opening of the Council drew near, we find Celestine again busy with his pen. Early in 431 Cyril had written to Rome for instructions as to the proper attitude to be adopted if Nestorius should, after all, retract his errors at the Council. On May 7 the Pope replied<sup>1</sup> to the effect that forbearance must be shown, and every effort made to win Nestorius and to secure the peace of the Church. On the following day the Pope handed a paper of instructions<sup>2</sup> to Bishops Arcadius and Projectus and Presbyter Philip,<sup>3</sup> whom he was dispatching to the East that they might represent

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xvi (Migne, 50, pp. 501-2).

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xvii (*ib.*, p. 503).

<sup>3</sup> *Cf. Ep.*, xix, 3.

him at the Council. In general terms the deputies were advised that they should consult with and give their support to Cyril, and safeguard "the authority of the Apostolic See." More particularly they were instructed that, in the event of controversy, they were not to enter into the conflict, but to judge of the opinions expressed.

These instructions are significant enough. The Bishop of Rome, in the person of his direct representatives, would become no party to a doctrinal dispute, choosing rather to hold officially a position of judicial aloofness. Meaner prelates might appear before the court, and urge their respective views; but the Pope would appear only as a judge. Some such idea as this appears to have been stirring in the mind of Celestine. At all events the line of policy which he marked out for the guidance of his representatives may not unfairly be interpreted as a tacit claim on the part of this Pope to be the final judge in matters of ecclesiastical dispute, and, as such, above appearing in court either for the prosecution or the defence.

For at least another week the papal representatives remained in Rome, while the Pope was completing the correspondence with the delivery of which they were commissioned.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Ep.*, xvii, *sub fin.*

The last letter to be written was apparently that to the Emperor Theodosius,<sup>1</sup> dated May 15. With grave courtesy Celestine begs the Emperor to safeguard the faith with care more jealous than that which he would bestow upon the maintenance of his secular sovereignty; though, in matter of fact, he will most effectively conserve the last by his attention to the first. The Pope, however, is prudent enough to avoid even the appearance of measuring his power against that of the civil sovereign; his letter is quite general in tone, Nestorius is not even named, much less does the writer make any mention of the fact that he himself has already given sentence against the Patriarch of New Rome—a sentence couched in the most explicit terms. This can only be interpreted as a silent acquiescence in the quashing of his own sentence by the intervention of the imperial power.

One other letter of this group still remains; <sup>2</sup> not indeed the last written, for it is dated May 8, but formally addressed to the Council of Ephesus, to which it will naturally lead us. As in his letter to the Emperor, written a week later, Celestine, in addressing the Ephesine Fathers, speaks in general terms only, and displays a marked moderation, suppressing any

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xix (Migne, 50, pp. 511-12).

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xviii (Migne, 50, pp. 505-12).

explicit reference to his own authority, beyond an expression in his closing sentence—after commending to them his representatives—of the hope that they will give their assent to his decision as conducive to the security of the Catholic Church.

The bishops, meanwhile, were assembling at the appointed rendezvous. Ephesus may have been chosen as the place of meeting merely on account of its accessibility by sea and land, and the ample supply of provisions which could be drawn from the wide plain of the Cayster. Still, it is not without significance that tradition told that the Virgin Mary had found a home there in company with the Apostle John; and the building in which the Council met was the only one then existing which was dedicated to her, a fact which may well have seemed prognostic of the decisions finally arrived at.<sup>1</sup> In the absence of John of Antioch and other bishops, his companions, who had not yet arrived—whether designedly, as the Cyrillans said, or through sheer force of circumstances, as he himself represented—the Council was formally opened on June 22, amid scenes of disorder, and with a display of brute force, alike on the part of Cyril and his opponent, which did little credit to the Christian name.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Stanley, *Christian Institutions* (1906 edition), p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> For a vivid word-picture of the tumult amid which the

Any detailed account of the proceedings of the Council would here be out of place as belonging more properly to the history of dogma than to such an inquiry as we have immediately in view.<sup>1</sup> We shall, therefore, confine ourselves, as far as possible, to matters which have some bearing, whether direct or indirect, upon the fortunes of the Roman See.

Though the Council had now been formally opened, it might reasonably be contended, as Nestorius actually did contend—with whom agreed Count Candidianus, who represented the imperial authority, and indeed went so far as to inhibit any meeting—that nothing should be done before the arrival of John. Of the great patriarchs, two, Cyril and Nestorius, were principals to the dispute; a third, the Patriarch of Old Rome, had no intention of being present, in addition to which he had already prejudged the case; by a process of elimination the presence of the Patriarch of Antioch might therefore have seemed, in common fairness, to be necessary.

members of the Council gathered to its sessions see Newman, *Historical Sketches*, ii, pp. 350-2; cf. also Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, i, p. 205.

<sup>1</sup> Cf., however, the letter addressed by the Council to Celestine which is to be found among the latter's own letters, *Ep.*, xx (Migne, 50, pp. 511-22). See also Evag., *H. E.*, i, 3-5; Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 34-5; and for a full and excellent account of the whole proceedings, Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, iii, pp. 40-114.



Cyril, however, strongly backed by Memnon of Ephesus, would brook no delay, and on June 22, as we have seen, the first session of the Council opened. Cyril presided, not however as the representative of the Pope.<sup>1</sup> He had acted, it is true, in Celestine's and his own behalf in promulgating the sentence which had fallen to the ground; the Council now assembled had met, however, in response to an imperial and not a papal summons. Save the defendant, Cyril was the only great patriarch at this time present in Ephesus, and the presidency would therefore seem naturally to fall to him, though as a matter of equity and decency the place of the leader for the prosecution was certainly anywhere but in the chair.

The demand of Candidianus for delay was set at defiance, and the Count himself, after reading the imperial rescript, was ordered to withdraw. Nestorius was cited to appear, but refused to do so in the absence of John. Those members who supported the not unreasonable demand of the accused patriarch were ejected from the Council. The issue of the day was now practically determined; for, from the President's

<sup>1</sup> Among early writers Evagrius (*H. E.*, i, 4) states that Cyril occupied the position of the Bishop of Elder Rome; but cf. note 2 in Bohn's translation, p. 259. The presidency of councils appears to have been in imperial hands, cf. *Soc.*, *H. E.*, v, *praef.*

point of view the case had already been judged, and execution alone remained to be done.<sup>1</sup> Hesitation or delay there was none; and ere the close of the day, a very unrepresentative, we might well call it a "rump" Council had proceeded to the deposition of the second prelate in Christendom.<sup>2</sup>

The end, however, was not yet. Five days later<sup>3</sup> the Patriarch of Antioch appeared upon the scene, and straightway, so at least the Cyrillians at Ephesus informed the Pope,<sup>4</sup> without waiting even for a wash and change of raiment, proceeded to hold a Council of his own—the so-called *Conciliabulum*<sup>5</sup>—a Council composed of himself and his adherents, together with a few Nestorians already on the ground, doubtless those excluded by Cyril from his own assembly. The assembly thus constituted—the number present is said to have been forty-three in all—which, it can hardly be denied, had very sufficient reason for criticism of the manner in which Cyril's Council had been conducted, did not content itself with that; but at once proceeded to put itself just as completely in the wrong by a precipitate deposition of Cyril and Memnon, coupled with an anathematization

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> For this session see Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, iii, 44-52.

<sup>3</sup> Evag., *H. E.*, i, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Migne, 50, p. 517.

<sup>5</sup> Hefele, *ib.*, pp. 53-6.

of their views ;<sup>1</sup> at the same time requesting Candidianus to see to it that neither of the prelates thus put under the ban, nor any of their adherents, conducted service upon the coming Lord's Day. This prohibition, it is hardly necessary to say, was set at defiance by Cyril and Memnon, who, in their turn, launched an anathema against their new assailants.

In the meantime Celestine's letters at length came to hand, and with them arrived the papal representatives, who had not been present at the opening session. To receive the legates and the letters the Cyrillans, on July 10, met in their second session.<sup>2</sup> The utterances of the Pope, agreeing as they did with the sentiments of those present, were received with acclamation. The legates, overlooking the informality of the decisive action of the first session in their absence, at once to all intents and purposes gave their adhesion to the sentence already pronounced against Nestorius.<sup>3</sup> On the following day, at the opening of the third session,<sup>4</sup> the legates, after due expression of the authority of the Pope, solemnly pronounced sentence of excom-

<sup>1</sup> Evag., *H. E.*, i, 5 ; *Ep. ad Cel.* (Migne, 50, p. 517) ; cf. Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 34, whose account is somewhat confused.

<sup>2</sup> Hefele, iii, pp. 61-4.

<sup>3</sup> Mansi, iv, p. 1290.

<sup>4</sup> Mansi, iv, pp. 1291-1300. Cf. also Hefele, *Councils*, iii, pp. 64-5.

munication and deposition against Nestorius ; whereupon the Council addressed a letter to the Emperor requesting that he should appoint a successor to the deposed patriarch, and also to the clergy and people of Constantinople expressing hope that they might soon have a new bishop.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from the Nestorian question one other matter came up for decision by the Council which seems to demand mention. The Patriarch of Antioch claimed the right of superior jurisdiction in Cyprus, more particularly in the matter of ordination. This right had been expressly allowed to him by a decision of Pope Innocent I.<sup>2</sup> On the eve of the Council, a vacancy having occurred, the Cypriote bishops had elected Reginus to the Metropolitan Office, in spite of patriarchal prohibition. The Archbishop-elect, supported by two suffragans, laid his case before the Council, urging that the Antiochene claims were without justification, and were indeed disallowed by the (spurious) Apostolic canons<sup>3</sup> and the Nicene decrees. The Nicene canon relied upon seems to have been the fourth, which confirmed the right of election to the provincial bishops. On the other hand, in view of the sixth canon, which confirmed their rights to the great patri-

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, iv, pp. 1301-04.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 45 *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> See in particular can. 36: Hefele, *Councils*, i, p. 454.

archs, the Cypriote bishops had to show that the Bishops of Antioch had not enjoyed such rights in pre-Nicene times. This they did to the satisfaction of the Council, which confirmed them in their independence,<sup>1</sup> thus reversing the definite decision of the greatest pontiff who had as yet occupied the Roman chair.

It is happily unnecessary for us to consider in detail the very unedifying proceedings at the later sessions of the Council. John, having haughtily rejected any overtures in favour of an amicable settlement, was in his turn deposed, a mark of displeasure to which he replied with a threat to elect a successor to Memnon. One historian,<sup>2</sup> indeed, informs us, how far correctly it is difficult to say, that Nestorius himself, appalled by the storm which he had raised, now offered to accept the *Theotokos*; but his voice failed to make itself heard above the tumult. By both contending parties pressure was being brought to bear upon the Emperor, who so far responded to their appeals for his intervention as to sanction equally the deposition of Nestorius, and of Cyril and Memnon. The publication of a rescript to this effect was entrusted to the Lord High Treasurer John, who proceeded to Ephesus forthwith. His summons to the prelate

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, iv., pp. 1466-70.

<sup>2</sup> Socrates, *H. E.*, vii, 34. For an early criticism of Socrates' accuracy see Evag., *H. E.*, i, 5.

was but the signal for further clamour and debate ; debate gave place to tumult ; and tumult threatened civil war. Only by force of arms could the Chief Shepherds of Christendom be so far held in check as to render possible the reading of the imperial letters. So dark became the outlook that the Count was finally driven to the extreme measure of placing the several party leaders under arrest.

The Imperial Court was now once more beset with clamorous appeals ; and the Emperor at length resolved to come face to face with the leaders of the conflicting parties. Eight deputies from each side were bidden into the imperial presence, among whom were included, on the one side, Cyril, the legates Philip and Arcadius, and Juvenal, and, on the other, John and Theodoret. So turbulent was the state of the capital that it appeared unadvisable to bring them thither, and they were therefore commanded to meet the Emperor at Chalcedon.<sup>1</sup> John and his companions made a deep impression upon the imperial mind, boldly claimed to represent the Nicene faith, and ventured to make intercession for Nestorius. It is, however, not improbable that the attitude which they adopted was due less to any real desire to assist Nestorius than

<sup>1</sup> On this episode Milman is good : *Lat. Christ.*, i, p. 217 ; but see also Hefele, *ib.*, iii, pp. 96-104.

to their extreme hostility to Cyril, whom they wished, at any cost, to humiliate and to abase. The Emperor returned to Constantinople quite convinced that an amicable settlement remained as far removed as ever. Cyril and Memnon, meantime, were to remain deposed. Other influence was now brought to bear upon the distracted Theodosius, that of the females of the palace, and notably of the Emperor's sister Pulcheria, the Empress of the Emperor, as she has been called.<sup>1</sup> Secret bribery also may have been at work among members of the imperial retinue.<sup>2</sup> But be that as it may, by both parties Nestorius was now abandoned to his fate. For the moment unmolested, the fallen patriarch withdrew to a monastery near Antioch; but after four years of quiet there he was driven forth to become a wanderer and fugitive on the face of the earth, hunted from place to place by various prefects, to find rest only in death, the exact time and place of which are unknown.<sup>3</sup>

After long wavering the Emperor at last made up his mind, and threw in his lot with the orthodox. Maximian was appointed as successor to Nestorius in the patriarchal chair of New Rome,

<sup>1</sup> Milman, *L. C.*, i, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Acacius Ber., *Ep. ad Alex. Hierap.*, printed among Theodoret's works, *Synodicon*, 41 (Migne, *P. G. L.*, 84, p. 648).

<sup>3</sup> Evag., *H. E.*, i, 7. Cf. Gams, *Ser. Episc.*, p. 439. But see Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius* pp. 189-90.

and was duly consecrated on October 25.<sup>1</sup> But real peace there was yet none ; and much negotiation was still necessary before any practicable working agreement was arrived at.

The news of Maximian's consecration reached the Pope at Christmas, whereupon he joyfully announced it to the crowd assembled to celebrate the festival.<sup>2</sup> His reply, however, whatever the reason may have been, was not dispatched to the East until the middle of the following March ; it was addressed to the Council,<sup>3</sup> congratulating the members thereof upon the good work which had been at last accomplished, and reminding them of his own solicitude, though distant from them, for "the care of the blessed Apostle Peter keeps all in view."<sup>4</sup> In accordance with his usual mildness of temper Celestine urges that a distinction should be made between the deluder and the deluded ; and that the misled followers of Nestorius should receive lenient treatment,<sup>5</sup> pointing to the usage of his own "Apostolic See" as affording a precedent in all such cases. As to the heresiarch himself, however, he speaks with quite another voice. The displaced Nestorius had, as we have seen, found peaceful retirement

<sup>1</sup> Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 35 ; Evag., *H. E.*, i, 8 ; cf. Cel., *Ep.*, xxiv (Migne, 50, pp. 547-8).

<sup>2</sup> Cel., *Ep.*, xxiii, 5 (Migne, 50, p. 546).

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xxii (Migne, 50, pp. 537-44).

<sup>4</sup> xxii, 6.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.*, 8.



at Antioch ; but in that quiet haven the Pope was unwilling that he should remain, and with some want of kindness and chivalry, recommends that he be driven forth. In a letter to the Emperor Theodosius, written at the same time as the foregoing, Celestine hints at the same thing.<sup>1</sup> How far this harshness was due to an honest desire to prevent Nestorius working further harm, how far to jealousy of the one prelate in Christendom whose position might seem to enter into rivalry with his own, it is impossible to say.

To Maximian, the new-made Patriarch of Constantinople, Celestine also sent a short but friendly letter,<sup>2</sup> greeting him as bishop ; and pointing out the need of healing the open wounds which bitter controversy had left behind, and the necessity of according gentle treatment to those who had been led astray.

Celestine's last letter on this subject, perhaps the last important letter that he wrote, was addressed to the clergy and populace of Constantinople.<sup>3</sup> In it the Pope again condemns the impiety of Nestorius, reminds the Constantinopolitans that "the blessed Peter," of course in

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xxiii (Migne, 50, 544-7). For the hint referred to see § 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xxiv (*ib.*, pp. 547-8).

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xxv (*ib.*, 548-58).

the person of the writer, had stood by them in the crisis through which their Church had been called upon to pass ; offers some justification for his own procedure in the matter ; and concludes with an admonition to the effect that they should give heed to their new teacher, who, they could rely upon it, would preach nothing but the historic faith.

One other act only remains to be recorded of Celestine. The historian Socrates, who, though not himself one of them,<sup>1</sup> was apparently interested in, and not unfavourably disposed to the Novatians,<sup>2</sup> informs us<sup>3</sup> that this pontiff deprived the Novatians in his own city of their churches, of which they possessed many, for they formed a community of considerable size, and compelled them to meet in secret, and in private houses. The account of our informant further implies that Celestine effected this less by moral suasion than by physical force.

Celestine died on July 26, 432, within seven weeks of completing the tenth year of his pontificate. His disposition appears to have been generally mild and forbearing, though, as we have seen, upon occasion it could become severe and even harsh ; but in respect of personal character

<sup>1</sup> *H. E.*, ii, 38 ; iv, 28 ; v, 20. On the Novatian movement cf. Beet, *R. S.*, i, pp. 36-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, iv, 9 ; vi, 22 ; vii, 12, 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, vii, 11.

he compares favourably with each of the two outstanding prelates of his day, the turbulent Cyril and the little less turbulent Nestorius ; both of whom, however, appear to have been men of more marked individuality than himself. It is impossible to read his letters without being impressed by Celestine's constant appeals to Holy Scripture ; whatever the circumstances, and whether writing to an emperor, a patriarch, or the proletariat of Constantinople, he invariably has a text ready, and is quick to apply it to the matter in hand. Amid the perplexities of life and administration, this Pope, at any rate, appears to have fallen back upon the Written Word as an infallible counsellor and guide—a practice which, we need scarcely say, has not generally been too characteristic of his later successors.

As Pope, Celestine was not markedly aggressive or self-assertive. The astute strength of Innocent and the headstrong folly of Zosimus were neither to be looked for in their mild and cautious successor ; who rather takes for granted as an accepted fact the authority which they had been at pains explicitly to claim. But his passing and apparently quite artless references to the responsibilities of his office in relation to all the Churches, the care of the blessed Peter, and so forth, are at all events sufficient to give clear enough indication that the claims of his

chair were by no means in abeyance. As matter of fact, in a quiet and unobtrusive way Celestine did maintain the authority of his see, and effected one important innovation. While Alexandria and Constantinople tore one another to pieces, one part of the Roman claims admitted by the one, and the other part by the other of the rivals, Celestine sat quietly apart, taking no part in the conflict save by letter and by proxy, yet ever ready to reap the advantage which his very aloofness made all his own. Appealed to by both Nestorius and Cyril, except himself by virtue of their great positions the most important prelates in the whole of Christendom, and personally stronger men, Celestine dared what no Roman Bishop heretofore had done ; he undertook, by his sentence, to determine the orthodox position in respect of a doctrine which was a matter of controversy, and that in view of the fact that the principals to the debate were ecclesiastics of so great importance. In acting thus Celestine created a new precedent and opened a new chapter in the dogmatic activity of the papacy. When, however, the civil sovereign intervened, and decided for a Council, Pope Celestine was too conscious of the limitations of his own effective power to give the least sign of impatience or resentment. He at once acquiesced ; but by his instructions to his legates shrewdly contrived to

represent upon a very public platform the Apostolic See as being above party.

In view of these facts it may be said with some assurance that the See of Rome lost nothing in respect either of prestige or practical influence while Celestine sat in St. Peter's chair, unshaken by the vicissitudes of party strife, which rendered insecure the seats of the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch and actually overturned that of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

But even so Celestine did not pass entirely free from censure ; for a contemporary historian<sup>1</sup> complains that under his régime the Roman episcopate "extended itself beyond the limits of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and degenerated into its present state of secular dominion" : a complaint which, however, the same writer had already made,<sup>2</sup> and in even stronger terms, against the Patriarch of Alexandria.

Within a few days of the death of Celestine a successor had been found in the person of Sixtus III. Sixtus had already, for many years, been a personage of some importance in the Roman Church, and had taken part in the several controversies which have passed under review. He had been suspected, at one time, of sympathy with Pelagian views, and the delight which Augustine displayed when his orthodoxy was estab-

<sup>1</sup> Socrates, *H. E.*, vii, 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, vii, 7.

lished is itself a sufficient indication of the future Pope's personal importance <sup>1</sup> so long ago as 418. He also seems to have taken an active interest in the Nestorian controversy, and himself to have admonished the erring Patriarch.<sup>2</sup>

Sixtus announced the event of his accession in two letters which remain to us. One <sup>3</sup> of these was apparently intended for the Easterns in general, and dispatched in the care of two Oriental prelates, Hermogenes and Lampetius, who, being in Rome at the time, had attended at the ordination ceremony. This letter closes with a mention of the fact that the writer feels that the burden of the care of all the Churches now rests upon him. The second letter <sup>4</sup> was sent to Cyril in person. In each of these letters the Pope informed his correspondents that he entirely concurred with the outcome of the proceedings against Nestorius; and referred with regret to the attitude of the Patriarch John, expressing a hope that he might come to a better mind and be restored to full communion with his brethren, but at the same time hinted that unless he did

<sup>1</sup> Aug., *Ep.*, 191; Dods, *Letters*, ii, 371-3. An elaborate letter addressed by Augustine to Sixtus, dealing with the Pelagian question, is not included in the Dods collection, *Ep.*, 194 in Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 33, pp. 874-91.

<sup>2</sup> Sixtus, *Ep.*, vi, 2 (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 50, p. 607).

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, i (Migne, pp. 583-7).

<sup>4</sup> *Ep.*, ii (Migne, pp. 587-9).

so such communion must be withheld from him.

Indications of an approaching settlement of doctrinal differences in the East were now at length beginning to appear. Into the details of the negotiations in favour of compromise on the part of the opposed leaders Cyril and John it would be wearisome to enter, and for our purpose it is unnecessary so to do.<sup>1</sup> A quite unequivocal sign that John was prepared to abandon his extreme position was forthcoming, apparently in the beginning of 433, in the form of a letter addressed to the Pope,<sup>2</sup> in which the writer expressed his willingness to formally approve of the deposition of Nestorius, to anathematize the latter's opinions, and to recognize the appointment of his successor Maximian.

Upon receiving this communication Sixtus must have felt that the principal hindrance to peace was now removed. Some of the Patriarch's followers were, however, not so pliant as their leader, and an irreconcilable minority still remained. Two of the latter, Eutherius of Tyana and Helladius of Tarsus, both supporters of Nestorius, opponents of Cyril, whom they accused of introducing doctrinal "novelties," and friends

<sup>1</sup> For a good account of these events see Hefele, *H. C.*, iii, pp. 115-56.

<sup>2</sup> Preserved among the letters of Sixtus; *Ep.*, iii (Migne, 50, pp. 592-4).

of John, with whom Eutherius had been joined in deposition at Ephesus, were especially prominent in opposition. Helladius, indeed, proceeded to the length of assembling a Synod of his province at Tarsus, at which the concordat between Cyril and John was indignantly repudiated. Both prelates had suffered, and they now joined in the composition of a letter to Sixtus,<sup>1</sup> in which they presented their own version of affairs, and expressed their astonishment at the *volte-face* of their former leader, coupled with a protest against the extreme measures to which they had been subjected. They now appealed to the Pope, like a new Moses, to save Israel from the persecution of the Egyptians. Helladius, however, in spite of his strong language, eventually found a pretext for following John's example; thus saving himself from the disgrace and exile which fell to the lot of the more resolute Eutherius.

Sixtus, one can well believe, was little troubled by this protest of two comparatively uninfluential bishops now that the greater difficulty in the way of a settlement seemed to have been overcome. At all events we find him, in the autumn of the same year 433, on receipt of the welcome intelligence that Cyril and John at last had come to a mutual understanding, and that their strife was in consequence at an end, writing in very

<sup>1</sup> Migne, 50, pp. 593-602.



jubilant strain to the reconciled patriarchs to express his satisfaction and good wishes.<sup>1</sup> To John, in particular, the Pope offers his congratulations upon his having adhered to the faith of St. Peter, together with a passing allusion to the importance of being in accord with Rome. Incidental as his reference is, the mere fact that in writing to a great patriarch, Sixtus takes quietly for granted rather than explicitly asserts the Petrine succession of the Bishops of Rome, affords a sufficient indication that this Pontiff at all events was personally satisfied as to his own connexion with the Prince of the Apostles.

To celebrate the victory of orthodoxy over Nestorianism Sixtus magnificently restored and lavishly adorned the basilica of Liberius, dedicating it to the "Mother of God," probably the first occasion upon which a Roman Church was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The activity of Sixtus as a builder and a beautifier of buildings affords conclusive indication of the material prosperity of the Roman See in the early fifth century.<sup>2</sup>

Sixtus, in the meantime, according to the tradition of the Roman court, which is not, how-

<sup>1</sup> *Epp.*, v, vi (Migne, 50, pp. 602-10).

<sup>2</sup> See *Lib. Pont.*, in *Sist. III*, Migne, 50, pp. 571-6; Duchesne, i, pp. 232-5; Platina, *Popes*, i, pp. 104-5. For a good account of the architectural activity of this Pope see also Gregorovius, *Rome in M. A.*, i, pp. 184-9.

ever, always of the highest authority, had his own difficulties to face at home.<sup>1</sup> Some twenty months after his accession he was accused of crime by one Bassus. A Synod was thereupon assembled, which acquitted the Pope by a seemingly unanimous vote of the fifty-six bishops present, and excommunicated his accuser, though without deprivation of the *viaticum* in case of need. On the death of Bassus, within three months, Sixtus, returning good for evil, honourably buried him in the tomb of his parents. The *Acts* of the Council assembled in Rome on this occasion are extant but undoubtedly spurious. It may, however, be mentioned that, according to the account therein given, the charge brought against Sixtus was that of having violated a consecrated virgin; and, after the usual fashion of spurious papal documents, the Emperor Valentinian is represented as acknowledging before the assembled Fathers the principle that the Pope can be judged by no man; Sixtus was therefore called upon to pronounce sentence in his own case.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lib. Pont.*, Migne, 50, p. 571; Duchesne, i, p. 232; Platina, *ib.*, i, p. 104, who, however, for this period closely follows the foregoing, and can hardly be regarded as an independent witness. For some interesting remarks upon this incident see also ex-Inquisitor Bower, *History of the Popes* (Lond. 1750), ii, p. 5. Barmby, art. "Sixtus (3)," *D. C. B.*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the case of Marcellinus; Beet, *R. S.*, i, pp. 56-7.

No less than his predecessors was Sixtus intent upon maintaining the authority of his see over Illyricum. It will be remembered that, some sixteen years before this time, Perigenes had been appointed to the see of Corinth, in the face of some opposition, by means of the intervention upon his behalf of the then Pope, Boniface. On that occasion Perigenes had been content to acknowledge the authority of the Pope, and also that of his Vicar, the Metropolitan Rufus. On the death of the last-named, Sixtus invested his successor in the see of Thessalonica with the same legatine authority. Strangely enough Perigenes, of all men, now made difficulties about giving his allegiance to the new Vicar Anastasius, who to maintain his authority convened a Provincial Synod forthwith. To this Synod and to Perigenes individually the Pope, who had of course been informed by his Vicar of the difficulty which had arisen and the means adopted to deal with it, sent letters upholding the authority of his representative. That to Perigenes<sup>1</sup> is written in a kindly tone; the writer, after gently reminding his correspondent that he should be the very last of men to rebel against the authority of the Apostolic See, in view of his own personal indebtedness thereto, argued with him that the legatine authority was, in practice, attached to

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, vii (Migne 50, pp. 610-11).

the Thessalonican chair; Anastasius had ascended the latter, and had been, in consequence, invested with the higher authority that his predecessors also had enjoyed. This authority Perigenes ought not to disregard.

To the Provincial Council Sixtus wrote in similar strain.<sup>1</sup> No reasonable objection could be made to Anastasius' claims, for he simply occupied the position of his predecessors; the writer had conferred upon him no authority which preceding Popes had not conferred upon former Bishops of Thessalonica. To this authority Perigenes must bow. This letter is dated July 8, 435; and that to Perigenes, though undated, was evidently written at the same time.

What response Perigenes made to the papal admonition is unrecorded; for with the letter of Sixtus he vanishes from history, even the date of his death being uncertain.<sup>2</sup> That an immediate settlement of the dispute was not effected is at least suggested by the fact that two years later Sixtus again took up his pen on behalf of the rights of his Vicar. On this occasion, so far as extant records go, he wrote two letters, both dated December 18, 437. Of these letters one

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, viii (Migne, 50, pp. 611-12).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gams, *Ser. Episc.*, p. 430. ↓

was directed to Proclus,<sup>1</sup> who, in the spring of 434, had succeeded Maximian in the patriarchate of New Rome. It is in effect an admonition to the recipient that he must be upon his guard against invasion of the rights of Anastasius as Papal Vicar ; let him beware of receiving ecclesiastics from the provinces within the jurisdiction of the latter, unless they come furnished with written permission, *litterae formatae*, from Anastasius himself.

That the Patriarchs of Constantinople, upon whom important privileges and very high ecclesiastical rank had already been conferred by the third canon of Constantinople,<sup>2</sup> were generally not averse from pushing their authority at the expense of that of the Elder Rome, can hardly be denied. The unsettlement of the Illyrian provinces, and the apparent tendency there to play off the authority of the Bishop of New Rome against that of his brother in the West, must have offered a strong temptation to the former to avail themselves of what doubtless seemed a favourable opportunity of extending their authority in that quarter. Sixtus' passing reference to the case of Idduas, Bishop of Smyrna, under the ostensible form of a papal confirmation of Proclus' action in the matter, is really a veiled rebuke

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, ix (Migne, 50, pp. 612-13).

<sup>2</sup> See Beet, *R. S.*, ii, pp. 62-3.

of what the writer regarded as an act of presumption. The Bishop of Constantinople had evidently given a decision in this case, and by such exercise of authority in Asia had formally transgressed against the second canon of Constantinople,<sup>1</sup> by which the jurisdiction of the Bishops of Thrace was limited to Thrace itself. The Council of Chalcedon in 451 enlarged the sphere of the recognized patriarchal jurisdiction of Constantinople, as we shall see in due course;<sup>2</sup> though apparently the extended jurisdiction then conferred had already to a greater or less extent been admitted in practice for some time before it was formally conceded to the Bishop of New Rome. Sixtus was doubtless well aware of this when, adopting the tone of paramount authority, he reminded his brother of the informality of his action in the sententious words, "We have decreed that your decision should be maintained," a not unskilful way of securing his own dignity without giving any opening for a rebuff. Any such aggressive tendencies on the part of Constantinople as those above referred to, the Roman Pope would be, naturally enough, anxious to check. Reading between the lines this appears to have been the real import of Sixtus' letter to Proclus.

<sup>1</sup> See Hefele, *Councils*, ii, p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 240 *infra*.

By the same post as the foregoing Sixtus also sent a letter to the Illyrian Synod,<sup>1</sup> impressing upon the collective body of bishops the duty of deferring in everything to Anastasius, of referring all important matters to him, that he in turn may refer them to the "Apostolic See," whence the necessary confirmation of anything that has been accomplished must come. He goes on to add, in a striking passage which has called forth much comment, that they are not bound to obey the decrees of the Eastern Council, except those on matters of faith, which had received his own approval. The allusion is not improbably to the Council of Ephesus, of six years before, which enacted that no bishop should assume authority in a province which had not been, from the first, subject to his see ;<sup>2</sup> a decree which, it is by no means unlikely, had been pleaded against the papal authority in Illyricum. The passage is also interesting as supplying a record of perhaps the first occasion upon which a Pope explicitly sets his own authority above that of a General Council. In the same letter Sixtus allows, in most definite terms, an appeal to himself in respect of matters

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, x (Migne, 50, 616-18).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the action of the Council with reference to the attempt of Juvenal to obtain the primacy of Palestine ; Hefele, *H. C.*, iii, p. 77 ; cf. also Bower, *Popes*, ii, p. 6 ; Riddle, *Papacy*, i, p. 171 ; and note on the passage in Migne, 50, p. 613.

which his Vicar finds himself unable to determine on the spot.

So far as affairs in Gaul were concerned Sixtus appears to have had no correspondence with reference to any matter of great moment. That there was a certain undercurrent of opposition, more especially in the South, to the jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff is hardly open to question. Some indications of this have, indeed, already attracted our attention ; and in the near future it will force itself upon us in a still more conspicuous way. But, even admitting that a careful observer might readily discern, in the power of the see of Arles, and the tendencies of the monks of Lérins, forces adverse to the Roman influence, no Gallic bishop would, as yet, have thought of questioning the appellate jurisdiction or the moral authority of St. Peter's chair. No words could, indeed, ascribe more importance to the decisions of the Holy See than those used by Vincent of Lérins in his great work, generally known as the *Commonitorium*, with reference to the reigning Pontiff, Sixtus, and his predecessor Celestine.<sup>1</sup> Vincent, writing, as he tells us, three years after the Council of Ephesus,<sup>2</sup> thought to render his own argument against heresy unassailable by an

<sup>1</sup> Vinc. Ler., *Common.*, 32, 33 (Migne, 50, pp. 683-5).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, 29 (Migne, p. 678).



appeal to the recorded decisions of the Popes.<sup>1</sup> The Head of the Roman Church, rudimentary Gallicanism notwithstanding, was at this time, so far as one can judge, regarded with something more than reverence in Southern Gaul, as the acknowledged leader of Catholic Christendom.

Sixtus died in the summer of 440, and by his death the way was opened for the accession of a Pontiff greater than any Rome as yet had seen ; indeed, one of the greatest who ever sate in St. Peter's chair. We have already observed that, in some sense, Innocent I was the first Roman Bishop to whom the title of Pope can, with any propriety, be applied. Innocent had, at length, found a successor ; and his mantle, together with a more than double portion of his genius and power, now fell upon the shoulders of Leo, who was destined to become, in a sense that the earlier Pontiff had never been, the founder of a great spiritual monarchy under the headship of the Pope. His pontificate marks an epoch in the history of the universal Church.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bury, *St. Patrick*, p. 64.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LONG ARM OF THE PAPACY : LEO THE GREAT

Career of Leo—His Election—Pulpit Activity—Peter in St. Peter's Chair—The Prince of the Apostles—The Divine Right of Popes—Pelagianism in Italy—Leo and the Manichees—Pope and Metropolitan : Hilary of Arles—Case of Celidonium—Hilary confronts Leo—The Pope and the Canons—Hilary's " Flight " from Rome—Projectus—Edict of Valentinian—A High-handed Vicar Rebuked—The Easter Question—African Affairs—The Priscillian Peril—Leo's Administration—Gathering Clouds.

OF the early life of Leo we know but little. Like some other of the greater Popes, he appears to have been of Roman origin.<sup>1</sup> As a lad in his teens he may have witnessed the sack of the city by Alaric, and in the years which followed was no doubt an interested observer of the growing prestige of the papacy, which, more and more in Rome, now no longer an imperial residence, was drawing to herself the

<sup>1</sup> So he himself implies, *Ep.*, xxxi, 4 ; Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 54, p. 794 ; cf. also p. 49 ; Prosper, *Chron.*, *sub ann.*, 439, Migne, *P. L.*, 51, p. 599. There is another tradition which makes Leo a Tuscan, cf. Platina, *Popes*, i, p. 105.

authority and influence of a waning and discredited empire. Leo's own conception of the greatness and possibilities of St. Peter's chair must have been largely moulded by what he had thus actually seen—a conception to which he was to give very effective expression when at length he himself came to occupy that high position.

So early as 418, while the Pelagian controversy was still in full progress, an acolyte Leo was employed as a messenger between Rome and Africa.<sup>1</sup> It is generally supposed, and the supposition is in itself highly probable, that the acolyte in question was none other than the future Pope. If this be so, it is interesting to observe that the greatest Pontiff who had as yet occupied St. Peter's chair had, in his earlier years, enjoyed some personal intercourse with the greatest of the Latin Fathers. The fact that he had met and talked with the author of *The City of God* cannot but have left an abiding impression upon the mind of the young man who, in after years, did so much to make the lofty conception of the elder man an accomplished fact.<sup>2</sup>

If our assumption that Leo was the messenger referred to by Augustine be correct, it indicates

<sup>1</sup> Aug., *Ep.*, 101, Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 33, p. 867. Cf. also note (b) and refs.

<sup>2</sup> For Augustine's influence on Western thought concerning the Church see p. 41 *supra*.

that while still, comparatively speaking, little more than a youth he had already made his mark. It therefore awakens no surprise to learn that, for a very considerable period before his election to succeed Sixtus in the highest office of the Christian Church, Leo appears to have been a personage of some importance both in civil and religious circles at Rome. In due course he became Archdeacon,<sup>1</sup> at this period, and long after, an office of very great importance, and often the stepping-stone to the highest place of all.

Leo was both administrator and theologian ; that he was known to be such we find indications, during these earlier years, in his relations with the Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria and John Cassian. That, at the time of the Council of Ephesus, the former had been in correspondence with him with reference to the ambitions of Juvenal of Jerusalem, who was intriguing for patriarchal rank, Leo himself informs us,<sup>2</sup> though the letter of

<sup>1</sup> So Gennadius, in his continuation of Jerome, *De Vir. Ill.*, 62, "Nicene and Post-N. Fathers" (sec. ser.), vol. iii, p. 376 ; Prosper, in passage cited above, refers to him simply as deacon, a term which, however, may very well have been used in a general sense as including the higher rank. Gennadius and Prosper can be reconciled on this assumption, but not otherwise. Among recent writers as Milman, Greenwood, Gregorovius and Gore, to name no others, there is some variation on this point. But the evident importance of Leo's position in Rome affords further reason for supposing him to have been archdeacon.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, 119, 4, Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 54, p. 1044.

Cyril does not appear to be extant. Thirteen years later we shall find Cyril again in correspondence with Leo, now Pope, with reference to a matter which will call for our attention in its proper place.<sup>1</sup>

That Leo had taken a keen interest in the Nestorian controversy, though, so far as the extant evidence goes, apparently not in communication with Cyril on the subject, is sufficiently shown by the fact that it was at his instance that John Cassian wrote his *De Incarnatione Christi*,<sup>2</sup> an elaborate defence of the orthodox position as against that of the Nestorians, and at the same time, though less directly and avowedly, against that of the Pelagians also. So far as his dealing with the last-named heretics was concerned we shall of course bear in mind that Cassian's theological opinions differed somewhat from those of Augustine upon this particular question.<sup>3</sup>

To his other gifts Leo added what, at all events by comparison, may be called pulpit eloquence; and he appears to have been the first among the Roman bishops to exercise that gift in any marked degree. Of this power it is impossible

<sup>1</sup> Cyr., *Ep.*, 86, Migne, *Pat.-Gr.-Lat.*, 77, p. 377; cf. also *Pat. Lat.*, 54, p. 601.

<sup>2</sup> Cass., *De Incarn.*, *praef.*, Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 50, pp. 9 *seq.*; cf. also Gennad., *De Vir. Ill.*, 62.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 112 *supra*.

to doubt that he must have given proof long before his election to St. Peter's chair, and his reputation cannot but have been considerably enhanced thereby; for the Romans were comparatively unfamiliar with the educational and spiritual possibilities of the pulpit, and preaching hitherto had apparently had little, if any, place in their Church life.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of Archdeacon Leo was, however, by no means confined to ecclesiastical circles. The social and political conditions at this period were such that the great Churchman was not unfrequently called upon to intervene in State affairs. One cause which was contributing not a little to the collapse of the imperial power in the West was the serious lack of any spirit of comradeship and mutual support among public officials. Cordial co-operation on the part of such might have accomplished something to check the rising tide of virile barbarism which was ever pressing with increasing weight upon the frontiers. Such co-operation was, however, by no means to be had. Quarrels were frequent; one of which had, in the course of the year 438,

<sup>1</sup> So Soz., *H. E.*, vii, 19. This statement has been denied; cf. Milman's note, *Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, p. 232; also Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 55, p. 197. It may, however, be pointed out that the statement of Sozomen is repeated by Cassiodorus, who had, at all events, fair opportunity of acquiring familiarity with Roman usages. See *Hist. Tripart. Eccl.*, ix, 39, Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 69, p. 1157.

broken out in Gaul between the famous general Aetius and his subordinate Albinus.<sup>1</sup> To compose this quarrel and to restore peace in the Gallic government, Leo was dispatched to that province by the Emperor Valentinian,<sup>2</sup> and was still absent from Rome when unanimously elected to succeed Sixtus on the pontifical throne.

At this moment Church and State alike were in evil case. In the West the Empire, pressed on all sides by thronging hordes of hardy barbarians, was already helpless and tottering to its fall; in the East the forces of decay were silently at work. As for the Church, the barbarians, Arian in their religious belief, encompassed her with an atmosphere of heresy which was fraught with threatening peril. Within her fold, Pelagians, Manichaeans, and Priscillianists provided, in rank abundance, the elements of discord and unrest. In the East Nestorianism was rife, and the very reaction therefrom was destined in turn to create new trouble. At such a juncture the

<sup>1</sup> What exactly was the position of Albinus at this time it is a little difficult to say; indeed it is not easy to gain any very detailed information about him at all. He seems, however, to have been at one time page of the poet Rutilius Numatianus, by whom he is mentioned, i, 466; he became Consul in 444, from which we may infer that he was already a person of some importance at the time of his quarrel with Aetius. See Pauly-Wissova, *Real-Encyclopädie*, "Ceionius, 39," vol. ii, pp. 1865-6.

<sup>2</sup> Prosper, *Chron., sub ann.*, 439, Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 51, p. 599.

Church needed a man, and in Leo she found the one man who conspicuously towers above his fellows amid the troubles of the time.

It was soon manifest that the mantle of his great predecessor Innocent, together with a double portion of his power, had fallen upon the shoulders of the new Pope. In addition to some others, whose authenticity is open to question,<sup>1</sup> ninety-six genuine sermons are still extant to bear witness to his unwonted pulpit activity. The range of subjects treated by the preacher is wide. The cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith are dealt with on a scale which makes abundantly manifest that, great Churchman and ruler as he undoubtedly was, Leo never suffered the cares of administration so to dominate his thoughts as to leave no place in his mind for those other and higher questions, which are even more properly matters of concern to all who are called upon to feed the flock of Christ. In other words, he never became a mere ecclesiastic, but was always theologian and thinker as well; and even the most casual glance through his sermons fills the reader with wonder that, amid his many other cares, he could find the time and mental detachment necessary to their composition. The Incarnation, Passion,

<sup>1</sup> For twenty such sermons see Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 54, pp. 477-522. This volume will hereafter be quoted simply as "Migne."



Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of the Trinity and the Person of Christ are some only of the topics with which he deals. One's admiration is hardly lessened by the fact that he occasionally takes up a position which has come to be regarded as untenable, and is generally forsaken to-day. Again and again,<sup>1</sup> for instance, he alludes to and accepts the now exploded view that man's atonement was effected by means of a trick played off upon the devil, who mistook Christ for a sinner like other men, and treating Him as such exceeded his rights; whereby he forfeited his claims upon man—a whimsical notion which was popular enough in the Middle Ages, but which now impresses us as being neither cogent nor seemly. Leo also devotes considerable attention to various ecclesiastical observances and principles of conduct of a more or less ascetic type—treated, however, with a robust common sense which is quite admirable; <sup>2</sup> together with sundry exhortations to charity and care of the poor. Other sermons there are, which are more particularly relevant to our present inquiry. To these we must now turn.

<sup>1</sup> E.g., *Serm.*, xxii, 2, lx, 3, lxix, 3; cf. also lxi, 4, lxiv, 2; Migne, pp. 196, 344, 377, 348, 358.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. for instance his remarks on fasting, *Serm.*, xxxix, 5, xlii, 2, 4. Migne, pp. 266, 276, 279.

Leo made a custom of preaching upon the anniversary of his accession. Five such sermons remain to us,<sup>1</sup> in which, as well as in some others, without seeking to disguise, and indeed laying stress upon his own personal unworthiness, he maintains in the strongest terms the grandeur of his official prerogative as successor of the Prince of the Apostles. He is Peter in St. Peter's chair,<sup>2</sup> and bears full responsibility as such. Peter in a sense lives on in the person of his successors, and his privilege is the abiding possession of his Apostolic See. Peter alone is the rock and foundation of the Church,<sup>3</sup> the Warden of the Celestial Gate, and the last earthly authority in all questions of binding and loosing.<sup>4</sup> To Peter it was that our Lord said, "I have prayed for you that your faith fail not," though He spoke with reference to a peril which threatened his fellow apostles equally with Peter himself; whence we may infer that this Apostle was the object of his Master's especial care, and that special prayer was made on his behalf that by his firmness in confronting temptation his colleagues also might be rendered

<sup>1</sup> They are numbered i-v in Migne.

<sup>2</sup> *Serm.*, ii, 2; Migne, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> *Serm.*, iii, 3, iv, 2, li, 1, lxii, 2, lxxxiii, 2; Migne, pp. 146, 150, 309, 351, 430.

<sup>4</sup> *Serm.*, iii, 3; cf. also iv, 3, lxxxiii, 2; Migne, pp. 146, 151, 430.

firm.<sup>1</sup> Peter it was who was singled out for the commission to strengthen his brethren and to feed the flock of Christ.<sup>2</sup> Peter is therefore the Chief Shepherd who is set over the shepherds of that flock, not one of whom has any business which is not his business as well.<sup>3</sup> He is at once the pattern and the source of all ecclesiastical authority.<sup>4</sup>

In other words, Peter was directly appointed by Christ as Prince of the Universal Church,<sup>5</sup> the primate to whose authority all bishops must defer.<sup>6</sup> As for Rome, she is a holy and elect people, a priestly and royal city, which Peter's chair has raised to be the first city in the world, conferring upon her wider sway than that which her earthly lordship had bestowed.<sup>7</sup> So far as the speaker himself is concerned, whatever be his personal unworthiness, he, as his successor, is the heir of Peter's power and prerogative,<sup>8</sup> who may rightly claim the honour due to the Prince of the Apostles, whose authority lives on in his see.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Serm.*, iv, 3, lxxxiii, 3; Migne, pp. 151-2, 431.

<sup>2</sup> *Serm.*, iv, 4; cf. lxxxiii, 2; Migne, pp. 152, 395.

<sup>3</sup> *Serm.*, v, 2, 3; Migne, pp. 153-4.

<sup>4</sup> *Serm.*, iv, 3; cf. lxxxiii, 2; Migne, pp. 151, 430.

<sup>5</sup> *Serm.*, iv, 4, lxxxiii, 3; cf. also lxxii, 2; Migne, pp. 152, 432, 395. <sup>6</sup> *Serm.*, iii, 4; Migne, p. 147.

<sup>7</sup> *Serm.*, lxxxii, 1; Migne, p. 423.

<sup>8</sup> *Serm.*, v, 4; cf. ii, 2; Migne, pp. 155, 144.

<sup>9</sup> *Serm.*, iii, 3, 4; Migne, pp. 146-7.

Of Leo's entire good faith in putting forth these claims, wide-reaching as they are, there can be no question at all. He does not in the least impress the reader as a man consciously striving to make out a case for himself. He speaks with conviction, and as a man conscious of his undoubted right to speak as he does ; apparently taking for granted that his hearers will accept what he has to say as quite uncontroversial and matter of fact. But to the historical student his claims are startling enough, more startling indeed than has so far appeared ; for no reference has as yet been made to the letters of Leo, which are both more numerous and more important than his sermons. As we shall have constant occasion, in the sequel, to refer to the letters, it has seemed desirable up to this point to confine ourselves to the sermons, upon which alone the foregoing statement has been based ; and, even so, no mere citation of points can give an adequate conception of the persistency and force with which Leo asserted the prerogatives of his position. To attain this the sermons should be read, or at all events such of them as are cited above ; for, though they do not by any means exhaust what Leo has to say upon this topic, they do at any rate contain sufficient to give the reader a very fair conception of the extent to which this great Pope, in all good faith, magnified his office in the pulpit ; and, at

the same time, afford ample evidence of the sincerity of his belief in what may best be called the divine right of Popes.

This, then, was the spirit in which Leo ascended the Fisherman's chair ; it is now time to see how he put his theory into practice.

Strictly orthodox himself, it was inevitable that a man in his position and of his decision of character should find himself at one time or other in conflict with pretty nearly all the numerous heresies by which the peace of the Church was then disturbed. We have already seen that Leo in his earlier years had taken a part, though doubtless a subordinate one, in the Pelagian controversy, at a time when this heresy exercised considerable influence over many minds. The Pelagians had in the meantime fallen upon evil days ; but the movement, if dying, was even yet not quite dead. Sometime within the first two years of Leo's pontificate, Septimus, Bishop of Altina, had written to inform the Pope <sup>1</sup> of certain irregularities in the province of Aquileia, to which he belonged ; the state of discipline was lax, Pelagian clergy were being admitted into Church fellowship without renunciation of their errors, and no check placed upon their wandering activities. To Septimus Leo replied <sup>2</sup> in cordial

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, i, 1 ; Migne, p. 593.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, ii, Migne, p. 597.

terms, expressing warm appreciation of his careful shepherding of the flock of Christ. To the Metropolitan of Aquileia he also wrote,<sup>1</sup> in a very peremptory tone, charging him to take prompt measures to remedy what was amiss, and by "the authority of our command" to assemble a provincial Council, and to compel all clergy, of whatever rank, who had been received from among the Pelagians into Catholic communion, to publicly abjure their errors, and openly to accept all conciliar decrees which have been ratified by the Apostolic See for the purpose of uprooting this heresy. The whole tone of this letter, directed as it is to an important metropolitan, is that of a superior to an inferior, of a commander to his subordinate.

Still nearer home—at his very doors, in fact—Leo was by this time at handgrrips with another form of heresy, Manichaeism, which he appears to have regarded as the worst of all, distinguished by a dreadful pre-eminence of evil, as alone among heresies containing no element of truth,<sup>2</sup> a very sink of all uncleanness.<sup>3</sup> Its founder Mani is described in unmeasured terms as "the master of iniquities."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, i.

<sup>2</sup> *Serm.*, xxiv, 5; Migne, pp. 206-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Serm.*, xvi, 4; Migne, p. 178.

<sup>4</sup> *Serm.*, xxxiv, 4; Migne, p. 248.

We have spoken, and for convenience shall continue to speak, of Manichaeism as a heresy. But, though generally classed among heresies, and so described by the early ecclesiastical historians,<sup>1</sup> it was strictly speaking only so in the same sense as Muhammadanism is to-day ; that is to say, it would be more properly described as a lower form of religion, having some points of contact with Christianity. Like Gnosticism, from which it borrowed freely, Manichaeism attempted to satisfy the deeper needs of man by illumination rather than by inner cleansing ; clear mental vision was put in the place of a regenerate mind, and knowledge was of deeper spiritual import than faith. In its attempt to explain the problem of existence it adopted dualism as a fundamental principle, and rigorously applied it. Into the details of this strange creed it is impossible here to enter ; nor can we dwell upon the genesis of nature from the accidental mingling of Eternal Good and Eternal Bad, Light and Darkness, God and personified Chaos ; nor tell how man was made to be a pawn in the great encounter of these two Eternities. That the followers of Mani worshipped

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Leo, *ut supra*, and other references ; cf. also Soc., *H. E.*, i, 22 ; Philostorg., *H. E.*, iii, 15. For a full discussion of Manichaean tenets, reference may be made to Augustine, who dealt with the subject at large ; see vol. 4, *Nic. and Post-Nic. Lib.*, which includes also essay by Newman. Cf. also Gwatkin, *Early Church History*, vol. ii, pp. 69-72.

the sun and moon, as was sometimes said,<sup>1</sup> seems to have been a misrepresentation, though an excusable one, in that they appear to have venerated those orbs as symbols and visible representations of the Great Light.

Reduced to a theory of life, and applied to the practical details of conduct, the anti-materialistic dualism of the Manichaeans might and did find expression in two very different ways—leading, on the one hand, to an exaggerated asceticism ; or, on the other, to the wildest licence. Matter being necessarily evil, it could not by any means be rendered more corrupt ; while sensual excesses, being material in character, could scarcely be regarded as subject to spiritual judgements, and were therefore of but small account.

That this cult was generally obnoxious is certain. Christians of all parties would find themselves at issue with it on some point or other. In the very forefront of the doctrinal controversies of this period stood the figure of Christ, the relation of whose divine and human natures it was the problem of the age to solve. Manichaeism found its solution of this problem by cutting rather than untying the knot ; for upon its principles the Incarnation itself, in any real sense, became an impossibility.<sup>2</sup> Whatever be the

<sup>1</sup> Soc., *H. E.*, i, 22 ; cf. also Leo, *Serm.*, xxxiv, 4 ; xlii, 5 ; *Ep.*, xv, 4 ; Migne, pp. 248, 279, 682.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Leo, *Serm.*, xxiv, 4 ; Migne, p. 206.



position of Christ—and on this point the opinions of the Manichaeans do not appear to have been either consistent or uniform—He was effectively deposed from that supreme place which He held in the mind and heart of all Christians.

That there were many Manichaeans in Rome at the time of Leo's accession, and that they had been guilty of some wild excesses, appears to be little open to doubt.<sup>1</sup> With such a man as Leo in the Bishop's chair it was not to be thought of that the scandal of their presence should pass unnoticed. They speedily found themselves the subject of a rigorous investigation; and a searching inquiry into the nature of their proceedings was instituted.<sup>2</sup> The hand of the Pope lay heavy upon the whole body of the misbelievers. Some, indeed, were treated with lenity, being admitted to penance on forswearing their errors; others were driven into exile; others fled, being followed, however, by letters in which the Pope urged upon the Italian bishops the necessity of vigorous search being made for the fugitives.<sup>3</sup> Nor were ecclesiastical censures all, or the worst, that they had to fear. Behind the Pope stood the Emperor, Valentinian III, who, no doubt at

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Serm.*, xvi, 4; *Ep.*, vii, 1, viii, xv, 15; Migne, pp. 178, 620, 622, 639.

<sup>2</sup> Leo, *Serm.*, ix, 4, xvi, 4, xxiv, 4; *Ep.*, vii, 1; Migne, pp. 163, 178, 206, 620.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, vii; Migne, pp. 620-2.

Leo's request, "issued an edict confirmatory of those laws of his predecessors by which the Manichaeans were to be banished from the whole world. They were to be liable to all the penalties of sacrilege. It was a public offence. The accusers were not to be liable to the charge of delation. It was a crime to conceal or harbour them. All Manichaeans were to be expelled from the army, and not permitted to inhabit cities; they could neither make testaments nor receive bequests. The cause of the severity of the law was their flagrant and disgraceful immorality."<sup>1</sup>

The Roman investigation, which doubtless occupied a considerable period, may be said to have reached its termination with the issue of the imperial edict in June 445. By this time Leo was involved in, indeed had almost brought to a similar conclusion, what must be regarded as the first *cause célèbre* of his episcopate, and one which is of peculiar interest as throwing into sharp relief the autocratic temper of his rule.

It was no mean antagonist with whom the great Pope had now been brought face to face. Himself undoubtedly the first man in the West,

<sup>1</sup> The passage quoted is Milman's—*Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, p. 236. It fairly reproduces the sense of the imperial edict, the text of which may be found in Mommsen and Meyer's authoritative work, *Theodosiani Libri XVI*, vol. ii, pp. 103-5; also in substantially the same form among Leo's own letters, *Ep.*, viii; Migne, pp. 622-4.

second to him, and second to him alone, stood Hilary, the Metropolitan of Arles. In the persons of these two, papal and metropolitan authority were now at issue, and throughout all Christendom no abler champions of the causes which they respectively upheld could have been found.

Hilary, born of a noble family, and described by his admiring biographer<sup>1</sup> as endowed with every public and private virtue,<sup>2</sup> was, after a severe struggle, induced by his friend Honoratus to renounce his worldly prospects, and to retire to the monastery of Lérins.<sup>3</sup> Honoratus, who in the meantime had been summoned to the archbishopric of Arles, on his deathbed sent for Hilary, and named him as his successor; a

<sup>1</sup> The author of the *Life of Hilary* is usually supposed to be Honoratus, Bishop of Marseilles: so Fleury, *Eccl. Hist.*, vol. ii (Oxford trans., 1844), p. 247; Bright, *History of the Church*, 313-451, p. 373, to name no others. Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, pp. 246 *seq.*, does not commit himself. The authority for Honoratus' authorship is found in Gennadius, *De Script. Eccl. Lib.*, cap. 99; Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 58, pp. 1119-20. The authenticity of this particular chapter has been questioned, and it is by no means improbable that it is the work of another hand; cf. notes in Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 50, pp. 1219 *seq.*; *Pat. Lat.*, 58, p. 1118. Whether by its supposed writer or not, the chapter is of early date and, though Ravennius is named in Arles MS. as author of the *Life*, may preserve a well-founded tradition. There is, at all events, no antecedent improbability attaching thereto; Honoratus was a disciple of Hilary, and may very well have written the life of his master. He must, of course, be distinguished from the Honoratus mentioned in the text.

<sup>2</sup> *Vit. Hil.*, cap. 1; Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 50, pp. 1221-3.

<sup>3</sup> *Vit. Hil.*, cc. 2-5; *Ib.*, pp. 1223-7.

nomination which Hilary, much against his own personal inclination, was almost compelled to accept,<sup>1</sup> probably in the course of the year 429. Of the events of his episcopate during the fourteen or fifteen years which preceded his collision with Leo it is unnecessary here to speak in detail. It is sufficient to say, in general terms, that he demeaned himself as a man of pure and lofty spirit, fearless in rebuking whatever was amiss, and resolute to maintain order and discipline.

As Archbishop of Arles, Hilary showed no disposition to underestimate his metropolitan authority. In the Church over which he had been called to preside an ancient tradition was preserved, to the effect that in apostolic or sub-apostolic times Arles had received, as her first bishop, Trophimus, the companion of St. Paul, and so had become the starting-point and head quarters of Christian activity in Gaul.<sup>2</sup> On the strength of this tradition, and as the hierarchical organization of the Church became more completely developed, the bishops of the historic see of Arles showed a marked disposition to look upon their city as being somewhat more than a mere provincial metropolis; and upon themselves as the rightful primates of Gaul, enjoying an authority {patriarchal

<sup>1</sup> *Vit. Hil.*, cap. 6; *ib.*, pp. 1227-8.

<sup>2</sup> Zosimus, *Ep.*, i, 3; Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 20, pp. 644-5.

rather than metropolitan in character. As, however, was only to be expected, the other Gallic metropolitans did not see eye to eye with them in this matter, about which, as we have seen in a previous chapter, there had already been some rather sharp controversy. Pope Zosimus, it will be remembered, had espoused the cause of the Bishop of Arles, and had laid it upon the bishops of Gaul to recognize the superior jurisdiction of that prelate.<sup>1</sup> The recognition which Rome, in the person of Zosimus, had thus given to the claims of Arles was, however, promptly withdrawn by the more cautious Boniface, as being contrary to the received canons of the Church.<sup>2</sup> But, human nature being what it is, one can hardly doubt that the Metropolitans of Arles were keenly aware that their claims to superior jurisdiction had been recognized by the Mother Church of the West, while conveniently excluding from their consciousness the fact that that recognition, hastily given, had early been withdrawn.

Hilary, at all events, appears to have extended his activities far beyond the ill-defined limits of metropolitan authority.<sup>3</sup> In the course of one of his visitations, on which he was accompanied

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 76 *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 98 *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> So Leo, *Ep.*, x, 2; Migne, p. 630; whose statements may, in this case, very well be correct. Cf. also Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. iii, p. 172.

by Germanus of Auxerre,<sup>1</sup> objection was brought against one Celidonius, said to have been Bishop of Besançon,<sup>2</sup> to the effect that he was disqualified for the episcopal office which he held. For, while still a layman, so the charge ran, the accused bishop had married a widow, and as civil magistrate had passed sentence of death.

On receipt of this charge, with or without any preliminary inquiry, Hilary hastily assembled a Council, possibly at Besançon,<sup>3</sup> by which Celidonius was deposed. The latter, however, declining to submit, betook himself to Rome and complained to the Pope. When informed of this, Hilary, undismayed by the discomforts and perils of a winter journey, immediately set out, crossed the Alps on foot, and so also made his way to the capital.<sup>4</sup> On his arrival he at once sought the Pope, expressly informing him that he had not come to plead at his tribunal, nor to accuse, but to protest against any infringement of his rights.<sup>5</sup> This protest notwithstanding a local Council was convened to hear the case.<sup>6</sup> At

<sup>1</sup> *Vit. Hil.*, cap. 16 ; Migne, 50, p. 1236.

<sup>2</sup> So Gams, *Ser. Episc.*, p. 514.

<sup>3</sup> So Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. iii, p. 172 ; otherwise stated to have met at Vienne, cf. Cazenove, art. "Hilarius (17)," *D. C. B.* The point, however, is of no great importance.

<sup>4</sup> *Vit. Hil.*, cap. 16 ; Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 50, p. 1237.

<sup>5</sup> *Vit. Hil.*, cap. 17 ; *ib.*, p. 1237.

<sup>6</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, x, 3 ; Migne, p. 630. Cf. Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. iii, pp. 172-3.

this Council Hilary was permitted to have a seat, but practically found himself in the position of defendant, being called upon to rebut a charge of injustice brought against him by Celidonius. Hilary met the challenge of the proud Pontiff with a haughtiness equal to his own ; and spoke his mind with much boldness and small reserve, or, as Leo chose to put it, gave expression to his feelings in terms such as “ no layman could utter, no bishop endure to hear.”<sup>1</sup>

What Hilary actually did say we, of course, do not know ; but we may very well assume that if “ no bishop could endure to hear ” his putting of the case, it was tolerably cogent and pointed. To place his opponents in a very difficult, if not untenable, position, he had only to fall back upon the accepted canons of various Councils.<sup>2</sup> The fifty-third canon of Elvira<sup>3</sup> and the sixteenth canon of Arles I<sup>4</sup> asserted that restoration of an excommunicate could only be legitimately given by the bishop who had excommunicated him ; the fifth of Nicaea that in cases in which the penalty of excommunication has been imposed it must be

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *ib.*

<sup>2</sup> Dupin, *De Antiq. Eccl. Disciplina*, Dissertation II, p. 212, has drawn up a list of no less than seven canons, as well as a decretal of Innocent I, which were violated by Leo in his handling of this case.

<sup>3</sup> Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. i, p. 159.

<sup>4</sup> Hefele, *ib.*, p. 193.

recognized by all other bishops.<sup>1</sup> The second canon of Antioch forbade even association with one excluded from the communion of the Church.<sup>2</sup> How Leo justified his disregard of these canons it is impossible to say, but it must certainly have been a matter of some difficulty to explain them away. Even if he tried to justify himself upon the ground that, in several cases, they embodied the findings of mere local synods, this plea would not avail against an accepted canon of Nicaea; nor could a decretal to the same effect,<sup>3</sup> attributed, with some show of reason, to the greatest of his predecessors, Innocent I, be treated as a document unworthy of consideration. But, however that may be, with or without cause shown, repudiated they all were. Hilary's resolute tone, and his bold assertion of his own prerogative were, indeed, little likely to create a favourable impression upon the minds of Leo and his attendant prelates, who cannot but have been exasperated with what they would doubtless term the insolence and insubordination of the Gallic archbishop. Their exasperation, moreover, would not be any the less because they were not quite unaware that there

<sup>1</sup> Hefele, *ib.*, pp. 386-8; so also the seventh canon of Turin, the eleventh of Orange, and the eighth of Arles II; see Hefele, *ib.*, vol. ii, p. 427; vol. iii, pp. 161, 168.

<sup>2</sup> Hefele, *ib.*, vol. ii, p. 67. It is more than doubtful whether the sixth canon, pp. 68-9, would apply in this case.

<sup>3</sup> Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 20, p. 624. Cf. the prefatory note, p. 623.



was some real force in the arguments with which he supported his case. The conclusion of the matter was practically foregone; the sentence upon Celidonius was reversed: and the outspoken Hilary himself appears to have been put under surveillance. Fearing lest he should be seized and compelled to communicate with Celidonius, Hilary, shortly afterwards, quietly slipped away from Rome. His departure, which may not have been altogether without reason, was contemptuously described by Leo as a "disgraceful flight."<sup>1</sup>

So far the accounts which have come down to us of the relations between Leo and Hilary, and upon which we are dependent for our information, have been straightforward enough, and, allowing for the difference of standpoint, easily reconcilable. Now, however, they begin to show wide divergences, and, for what follows, we must rely more or less upon conjecture. From the *Life* we gather the impression that Hilary's departure from Rome took place immediately after the, to him, unsatisfactory termination of the affair of Celidonius. The remaining seven chapters tell us but little of what occurred after his return to Arles, being mainly concerned with his closing days. Interesting as they are in themselves, they contain nothing which need detain us here. From the letters of Leo, on the other hand, we are

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, x, 7; Migne, p. 635.

led to infer that, before his departure from the metropolis, Hilary was again in conflict with the Pope about another matter of administration.

Although the historical foundation, upon which any treatment of this second controversy must be necessarily based, is decidedly weaker than that upon which we have hitherto wrought, there appears to be no sufficient reason for dismissing the affair as entirely apocryphal—a course which has apparently been followed by some writers upon the subject.<sup>1</sup> It is true that the account upon which we have to rely is from the pen of Leo himself, whom we can hardly regard as otherwise than hostile to the man about whom he writes. The personal hostility of the writer will therefore render it needful that we should accept his narrative with some reserve; nor is it too much to suppose that it is somewhat distorted by party-spirit, and that the worst construction is often put upon the action of the bold prelate who had braved his wrath. But what we know of Leo renders it hardly credible that he should so far forget what was due to himself and to his office as to compose and publish an elaborate fiction expressly intended to darken the fame of a bishop who had dared to oppose his will. Further, if the story had no basis of fact it is difficult to understand how so sane a man could have per-

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Gore, art. "Leo (5)," *D. C. B.*, and *Leo the Great*.

petrated the folly of addressing the tale to the very quarter in which its falsity would be most readily exposed. It should also be borne in mind that Hilary, after all, may not have been entirely free from blame in the matter ; and, as the writer of the *Life* appears to have been in the grip of a severe attack of what Lord Macaulay would have called *furor biographicus*, it may have seemed to him that the incident was not worth recording. This at all events appears less improbable than the counter-supposition that Leo, justly called the Great, was a liar and a fool. Premising this, we shall therefore take the story for what it is worth.

Scarcely had the affair of Celidonius been settled, so Leo complains to the bishops of the province of Vienne,<sup>1</sup> than a further complaint against the administration of Hilary came to hand. Projectus, bishop of a see unnamed but which may have been Die,<sup>2</sup> in the province of Treves, in-

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, x, 4 ; Migne, p. 631.

<sup>2</sup> Gams, *Ser. Episc.*, p. 544, includes a Projectus among the bishops of Die immediately after the year 441. Tillemont, *Mem.*, xv, p. 78, thinks that the Projectus with whom we are concerned did not belong to the province to which Leo's letter is addressed, namely Vienne, but to that of Narbonne II, and that he was not Projectus of Die. There is some evidence which perhaps bears upon this in the *Gallic Chronicle*, to which, however, I have not been able to get access. According to Potthast, *Bibliotheca*, vol. i, p. 267, it is still unedited. The point, however, is of no very great importance.

formed the Pope that, while he lay sick, Hilary, usurping authority in a province other than his own, and without regard to the usual forms of canonical election, had consecrated another bishop in his room. The very life of the sick man, which Hilary evidently held as a matter of no concern, was imperilled by this hasty action, and but slight regard shown to the authority of the Apostolic See—so Leo indignantly protests. Nor is this the only irregularity of which Hilary had been guilty ; while to crown all he had strengthened his hands for his unlawful proceedings by calling in the assistance of the military power.<sup>1</sup>

That Hilary may have been somewhat hasty, even high-handed, in his methods, is not unlikely ; but, to whatever extent he may have overstepped the bounds of moderation, it may be regarded as certain that his actions were represented to the Pope in the worst light possible. That the latter, already prejudiced against him, was not too careful to inquire into the exact truth of the representations made to him, we may also not unfairly assume. But, be that as it may, as might indeed have been foreseen, though with what measure of justice it is impossible to say, Projectus won his case. Hilary was deprived of his metropolitan authority, was, for the future, to exercise no

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, x, 6 ; Migne, p. 633.

jurisdiction over the province of Vienne,<sup>1</sup> and to take no further part in any ordinations.<sup>2</sup> It was also suggested that an ancient bishop, Leontius, should, on the ground of seniority, enjoy a kind of primacy in Gaul.<sup>3</sup>

That Hilary was entirely in the right, and that the complaints of Celidonius and Projectus were unjustifiable and frivolous, it is not for us to say.<sup>4</sup> In such affairs as these there are usually faults on both sides. But, whatever errors of judgement may be laid to his charge, it is practically certain that he was the victim of misrepresentation and arbitrary treatment, and that the heavier burden of blame rests upon the greater prelate who constituted himself as his judge. For, even supposing Hilary to have been guilty, the proper tribunal to have dealt with the case was a Gallic Council lawfully assembled.<sup>5</sup>

In his relations with Hilary Leo shows at his

<sup>1</sup> Leo's predecessor Zosimus had declared (*Ep.*, 5; Migne, 20, p. 666) that metropolitan jurisdiction over Vienne and the two Narbonnes had been so unalterably annexed to Arles that it was beyond the power even of the Roman See to make any alteration—a somewhat unhappy admission, in view of after events.

<sup>2</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, x, 7; Migne, pp. 634-5.

<sup>3</sup> Leo, *ib.*, 9; Migne, p. 636.

<sup>4</sup> For a clear and excellent statement of the case for Hilary, see Fleury, *Eccl. Hist.* (Eng. trans.), vol. iii, pp. 245-6, note (b).

<sup>5</sup> For constitutional authority on this point see Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. i, pp. 387, 373-4; vol. ii, p. 407.

worst. Generally speaking, whatever we may think of the justice of the claims which he put so prominently forward, our sympathies are on the whole with him in the various controversies in which he was involved. This case, however, forms an exception. Prelates of the stamp of Hilary could not but prove a great stumbling-block in the way of realization of his ambition—not a sordid, personal ambition, in fairness to Leo it must be said—and he appears to have approached the case in a very unjudicial frame of mind, to have greedily swallowed a good deal of misrepresentation, and on *ex parte* evidence to have decided the case. That he had dealt hard measure to a man whose real worth he knew, and whom, after his death, he described as “of holy memory,”<sup>1</sup> Leo seems to have been not quite unconscious; and, as he reviewed his action in the matter it is more than possible that his mind was not entirely at rest. If this be so, it may afford a partial explanation why, at this juncture, he felt it to be necessary to fortify his own sentence by one, in those days, more tremendous still.

On July 8, 445, the Emperor Valentinian put forth an edict, for the substance of which Leo must be regarded as responsible.<sup>2</sup> A Holy

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xl; Migne, p. 815.

<sup>2</sup> Mommsen and Meyer, *Theod. Lib. XVI*, vol. ii, pp. 101-3; also among the letters of Leo, *Ep.*, xi; Migne, pp. 636 *seq.*

Council<sup>1</sup>—so the Emperor is made to say—has confirmed the primacy of the Apostolic See, from regard to the merit of St. Peter and the dignity of the city of Rome ; so that no one should presume to do aught unpermitted by her authority, Hilary is denounced as guilty of contumacy and lawlessness, and as a disturber of the peace of the Churches. This is a civil as well as an ecclesiastical offence, which has been duly investigated by the Pope, whose sentence would be valid even without imperial sanction. But, inasmuch as Hilary has offended against the majesty of the

Comparison of these two versions will reveal slight textual differences, in the main merely verbal, which leave the general purport of the letter unchanged. It may be added that the rescript formally runs in the name of both Theodosius and Valentinian.

<sup>1</sup> Notice the vagueness of this. The canons of Sardica, which Council moreover was not oecumenical, do not apply in this case : see Fleury, *Eccl. Hist.*, vol. iii, p. 245 ; and Beet, *R. S.* ii, pp. 32-5. Still less does the sixth canon of Nicaea meet the case : *ib.*, pp. 22-3. On attempts to twist this canon into a form calculated to afford support to the pretensions of the Roman chair, see Bright, *Roman See*, pp. 76 *seq.*

Leo must have been aware that no conciliar decree was in existence which justified this statement ; it appears difficult to clear him in this instance, if not of a charge of direct falsehood, at any rate from complicity in a falsehood, the publication of which he instigated, and which he was quite ready to make use of in the interests of his see.

Von Schubert, it may be mentioned, regards this vague reference to a Holy Council as the first appeal to the spurious addition to the sixth canon of Nicaea, "The Roman Church has always enjoyed the primacy," which he says appeared at this time. See *Outlines of Church History* (E. T.), pp. 168-9.

empire as well as against the Apostolic See, the Emperor's attention has been called thereto, and he now reminds Hilary that to the mildness of the Roman Pontiff alone it is due that he still bears the name of bishop. He and others were alike warned to heed this perpetual edict that it shall not be lawful for bishops in Gaul, and elsewhere, contrary to ancient custom, to do aught without the authority of the venerable Pope of the Eternal City, whose enactments shall be laws for all. If any bishop, summoned for trial by the Pope, neglect to attend, he shall be compelled to appearance by the Governor of the province to which he belongs.

The foregoing is the general import of the famous edict, which may be summed up in brief by saying that it recognized the Bishop of Rome as Sovereign Head of the Christian Church, established his enactments as general laws, defined opposition to them as a kind of *crimen laesae majestatis*, and ordered all civil authorities to arrest and surrender any person who, summoned by the Pope, neglected to appear.

Whatever be the moral judgement which we feel constrained to pass upon Leo's share in this transaction,<sup>1</sup> and indeed upon the whole matter

<sup>1</sup> Which has been, not unjustly, characterized as a grave offence against history and the rights of the several Churches. See Bright, *Hist. Church*, 313-451, p. 376.



of his relations with Hilary, it must be admitted that, from his own point of view and so far as the prerogatives of his see were concerned, he had achieved an undoubted triumph. He was publicly recognized by the Head of the State as enjoying a sort of co-ordinate sovereignty with himself. The successor of the Fisherman, whose irresponsible absolutism thus became part of the law of the Empire, seemed at length to sit enthroned but little lower than the heir of a long line of Caesars. Peter and Augustus had agreed together to share the lordship of the world. This celebrated edict, rather than our Lord's supposed commission to the Prince of the Apostles, must be regarded as the real starting-point of the mediaeval papacy.

Of the autocratic temper which his relations with Hilary throw into such distinct relief, Leo had already, some eighteen months before, given some indication in the manner of his dealing with Illyrian affairs. When, on his accession, the Vicar Anastasius applied to the new Pope for confirmation of the delegated authority which he had enjoyed under his predecessor, whether "because that office was still supposed to depend upon the pleasure of each successive Bishop of Rome, or because some fresh opposition had been offered by the Illyrian bishops,"<sup>1</sup> Leo acceded

<sup>1</sup> Riddle, *History of the Papacy*, vol. i, p. 173.

with haughty claims.<sup>1</sup> With complete disregard of the historical circumstances which had originally brought these provinces within the sphere of the patriarchal authority of Rome, he grounds his title to supremacy upon our Lord's commission to St. Peter, in virtue of which the care of all the Churches now rests upon him. Metropolitans, he informs his correspondents, must understand that, in relation to the Papal Vicar, they occupy a position similar to that of their suffragans to themselves. Appeal, however, may be made, and all graver causes must be referred to Rome for judgement.<sup>2</sup>

Though Anastasius did not apparently enjoy much personal popularity, the powers thus afresh conferred upon him do not seem to have been in any way called into question by the Illyrian bishops.<sup>3</sup> The right of appeal was not, however, suffered to remain a dead letter; indeed, it was very soon called into requisition. The circumstances need not be set forth in detail here. It is only necessary to say that Atticus, Metropolitan of Old Epirus, had begged to be excused for non-attendance at Council on the ground of ill-health. Anastasius would have none of it; but, calling in the assistance of the civil power, he had the

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, v; Migne, pp. 615-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, v, especially 2-5; Migne, pp. 615-6; cf. also *Ep.*, vi.

<sup>3</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, xiii, 1; Migne, p. 664.

sick man brought by force to Thessalonica through the severe cold and snows of winter. Atticus thereupon appealed to the Pope, who soundly rated his Vicar for this serious abuse of his authority, which he reminded him was delegated not absolute, bade him be under no misapprehension as to his real position, that he had been called to be a sharer in but a part of the papal cares and not into its plenitude of power,<sup>1</sup> and insisted that he should respect metropolitan rights.<sup>2</sup> The principal significance of this incident, so far as we are concerned, is that it affords an illustration of the fact that Leo intended his to be no nominal supremacy, a formal acknowledgement by others of an authority that really meant little, but one thoroughly effective so far as he could make it so. The tone of the letter is autocratic; it is that of a master who has a right to expect and will exact obedience.

That Anastasius eventually succeeded in reinstating himself in the good graces of the Pope we gather from a letter, written some years later,

<sup>1</sup> It may be of interest to observe that Innocent III quoted this phrase of Leo's in support of his claim that the Pope alone has plenary jurisdiction in the Church, while all bishops are merely his assistants for such portions of his duty as he sees fit to entrust to them. This may be regarded as the completion of the papal system. See *Inn., Regest.*, bk. i, 350; Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 214, p. 324; cf. also "Janus," p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xiv, 1, 2; Migne, pp. 668-72.

when more important events, which will claim our attention in due course, were in progress. In the letter in question he is warmly commended by his master for having taken no part in the Robber Council of Ephesus.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that, strong and self-assertive as he was, Leo could, upon occasion, defer to the judgement of others. In the year 444 Easter, according to the Roman reckoning, fell upon March 26; according to that of Alexandria on April 23. This double celebration offended against Leo's ideal of the unity of the Church, and we find him in consequence in correspondence with Cyril of Alexandria and Paschasinus of Lilybaeum on the subject.<sup>2</sup> The upshot of this correspondence was that Leo surrendered his point, and the Roman reckoning gave way to that of Alexandria.

It may be that the memory of this concession,

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xlvii, 1; Migne, p. 839.

<sup>2</sup> Fragment in Migne, pp. 601 *seq.*; *Ep.*, iii, *Ib.*, pp. 606-10. This matter was the subject of correspondence in later years. We find Leo dispatching letters broadcast with respect to it, his correspondents including the Emperor Marcian, the Bishops of Arles, Alexandria, Cos, and, collectively, the bishops of Gaul and Spain. See *Epp.*, lxxxviii, 4, xcvi, cxxi, cxxii, cxxvii, 2, cxxxi, 2, cxxxiii, cxxxiv, 3, cxxxvii, cxlii, 1; Migne, pp. 929, 945, 1055-8, 1058-60, 1072, 1082, 1084-94, 1095-6, 1100-01, 1110-11. In the year 455 Leo again deferred his judgement to that of the Orientals, as he said, for the sake of the unity and peace of the Church; *Ep.*, cxxxviii; Migne, pp. 1101-2.

and some apprehension lest it should lead people in Alexandria, and elsewhere, to draw conclusions which he certainly had no desire should be drawn, made Leo somewhat anxious to find an opportunity of making quite clear what were the relations between his own see and that of Alexandria as he conceived them. Before the year was out Dioscorus had succeeded Cyril in the patriarchal chair of that city; and a letter from him, presumably announcing his election, afforded to Leo the opportunity which he desired. To the new Patriarch Leo courteously replied, at the same time reminding him that as the Church over which he had been called to preside had been founded by St. Mark, himself the disciple of St. Peter, the relationship of their respective founders must determine that of the two Churches, and the practice of Alexandria must therefore conform to that of Rome.<sup>1</sup> The remainder of the letter consists of detailed directions concerning sundry matters of ritual. How these instructions were carried out it is impossible to say; what we know of Dioscorus suggests that he would be the last man in the world to render implicit obedience to another unless it suited himself to do so. But, whatever the outcome, the spirit which dictated them is manifest enough.

We have seen that the Church in Africa had

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, ix, *præf.*; Migne, p. 624.

been, in the past, quick to resent and to resist papal encroachments upon her independence.<sup>1</sup> But times were now changed in that unhappy province. Weakened by Vandal persecutions, the fruit, in a measure, of her own persecution of the Donatists, whereby was raised up a domestic faction which regarded with not unfriendly eyes the invasion of Africa by a barbarian heretic, whose enterprise was rendered still more easy by the momentary treason of a Roman Governor, impelled thereto by jealousy and sense of wrong,<sup>2</sup> the African Church was no longer in a position to assert herself or to adopt the attitude which had been hers a generation before. It was easy therefore for Leo to assert his authority over what remained of the Church in that distressful country. Among his letters we are, therefore, not surprised to find a long one,<sup>3</sup> which seems to belong to the year 446, addressed to the African bishops with reference to various matters of Church order and discipline. His tone is that of complete authority; indeed, according to one version of the letter, he reversed the decision

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 68, 71, 91-4 *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> For details, which cannot here be given, the reader may be referred to Gibbon, c. 33. For the relation between Aetius and Boniface, in the light of the latest research, see Freeman, *Western Europe in the Fifth Century*, App. I, especially pp. 338 *seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xii; Migne, pp. 645 *seq.*

of an African Council by restoring to communion an excommunicated bishop, Lupicinus, who had appealed to his apostolic throne.<sup>1</sup>

In the following year, 447, Leo was again in conflict with heresy, and was asserting his authority in yet another quarter of the world. Some seventy years before the date at which we have now arrived the Priscillian heresy had appeared in Spain. In spite of strenuous efforts to stamp it out, including the execution of its author Priscillian,<sup>2</sup> an act upon which Leo, though he himself shrank from enforcing the death penalty against the Manichees, put the *imprimatur* of his approval,<sup>3</sup> it had continued to gain adherents. Effective check upon its development there was none, owing to the distracted state of the country, overrun as it was by Suevi, Goths, and Vandals; all of whom, so far as they were Christians at all, were placed by their Arian beliefs outside the pale of orthodoxy. Under these conditions it

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xii, 12; Migne, pp. 655-6. Quesnel and others doubt the genuineness of this portion of the letter, which is extant in a longer and a shorter form, both of which are printed by Migne, where is also to be found a full discussion of the question, and to which reference may be made by those desirous of further information. See *Admonitio*, pp. 639 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Usually considered to be the first person who suffered death as a heretic, though it is not quite certain that he was not formally charged with a civil offence, and executed as a sorcerer.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xi, *init.*; Migne, pp. 679-80.

was impracticable to assemble the bishops in Council, and discipline was in a state of collapse.

It may perhaps be desirable, at this point, and in the merest outline, to give some slight idea of what Priscillianism really was, and of the seriousness of the danger which Leo now intervened to meet. The Spanish heresy had many points of contact with the Manichaeism against which he had already taken strong measures in Rome and Italy. It may perhaps be described in a word as a kind of theological unitarianism on a dualistic basis. God was, and was One. The Devil also was, being regarded as no fallen angel, but as uncreate, the spontaneous development of darkness and chaos, the principle and substance of evil. The human body is his handiwork, while the spirit of man is an emanation from God. To save the latter from the devil Christ appeared on earth; but He was not a real man, for He assumed human flesh without assuming a human soul. The Trinity, as we understand it, was impossible on Priscillian principles; so far as it was recognized at all, it was only in a modalistic or Sabellian form. Doctrines such as these naturally led to a theoretical asceticism, which, however, as we have already seen in the case of Manichaeism, was not necessarily incompatible with much that was licentious and anti-social in practice. The votaries of



this creed were further charged with being much addicted to magic and astrology.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the state of affairs in that country when a Spanish bishop, Turribius of Astorga, wrote to the Pope, laying the whole matter before him, and seeking his assistance and advice.<sup>2</sup> Leo, whose zeal to establish the true humanity of Christ cannot but command our assent and admiration, replied at considerable length,<sup>3</sup> dealing seriatim, among others, with the points indicated in the previous paragraph. The letter concludes with directions that a General Council of Spain should be convened to deal with the matter, and mentions that the bishops of the four provinces, Tarragona, Cartagena, Lusitania, and Galicia are being advised to that effect. But Turribius is at the same time informed that, if the holding of a General Council should, for

<sup>1</sup> From Leo's somewhat lengthy letter on the subject, to which further reference will be made, considerable information may be gathered as to the tenets of the followers of Priscillian. See also Jerome, *Epp.*, 133, 144 ("Nicene and Post-Nic. Lib." [New Series], vol. vi, pp. 273, 284); Sulpicius Severus, *Sacred History*, cc. 47 *seq.* (*Ib.*, vol. ii, pp. 120-2); and vol. 18 of *Corpus Script. Eccl. Latin.* (ed. Schepss, Vienna, 1889), which contains the writings of Priscillian and Orosius' *Commonitorium* on the subject. Cf. also note 2, p. 34 *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Leo, *Ep.*, xv, *init.*; Migne, pp. 678-9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xv.; Migne, pp. 677-92. It would be wearisome to give references to this letter, which should be studied as a whole by those who wish to gain some insight into the questions at issue. Cf. previous note.

any reason, prove to be impracticable at the moment, it will be well for him to assemble a provincial Council from Galicia alone, and to deal with the matter there.<sup>1</sup> Leo's instructions were so far followed that two large, though not General Spanish Councils were duly held, at which the Priscillian doctrines were anathematized with the usual forms.<sup>2</sup>

If Leo was his own Minister for Foreign Affairs, as indeed he most certainly was, Home Affairs were by no means overlooked by him, for they too received his personal attention. Thus, in the autumn of this same year, 447, he was in correspondence with the Sicilian bishops, whom he reminds of our Lord's commission to St. Peter, and of the consequent peculiar privilege of his see, to the practice and ritual of which they must conform their own; also that the annual attendance of certain of their number at Council in Rome is expected, and must be observed.<sup>3</sup> In

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xv, 17; Migne, p. 692.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Hefele, *Councils*, vol. iii, pp. 175-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xvi; Migne, pp. 695-704. It may be interesting to add that a portion of this letter, chapter vii to be exact, has passed into the great collections as the first Papal Bull, and indeed the only one until we come to the time of Gregory the Great, a century later. See, for instance, *Collectionis Bullarum S. S. Basilicæ Vaticanæ*, Tom. i, issued from the Pontifical Press at Rome in 1747. This is, of course, not the only collection, nor the first, which appeared in 1550, but contained fifty documents only. The first comprehensive collection appeared in 1585.

a letter of the same date, October 21, they are reprimanded for alienating certain Church property, of which complaints have been received from the Churches concerned ; the offenders are further threatened with deposition.<sup>1</sup> Two months later Leo writes to the Metropolitan of Aquileia<sup>2</sup> giving directions as to the treatment to be accorded to clerical persons who, after a lapse into heresy, have returned to the faith. In March 448, we find him intervening in a case of irregular promotion at Beneventum.<sup>3</sup>

The manifold activities of Leo have, up to this point, been for the most part confined to the Western Empire, in which the Bishop of Rome held a position of ecclesiastical pre-eminence, as distinct from sovereign primacy, which was hardly open to question. We have seen how Leo himself interpreted that pre-eminence in a sense other than that in which it would have met with universal recognition ; claiming, as successor of the Prince of the Apostles, a superior jurisdiction over the whole Church, of which he unmistakably regarded himself as being the ruling head. Before his tribunal a great metropolitan like Hilary must answer for the way in which he has discharged the duties of his office ;

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xvii ; Migne, pp. 703-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xviii ; Migne, pp. 707-9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xix ; Migne, pp. 709-14.

and by his directions the policy and practice of the most distant provinces must be shaped. Strong in imperial support, stronger still by reason of his own strength and force of character and innate capacity for rule, he has to a large extent made his claims effective, and has exacted a wide recognition of his authority.

But at the period at which we have now arrived a voice was already calling from the Orient, where a new field for papal intervention was being thrown open by theological controversy. The letter<sup>1</sup> immediately following that to which we last referred, is addressed to the Abbot Eutyches, a name which now meets us for the first time, but of which we shall hear much before the eventful pontificate of Leo reaches its close. Trouble is already afoot in the East; and the great conflict, which will render the age of Leo for ever memorable in history, has really begun. We have already seen this great Pope, rightly or wrongly, exercising effective discipline far beyond the limits of his own province or patriarchate; we shall now see him, with truth upon his side, laying down the norm of orthodoxy for the whole Christian world, and shall hear him voice the truth on behalf of the universal Church.

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xx; Migne, p. 713.

## CHAPTER V

### THE POPE AND THE COUNCIL : LEO THE EXPONENT OF DOCTRINE

Eutyches—Council at Constantinople—Appeals to Rome—The *Tome* of Leo—Robber Council of Ephesus—Eutyches restored—The Fate of the *Tome*—Deposition and Death of Flavian—The Pope and the Council—Theodosius confirms its *Acts*—Anatolius Patriarch of Constantinople—Dioscorus attempts to excommunicate the Pope—Death of Theodosius—Pulcheria and Marcian—Leo's dislike to a Council—The Fourth General Council—Dioscorus under the Lash—Adoption of the *Tome*—The 28th Canon—Civil and Ecclesiastical Greatness of Cities—The Second See of Christendom—The Legates' Protest—Letter from the Council to the Pope—Leo's Indignation—The Emperor intervenes—Leo's Concessions—Abject Attitude of Anatolius—The Canon takes Effect—Summary.

THE heresy of Nestorius had, as we have seen, been the subject of a heated controversy in the previous generation, being eventually condemned at the General Council of Ephesus in 431. Foremost among the opponents of the Nestorian opinions was, it will be remembered, the Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria. Of the

followers of Cyril no one had more insistently asserted the unity of the Person of Christ than the Archimandrite Eutyches of Constantinople. Eutyches, now an aged man of blameless character and hitherto unimpeachable orthodoxy, perhaps almost without being aware of it, suddenly emerged into notoriety as the author of a new heresy, and the storm-centre of the bitterest theological strife.

The doctrinal settlement at Ephesus had not by any means given entire peace to the Church. Nestorianism still remained as an object of apprehension to the orthodox, and the years which followed the third General Council of the Church were marked by considerable unrest.<sup>1</sup> Early in 448 Eutyches wrote to Leo deploring the revival of Nestorianism; and on June 1 Leo briefly replied <sup>2</sup> applauding his zeal. The next thing that he heard of Eutyches was, early in the following year, that he had been condemned as a heretic by a Constantinopolitan Council.

A new party had, in fact, been formed in the East by monkish zeal, the distinguishing feature

<sup>1</sup> For a clear and interesting sketch of the course of events which preceded the advent of Eutychianism, reference may be made to Bright, *Roman See*, pp. 254-61; cf. also the same writer's *History of the Church*, 313-451, pp. 378-83. Some very interesting remarks on these controversies may be found in Bury's *Later Roman Empire*, pp. 188-91.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* xx; Migne, p. 713.

of which was hostility to the theological position of Theodoret, best known to us perhaps as a church historian, though a prolific writer on all manner of subjects. Theodoret was concerned to maintain with the utmost clearness, the distinction of natures in Christ, upon which, for him, depended the reality of the Gospel. The monks, on the other hand, exaggerated the teaching of Cyril, which had been accepted as the norm of orthodoxy at Ephesus, practically to the point of a denial of the two natures in Christ after the Incarnation. Of this monkish party Eutyches became the representative and the mouthpiece; and with it had clamorously taken part in the movement which had led to the degradation of Theodoret, Ibas of Edessa, Irenaeus of Tyre, and some others, the character of whose teaching appeared to be anti-Cyrrilline in its tendency. The Patriarch Dioscorus of Alexandria, though himself decidedly anti-Cyrrilline in his administration, also held strongly the anti-Nestorian views of his great predecessor.

Another and less respectable influence appears, however, to have been simultaneously at work, and to have fanned into flame the glowing embers of strife. The strong-minded Pulcheria had long ruled her brother, the Emperor Theodosius II, to the deep discontent of the eunuch minister Chrysaphius, the head of the imperial adminis-

tration. The great object of this unscrupulous statesman was to undermine the authority of Pulcheria ; this he hoped in part to do by strengthening the influence of the beautiful Empress Eudocia.<sup>1</sup> Chrysaphius was, moreover, the godson of the Archimandrite Eutyches, whom he schemed to raise to the Patriarchal throne of Constantinople on the death of Proclus in 447. Had he succeeded in this his position at court would have been manifestly strengthened. The elevation of Flavian, however, came as a check to his plans ; but he still hoped to contrive the overthrow of the new Patriarch, and to set up his own spiritual father in his room. When Flavian was installed the eunuch demanded from him the customary *eulogia*, or inauguration present to the Emperor. Flavian bravely declined to offer any other present than three loaves of white bread, that being all he could afford to give without a sacrilegious appropriation of the treasures of the Church. Thus a subject of unpleasantness was raised up, the object, of course, which Chrysaphius had in view. The latter, suddenly changing his apparent attitude and assuming a mask of friendliness, now strove to implicate Flavian in his own intrigue against Pulcheria. At this point Eusebius, Bishop of

<sup>1</sup> For the romantic history of this lady see Gibbon, c. 32 ; cf. also Soc. *H.E.*, vii, 21.



Dorylaeum, intervened. Before his elevation to the episcopate Eusebius had held civil office, probably in Pulcheria's household ; years earlier he had stoutly opposed Nestorianism, and he now stood forth as the accuser of Eutyches.<sup>1</sup>

A Council was assembled in Constantinople, under the presidency of Flavian, at which Eusebius took up his parable against Eutyches, whom he solemnly charged with a denial of the two natures in Christ. Thrice was Eutyches summoned to appear, and thrice, upon one excuse or other, he disregarded the citation. He was under a vow not to quit his monastery—a vow which his opponents reminded him he had held in but light esteem when it was a matter of taking part in the tumults against Nestorius ; Eusebius was his personal enemy, and had brought in his accusation out of malice ; he was in bad health ; he would come some other day. Flavian throughout displayed the utmost forbearance ; he did not wish to be hard upon Eutyches, he said, and the Council would wait till he was well.

When at length Eutyches did put in an appearance it was in tumultuous wise, accompanied by a rabble rout of soldiers and of monks, and by the Patrician Florentius, for whom, in the Emperor's name, he demanded a seat in the

<sup>1</sup> Theophanes, *Chronog.*, pp. 84-6. Ed. Goar (Paris, 1655).

Council, which he himself, professing to be in peril from Eusebius, declined to enter without security given for his personal safety. At length the Council got to work; much talking ensued, and Eutyches was eventually, with considerable difficulty, brought to the point under discussion. Professing unwillingness to speculate upon such a matter, asserting in general terms his agreement with Cyril, striving to obscure the issue by a cloud of vague and ambiguous expressions, the dialectical skill of Eusebius cornered him at last. It was in answer to a question of none other than his companion Florentius himself, that Eutyches was finally forced to the heretical confession, that "Christ was of two natures before the union, but after the union I acknowledge one." He appealed to Athanasius and Cyril in support of his view. Eutyches was condemned forthwith, degraded from all priestly office, and thrust out of the communion of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

Up to this point Leo had not been involved in the affair, but now that the controversy had arrived at so acute a stage it was impossible

<sup>1</sup> For this Council see Hefele, *Councils*, vol. iii, 189-204, cf. also pp. 182-9. The minutes are embedded in those of the Robber Council of Ephesus, which are in turn embodied in those of Chalcedon. See Mansi, vi, 649, 657, 697, 704, 712, 716, 724, 729, 740, 744, 748.

that he should remain so any longer. Both parties were alike eager to secure his most valuable support. Flavian and Eutyches both wrote to the Pope, putting the case before him from their very different points of view, but the letter <sup>1</sup> of the former was apparently delayed <sup>2</sup> in transmission; if indeed it ever did reach the Pope. The Emperor also himself addressed a letter to the Roman Chair on the same subject.<sup>3</sup>

The first intimation of what was doing at Constantinople which Leo actually did receive appears to have been contained in the letter of Eutyches, in which he announced his own condemnation; and, in the most flattering terms, besought his protection, representing that, at the recent Council, he had appealed to the Pope, but in vain—a statement the literal truth of which appears to be open to some question. He also enclosed a paper, which he said he had not been allowed to substitute in lieu of an oral statement.<sup>4</sup> Eutyches, in addition, addressed himself to the renowned preacher-bishop, Peter of Ravenna, who replied to the effect that he must

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* xxii, among Leo's own; Migne, pp. 723-32.

<sup>2</sup> Baronius [*Ann.*, 448, vol. vi (Antwerp, 1658), p. 64] accuses Eutyches of getting Flavian's letter detained; this statement, however, lacks evidence.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Leo, *Ep.* xxiii, *init.*; Migne, p. 731.

<sup>4</sup> See Leo, *Ep.* xxi; Migne, pp. 713-20.

submit himself to the written instructions of the Pope.<sup>1</sup>

On February 18, 449, not having received his letter, Leo wrote to Flavian<sup>2</sup> expressing surprise that he had not been informed of what had taken place, and requesting some explanation of the treatment which had been accorded to Eutyches. So far as the matter in dispute was concerned, the Pope, for the moment, adopted a non-committal attitude. Though claiming, as a matter of course, the right of final pronouncement on the case, Leo was too wise a man to determine his course of action upon an *ex parte* statement. To the Emperor Theodosius he also wrote, cordially recognizing his interest in the affair, and mentioning his own present inability to form a judgement, owing to lack of information.<sup>3</sup>

Flavian's delayed letter now, perhaps, came to hand, and also a second letter,<sup>4</sup> in which the Patriarch informed the Pope that, so far as any

<sup>1</sup> For Peter's reply see Leo, *Ep.* xxv; Migne, pp. 741-3, cf. cap. 2. Milman (*Latin Christianity*, vol. i, p. 259 note) expresses some suspicion of the second chapter of this letter. It is not found in most MSS. of Leo, and has to be supplied from other sources. For details and discussion see Migne, *Admonitio*, pp. 737-40. On the whole we may, perhaps, receive the disputed chapter as genuine.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* xxiii; Migne, pp. 731-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.* xxiv; Migne, pp. 735-6.

<sup>4</sup> Among Leo's, *Ep.* xxvi; Migne, pp. 743-8, and pp. 749-51, for another version couched in slightly different terms, the general tenor, however, remaining unchanged.

appeal to Rome was concerned, Eutyches had lied; at the Council he had, in fact, made no such appeal. He had been canonically deposed, and it would be well that the Pope should confirm the action of the Council, and so establish the Emperor's faith. To this letter Leo briefly replied,<sup>1</sup> on May 21, to the effect that he would forward by Flavian's envoy a complete letter, showing how the matter should be judged.

In the following month the promised letter<sup>2</sup> was written, a letter destined to literary immortality as one of the comparatively few letters which take a conspicuous place in history, and which is now familiarly known as the *Tome of Leo*. Formally addressed to an individual, it was in reality a solemn pronouncement upon the doctrinal question at issue, intended for the Church at large<sup>3</sup>; and more immediately intended for formal presentation to the General Council, which had already, on March 30, been summoned by the Emperor Theodosius to meet at Ephesus. The imperial brief of convocation, which ran in the joint names of the Emperors of the East and of the West, was addressed in

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* xxvii; Migne, pp. 751-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* xxviii; Migne, pp. 755-82.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Leo's own letters show him circulating it in Gaul and Sicily, and indications are not wanting that it was received in Italy as an authoritative symbol. Cf. *Epp.* lxvi, lxvii, lxxxviii 1, xcvi 2, xcix 2; Migne, pp. 884-90, 927-8, 946, 966-7.

identical terms to the great metropolitans, and still exists in the copy sent to Dioscorus.<sup>1</sup> Imperial commissioners were appointed to attend for the purpose of preserving order, forwarding business, and informing the Emperor of the course of proceedings in the Council, which appears to have been convoked at Eutyches' request.<sup>2</sup> With the cause of the last-named Theodosius was inclined to sympathize; the imperial sympathy, however, such as it was, may be best interpreted as due not to any real conviction on the part of the Emperor, himself a man of small mind, a mere nonentity in fact, but rather as affording indication that the influence of Chrysaphius was, for the moment, in the ascendant.

It is indeed significant, and a shadow of the coming domination of the Roman See, that, in the case of an Eastern controversy, which left the West practically untouched, the chief bishop of the West, with the approval of the orthodox throughout the Christian world, undertook to put forth a statement of the true faith with respect to the grave matters in dispute, a statement, moreover, which was generally accepted as authoritative. But it must by no means be

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. iii, p. 222; Mansi, vi, 588-9.

<sup>2</sup> Mansi, vi, 820; cf. Liberatus, *Brev.*, c. 12; Migne, 68, p. 1003.

overlooked that, while the position of the Bishop of Rome gave weight to any utterance of his, the *Tome* stood firm by reason of its own impressiveness and orthodoxy, and by reason of its own inherent qualities strengthened the position of its author. Thus while the office of the writer gave additional importance to the work of his pen, that work at the same time, by reason of what it was in itself, contributed in no small degree to raise at once the person and the office of him who had given it to the Church.<sup>1</sup> Confronted by conflicting heresies, with perfect clearness and a firm grasp of the real position, Leo, emphasizing as against Eutyches the reality of the two natures in Christ, and as against Nestorius insisting upon the unity of His personality, steered a middle course, which has secured abiding recognition as representing the happy mean of Catholic orthodoxy; and has given his work a high place among the dogmatic treatises which the Church in general could ill afford to lose.

Bearing the same date as the foregoing, Leo also dispatched a letter to the Emperor Theodosius, informing him that Julius, Bishop of Puteoli; Renatus, a presbyter, who appears to

<sup>1</sup> For a neat statement of the real significance of the questions at issue in this controversy, and a summary of the contents of the *Tome*, see Gore, *Leo the Great*, pp. 53-70; or more fully in Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. iv, pp. 190 *seq.*

have died *en route*; and Hilary, a deacon, who twelve years later succeeded to the papal chair, would represent him at the approaching Council. A week later another letter to the same effect followed, in which the Emperor was urged to preserve the mean of orthodoxy.<sup>1</sup> Leo's pen was indeed busy at this juncture. Including the *Tome*, no less than eight letters bear the single date, June 13, his correspondents including the Princess Pulcheria,<sup>2</sup> the archimandrites of Constantinople,<sup>3</sup> the Council itself,<sup>4</sup> and Julian of Cos.<sup>5</sup>

Between the date borne by the foregoing letters and that of the meeting of the Council three other letters were written by Leo, two,<sup>6</sup> addressed to Flavian and Theodosius respectively, bearing the date June 20, and one to Flavian<sup>7</sup> dated July 23. These letters, however, are but short, and call for no special remark.

Without going into the details of this somewhat lengthy correspondence, it may be said in brief that, while utterly repudiating the errors of Eutyches and heartily supporting the action of

<sup>1</sup> *Epp.* xxix, xxxvii; Migne, pp. 781-3, 811-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Epp.* xxx, xxxi; Migne, pp. 785-96.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.* xxxii; Migne, pp. 795-7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep.* xxxiii; Migne, pp. 797-9.

<sup>5</sup> *Epp.* xxxiv, xxxv; Migne, pp. 801-10.

<sup>6</sup> *Epp.*, xxxvi, xxxvii; Migne, pp. 809-12.

<sup>7</sup> *Ep.* xxxviii; Migne, pp. 812-3.



Flavian, the Pope expressed his desire that the offending prelate should receive kindly treatment, if penitent. In writing to the Council he takes it for granted that he himself is the authoritative exponent of Christian doctrine, and, conveniently adapting facts to theory,<sup>1</sup> makes it appear as if, doctrinal dispute having arisen, the Emperor had in the first instance had recourse to him as the successor of St. Peter, on the basis of whose confession he had set forth the truth of the matter, and refuted Eutyches.<sup>2</sup> Leo's dislike to the Council, which reveals itself clearly enough, is thus easily to be understood; from his point of view it was quite superfluous.<sup>3</sup> He mentions that the Emperor had desired his presence only to say that the state of the city and the precedents of his see alike rendered it impossible; he had, however, sent legates to represent him.<sup>4</sup>

On August 8, the Council met in the Church of Mary the Virgin<sup>5</sup> at Ephesus, the scene of the deposition of Nestorius—an evil omen for the Patriarch of Constantinople, who was now

<sup>1</sup> "A daring attempt to misrepresent the conditions under which the Council had come together," Harnack calls it. Cf. *History of Dogma*, vol. iv, pp. 202-3, for some interesting, if not entirely impartial, remarks upon this point.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* xxxiii; Migne, p. 797.

<sup>3</sup> *Epp.* xxxvi, xxxvii; Migne, pp. 810, 812.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep.* xxxi, 4; Migne, p. 793.

<sup>5</sup> Liberatus, *Brev.*, c. 12; Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 68, p. 1004.

practically upon his trial. By imperial command Dioscorus, a declared partisan of Eutyches, occupied the presidential chair,<sup>1</sup> while Flavian, seated below his rank, occupied but the fifth place.<sup>2</sup> In the same spot, after an interval of eighteen years, the rivals, Alexandria and Constantinople, were again at issue; the advantage, notwithstanding that Rome had spoken for the latter, being for the moment distinctly with the former.

It may, perhaps, be convenient to observe at this point that the Council of 449 differed, in one important respect, from nearly all other ecclesiastical assemblies which have put forth false doctrine. Such have generally been, beyond the possibility of dispute, party gatherings, assembled by party methods, and with a definitely party object in view. But the Council now under consideration was intended to be oecumenical, was regularly convoked, and was attended by Roman legates. This being so, and the sequel being what it was, a query naturally suggests itself as to what actually confers oecumenicity upon a Council, which is evidently not the manner of its coming together. Interesting

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mansi, vi, 600.

<sup>2</sup> It will be borne in mind that at the second General Council, in 381, the Bishop of New Rome had been given precedence immediately after his brother of the ancient imperial city. Cf. Beet, *R.S.*, ii, p. 62.

as it would be to dwell upon the question thus raised, it is necessary for us to pass it by, that we may confine ourselves to the matter which is the more proper subject of our inquiry.

So far, however, it will be observed that nothing had occurred in connexion with the Council which could in any way distinguish it from the General Councils which already had been held; it had come together in the usual way, and with due observance of the customary forms. But from the very moment of its opening it assumed a party character. This was shown clearly enough by the fact that, with the sole exception of Flavian, none of the bishops who had taken part in the Council by which Eutyches had been condemned were permitted to be present. Eutyches himself was present to plead his cause in person, while his accuser, Eusebius, was not admitted.<sup>1</sup>

The imperial edict of convocation having been read, the Roman legates demanded that the papal letter should be read also, a demand which was evaded, if not openly disallowed, by the President. Leo, indeed, himself tells us<sup>2</sup> that the Archbishop of Alexandria contemptuously refused to hear a word of it. The temper and sympathies of the assembly were soon manifest. The records of the recent Council were gone

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vi, 644.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, l. 1, cf. xlv, 2; Migne, pp. 841, 835.

through. Angry words began to fly about at the first mention of the "Two Natures"; but when Eusebius' demand that Eutyches should confess the two natures in Christ was read out the storm really burst forth. Amid scenes of the wildest tumult and coercion,<sup>1</sup> tumult and coercion encouraged from the chair, Eutyches was declared orthodox and reinstated.<sup>2</sup> The president then proceeded, in spite of the passionate entreaties of some members of the Council, to the deposition not of Eusebius only, but of his own rival, Flavian—to Dioscorus, we can well believe, a grateful task. Flavian appealed to the Pope and the Western bishops. Hilary, the junior legate, alone bravely protested in the name of the Pope. By browbeating and intimidation from the chair all other opposition was overwhelmed. The above-mentioned depositions were confirmed, and others followed. In the confusion the heroic Hilary, fearing lest he should be compelled by force to subscribe to the Acts of the Council, escaped, and made his way to Rome,<sup>3</sup> whence, two months later, he addressed a letter to the Princess Pulcheria giving his account of the affair.<sup>4</sup> Flavian was not so fortunate; loaded with insult, if not actually

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vi, 601, 625, 637, 988; vii, 68.

<sup>2</sup> Mansi, vi, 836 *seq.*

<sup>3</sup> Leo, *Epp.*, xliv, 1, xlv, 2; Migne, pp. 827, 833.

<sup>4</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, xlvi; Migne, pp. 837-9.

assaulted by Dioscorus himself, pressed upon and trampled by a crowd of furious monks urged on by the Abbot Barsumas, broken in body and in mind, a prisoner and an exile, in a few days the unhappy Archbishop of Constantinople passed away.<sup>1</sup>

Anatolius immediately replaced Flavian in the patriarchal chair of Constantinople, an appointment in which it is impossible not to trace the influence of Dioscorus, whose envoy at the imperial court the new Patriarch had been.

Hilary had meanwhile made his way to Rome, and had laid before the Pope his account of the shameful happenings at Ephesus, saving only the death of Flavian, which had not yet occurred at the time of his flight. Leo, as can well be imagined, was filled with indignation. The assembly at Ephesus was, he said, not a Council

<sup>1</sup> The acts of this Council, in which are embodied those of Flavian's Council, by which Eutyches was deposed, are preserved in the minutes of the General Council of Chalcedon, from which the above references have been taken, and many more might have been given. See Mansi, pp. 593 *seq.* A neat summary of the proceedings of the Robber Council may be found in Liberatus, *Brev.* c. 12 ; Migne, 68, pp. 1003-6. In this case it has not appeared necessary to give detailed references, as this chapter of Liberatus is confessedly based upon the minutes of the Council of 449 as presented at Chalcedon. The author was Archdeacon of Carthage, and his work was written rather more than a hundred years after the event. Some students will, however, find his neat summary more manageable than Mansi, and for some purposes sufficient.

but a conclave of robbers<sup>1</sup>; and he at once set to work to undo what had been done. A Council was hastily summoned in Rome to consider the posture of affairs,<sup>2</sup> and the Pope himself again took up his busy pen. Into the details of the somewhat extensive correspondence upon which he now entered, it is needless for us to go. It may be mentioned, however, that his correspondents included the Emperor,<sup>3</sup> the Princess Pulcheria,<sup>4</sup> the Papal Vicar Anastasius of Thessalonica,<sup>5</sup> whom he congratulated upon his having held aloof from the most criminal proceedings at Ephesus, Julian of Cos,<sup>6</sup> the populace of Constantinople in general, urging them to cleave to Flavian at this crisis, and to the archimandrites of the city in particular,<sup>7</sup> exhorting them to decline to be implicated in the misdoings of the late Council, and lastly to Flavian<sup>8</sup> himself, of whose tragic end the writer was, as we have seen, unaware, consoling him as a sufferer for the truth.

In the course of this correspondence, while repeatedly expressing his wish upon the matter

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Ep.*, xcvi., 2; Migne, p. 943.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Leo, *Ep.*, xlv; Migne, p. 833.

<sup>3</sup> *Epp.*, xliii, xlv; Migne, pp. 821-31.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep.*, xlv; Migne, pp. 833-5.

<sup>5</sup> *Ep.*, xlvii; Migne, pp. 839-40.

<sup>6</sup> *Ep.*, xlviii; Migne, p. 840.

<sup>7</sup> *Epp.*, 1, li; Migne, 841-5.

<sup>8</sup> *Ep.*, xlix; Migne, pp. 841-2.

to others, Leo urgently entreats the Emperor Theodosius to give orders for the assembling of a Council in Italy, that is to say, within the immediate sphere of his own personal influence.<sup>1</sup> At such Council the proceedings at the Robber Council could be revised, things meanwhile to remain as they were before the gathering of that assembly.<sup>2</sup> A few months later, Leo again returned to this point,<sup>3</sup> and in the meantime had so wrought upon the minds of the Western Emperor Valentinian, and the imperial ladies Galla Placidia and Eudoxia, that they themselves addressed letters to the Emperor of the East upon the subject, and, in terms very deferential to the Pope, united their requests that what he desired should be done.<sup>4</sup> Theodosius, however, remained unmoved; to his imperial relatives he vouchsafed only brief replies, in which he expressed his own adherence to the findings of the late Council of Ephesus, upon which, indeed, he eventually put his *imprimatur* by the issue of an edict confirming its Acts. How deeply Leo must have been affected by this—from his point of view—ill turn of events, may be inferred from a remark in

<sup>1</sup> See Migne, pp. 823, 826, 829, 835.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xliv, 2; Migne, p. 829.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, liv; Migne, p. 855.

<sup>4</sup> These letters may be found among Leo's own, *Epp.*, lv, lvi, lvii; Migne, pp. 859, 861, 863. The replies of Theodosius are also included, see *Epp.*, lxii, lxiii, lxiv, pp. 875-9.

an extant letter of the Empress Galla Placidia to her niece Pulcheria <sup>1</sup> to the effect that, when pleading for her intercession with the Emperor, the Pope could hardly speak for tears.

Near the close of this eventful year, 449, Leo received a letter from the new Patriarch Anatolius, <sup>2</sup> in which the latter simply announced his consecration, without making any pretence of asking for papal confirmation. Irritated by what he regarded as a personal slight, and entertaining some suspicion of the orthodoxy of one whom he could hardly regard as other than a creature of Dioscorus, the Pope replied somewhat peremptorily, at the same time being careful to observe all the outward forms of respect to the Emperor himself. <sup>3</sup> He must withhold, so the letter ran, his consent to the elevation of Anatolius—a consent which had not been asked, it may be again observed—until such time as the Patriarch-elect had given some security for his orthodoxy. Let him therefore read the writings of the Fathers upon the Incarnation, the letter of Cyril against Nestorius, and the Acts of the Council of 431; further “let him not scorn to read also my letter,” <sup>4</sup> i.e. the *Tome*. This done,

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, lviii; Migne, p. 865.

<sup>2</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, liii; Migne, pp. 853-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, lxix; Migne, pp. 890-2.

<sup>4</sup> Migne, p. 891. It is interesting to observe that Leo, in this connexion, makes no claim to personal infallibility;



Anatolius is required to make a public profession of his orthodoxy, to the Apostolic See in particular, and to the Church in general. Leo then adds that he is sending legates to support his demand, and to press for the assembling of a Council in Italy, to which project he thus again recurs, coupling his Roman Council with himself in making the request. This letter to the Emperor was accompanied by one to Pulcheria in much the same strain,<sup>1</sup> and twenty-four hours later a third letter was added to the packet, this one addressed to the archimandrites of Constantinople.<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime Dioscorus, literally drunk with triumph, had contemplated and made preparation for, even if he did not take in proper form, a step which, to the orthodoxy of the period, appeared to be one of audacity unparalleled. At Nicaea, *en route* for the Court, he persuaded or coerced ten bishops, his travelling companions, into signing a document excommunicating the Bishop of Rome.<sup>3</sup> His triumph, however, was short-lived, for a great change was at hand.

a thing he most assuredly would have done had he regarded it as a prerogative of his office, which he shows no tendency to underrate.

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, lxx ; Migne, pp. 893-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, lxxi ; Migne, pp. 895-6.

<sup>3</sup> Mansi, vi, 1009 ; vii, 104. Cf. also Leo, *Epp.*, xcviij, 2, cxx, 3 (with note [c]), Migne, pp. 953, 1051 ; and Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 18.

Before either the letters or the legates of Leo had reached their destination Theodosius was no more. An accident which befell him while riding in the neighbourhood of Constantinople proved fatal,<sup>1</sup> and on July 28, 450, the Emperor passed away.

The orthodox Pulcheria now ascended the imperial throne. Almost her first act was to bestow her hand upon the general Marcian, orthodox as herself, who thereby became the partner of her sovereignty. The whole aspect of affairs in the religious world was thus changed in a moment, and that by means of a purely political event. Orthodoxy once more raised its head; and Eutyches and the Alexandrian faction found their outlook darkened in proportion. With the unobtrusive acquiescence of Anatolius, a prudent man who had no mind to be a martyr for the party by whose influence he had been raised to the patriarchal throne, Eutyches was quietly removed from the city; the bishops who had been sent into exile as the adherents of Flavian were recalled; while the body of the murdered Patriarch was, by the direction of the new Emperor, brought to Constantinople, and solemnly interred in the Church of the Apostles.

A change of dynasty had thus completely altered the situation of affairs within the Church,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gibbon, c. 34.

a change which quickly manifested itself in the attitude of Leo. His desire for a Council had, quite suddenly, strangely cooled. Within a month of the death of Flavian he had received a letter from Marcian,<sup>1</sup> in which the latter, while making much of the importance of the Pope in relation thereto, urges the desirability of the prompt assembling of the proposed Council, adding, however, unambiguously enough in a second letter,<sup>2</sup> which followed two months later, that he reserved to himself the selection of its place of meeting.

Why this sudden *volte-face* on the part of the Pope? There must be some explanation of it—perhaps even one not so entirely unfavourable to Leo as that not infrequently proposed. What may appear to be necessary under one set of circumstances may not improperly appear to be no longer necessary under new conditions. Before the death of Theodosius it might well have seemed that the only way to save the orthodoxy of the Church, which had been so gravely compromised at Ephesus, was to afford the friends of orthodoxy an opportunity of rallying in its support; such opportunity could hardly have been found in the East, as things then were, but might have been secured in an

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, lxxiii; Migne, p. 900.

<sup>2</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, lxxvi; Migne, p. 904.

Italian Council such as Leo suggested. The threatening danger had now altogether passed away, and orthodoxy was once more triumphant. That being so, the Pope might fairly argue that it was better to avoid the possible danger which might have to be encountered in an ecclesiastical assembly by way of reaction, a rebound from Eutychianism into Nestorianism.<sup>1</sup> As things were, it might have been necessary to risk this in order to meet an actually present peril; but under the new conditions it was no longer necessary, and therefore unwise. Motives such as these are at once intelligible and not without evidence; it is, however, not entirely improbable that with them were mingled other motives of a less disinterested character. Leo had expressed his own views with reference to the matter at issue in no uncertain voice, and doubtless the thought of the acceptance of his pronouncement as having finally settled the controversy was agreeable enough to himself, and well in harmony with his claims. A few weeks before this had been manifestly impossible; now, perhaps, it appeared to be well within the bounds of possibility. If, therefore, he could effect that the matter

<sup>1</sup> That this danger was contemplated by Leo may be inferred from *Ep.*, xciii, 3, Migne, p. 939, where he addresses an admonition to the Council which actually did assemble, warning its members against this very thing.

should be regarded as already settled, and settled by himself alone, and a council therefore unnecessary, it would be a striking success for that papal policy which was so near his heart. At all events, shortly before the General Council of Chalcedon did, in fact, assemble, he addressed two letters to the Emperor, in which we find him urging upon the latter not to treat the doctrinal question as still open, and endeavouring to persuade him that the time was not opportune for the assembling of a Council.<sup>1</sup>

The only question that really pressed was that of the treatment to be accorded to those who had gone astray during the recent troubles, a matter which could very well be dealt with by Anatolius, who had by this time unreservedly given his adhesion to the orthodox party, with the aid of the legates whom the writer said he was sending to assist him.<sup>2</sup> The principal offenders, however, as he expressly instructed Anatolius, were to be reserved for the "maturer counsels of the Apostolic See."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Epp.*, lxxxii, 2, lxxxiii, 2; Migne, pp. 918, 920. These letters are dated April 13 and June 9, 451. Leo's plea of war as placing a hindrance in the way of a Council may, of course, have been true enough in itself, but does not appear to be strictly relevant to the point with which we are immediately concerned, i.e. his complete change of front.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, lxxxiii, 1, cf. lxxxvii; Migne, pp. 919-20, 926.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, lxxxv, 2; Migne, p. 923.

It is not at all unlikely, as Hefele admits,<sup>1</sup> that Leo's opposition to the convocation of an Eastern Council was all the more persistent because he instinctively feared that such an assembly would not be enthusiastic in recognition of the position of solitary pre-eminence in ecclesiastical affairs which he claimed for his see; and that some attempt might be made to equate the Patriarch of Constantinople with himself—the very thing which actually did come to pass.

Leo's instructions to his legates bear out this supposition.<sup>2</sup> They were bidden to uphold the regulations of the Holy Fathers, no doubt the sixth canon of Nicaea in its Romanized form as against the third of Constantinople.<sup>3</sup>

From the elder patriarchates, Alexandria and Antioch, Rome had nothing to fear, while the rivalry of that of the Younger Rome, which had been elevated to the second place at the second General Council, might easily become a serious menace to the spiritual autocracy of the ancient imperial capital.

Marcian, however, was not to be turned from

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Councils*, vol. iii, p. 282; cf. Milman, *Latin Christianity*, vol. i, p. 265.

<sup>2</sup> For what professes to be the commonitorium of Leo to his legates see Migne, pp. 1226-7, cf. also the extract from his paper of instructions read out by Legate Boniface at the sixteenth session of the Council of Chalcedon, Mansi, vii, 443.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 190, *ante*.

his purpose by the arguments of the Pope ; and the Council was summoned forthwith to assemble at Nicaea, Chalcedon being afterwards appointed as the place of session in deference to the convenience of the imperial convener. As enjoying ready communication with the capital, it was possible for the Emperor to be in close touch with a Council assembled in the place last named, without neglecting affairs of state which might require his presence in the capital.<sup>1</sup>

Argument having thus proved unavailing, nothing remained for the Pope but to submit with such grace as he could muster. Personally, of course, he would not dream of attending, but he did appoint legates with at least a show of goodwill. In addition to the legates Basil and Lucentius, whom he had previously sent to confer with and assist Anatolius, and with whom he had since associated Julian of Cos,<sup>2</sup> Leo now commissioned to attend the Council on his behalf Paschasinus, Bishop of Lilybaeum, to whom he forwarded a copy of the *Tome*, and the presbyter Boniface.<sup>3</sup> He was thus to be represented by two bishops and two presbyters, in addition to Julian, who, owing to his special qualifications,

<sup>1</sup> For interesting description of the surroundings amid which the Council met, see Evagrius, *H. E.*, ii, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Leo, *Epp.*, lxxxvi, xcii ; Migne, pp. 924-5, 936.

<sup>3</sup> *Epp.* lxxxviii, 1, lxxxix, xc, 2, xci, xciii, 1, &c. Migne, pp. 927, 930, 934, 935, 937 ; cf. also Evag., *H.E.*, ii, 4, 18.

appears to have been a sort of consulting member of the papal commission, though apparently not invested with the fully representative character of his colleagues. In his letter to the Council<sup>1</sup> Leo takes for granted that, as a matter of course, the legates will preside, and that he himself will be considered as presiding in the persons of his representatives, though in this connexion Julian is not named, a point in favour of the inference already drawn as to the position which he is to be regarded as holding.

It may perhaps be worth while to observe in passing that no shadow has ever been cast upon the oecumenicity of the Council to which we now turn our attention by reason of the fact that it was not merely not summoned by the Pope, but in direct opposition to his wishes repeatedly, and even passionately, expressed.

The Council, which began its sessions on October 8 and sat until the end of the month, was very numerously attended, about six hundred bishops, more or less, being present,<sup>2</sup> though, with the exception of the legates and two Africans, all were either Greeks or Orientals. The real

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xciii, 1; Migne, p. 937; cf. Paschasinus' claim at the Council, Mansi, vi, 984.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Leo, *Ep.*, cii, 2; Migne, p. 986. This total perhaps included proxies. But we may assume that not less than five hundred members took their seats. An excellent epitome of the proceedings of the Council, or rather its earlier and more important sessions, is given by Evagrius, *H.E.*, ii, 18.



control of the proceedings, the effective presidency as it has been called, was in the hands of the imperial commissioners, who, however, were formally reckoned as being outside the Council. So far as the formal ecclesiastical presidency was concerned Leo carried his point, his legates being permitted to sit first and ostensibly to occupy that position,<sup>1</sup> though in reality their situation was rather that of first voters than of actual presidents of the assembly. They did, however, enjoy a certain vague superiority over the other voters, such as might properly appertain to the presidential chair.<sup>2</sup>

As soon as the first session was fairly opened the legates demanded that Dioscorus should leave the Council, failing which their instructions made it incumbent upon them to retire. In reply to the commissioners, who desired to be informed with what the Archbishop of Alexandria was charged, Legate Lucentius stated that he had exceeded his jurisdiction by venturing to hold a General Council without consent given by the Apostolic See, a reply which tacitly assumed for the Pope a prerogative which had certainly never been formally accorded to him. The Commissioners thereupon informed the legate that he could not act at once as accuser and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Leo, *Ep.*, ciii, *init.*; Migne, p. 988.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the letter from the Council to Leo, *Ep.* xcvi, 1; Migne, p. 952.

judge. They did, however, order Dioscorus to leave the place of his rank and to sit in the middle of the hall,<sup>1</sup> thus temporarily depriving him of his right to vote. Dioscorus was then formally accused by Eusebius of Dorylaeum<sup>2</sup> of having inflicted personal ill-usage upon himself, and of the death of Flavian. Amid much tumult, and after the reading of the minutes of the Robber Council, mention of the non-reception of the *Tome*, and vindication of the orthodoxy of Flavian by Legates Paschasinus and Lucentius, Anatolius, and others,<sup>3</sup> the case went against the accused, and the commissioners found that he, Juvenal, and the other leaders in the former Council, had incurred deposition, if the Emperor so willed.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the first session was brought to a close with the provisional deposition of Dioscorus, and of the more conspicuous of those who had countenanced his proceedings at the Robber Council.

At the second session, which was held two days later, Dioscorus being absent, the *Tome* was read amid loud applause, and seemed likely to be carried by acclamation.<sup>5</sup> This feeling,

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vi, 581; cf. Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 4, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Mansi, vi, 584; Evag., *ib.*, where the accusation of Eusebius is brought forward in the form of a petition to the Emperor. <sup>3</sup> Mansi, vi, 596 *seq.*, 616, 680.

<sup>4</sup> Mansi, vi, 936; Evag. *H.E.*, ii, 4, 18.

<sup>5</sup> Mansi, vi, 953 *seq.*

however, was not unanimous, exception being taken to certain passages by the bishops of Palestine and Illyria,<sup>1</sup> and, in response to a demand for time for further consideration, the matter was postponed for five days.<sup>2</sup> This postponement is of interest as affording indication that, while any utterance of the Bishop of Rome was recognized by the Eastern bishops as being of weight and importance, it was not received as an infallible *ex cathedra* utterance which put a term to all discussion; but as open to comment and criticism, and as, in the last resort, standing or falling by its own intrinsic worth.

The business of the third session, which was held on October 13, was the trial of Dioscorus. The accuser was again Eusebius,<sup>3</sup> whose attack was reinforced by various charges against the accused which came pouring in from his own city Alexandria and elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

After disregarding several citations to present himself, Dioscorus at length definitely refused to come, saying that he had nothing to add to what he had already said.<sup>5</sup> This refusal was

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vi, 972-3.

<sup>2</sup> Mansi, vi, 973.

<sup>3</sup> Mansi, vi, 984. At this session the bishops alone appear to have been present; see Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 18, with note on p. 322 of Bohn's translation.

<sup>4</sup> Mansi, vi, 1099, cf. vii, 103.

<sup>5</sup> Dioscorus appears first to have pleaded forcible restraint, then ill-health. Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 18.

interpreted as self-condemnation, and sentence was formally pronounced against him by the Roman legates in terms which they were allowed to choose, and which were capable of being interpreted as a very ample recognition, on the part of the Council, of the prerogatives appertaining to the Apostolic See.<sup>1</sup>

The deposition of Dioscorus, in due course, received imperial confirmation ; and the deprived patriarch was sent into exile at Ganga, his see being given to Proterius, a prelate of unimpeachable orthodoxy. The other accused bishops were spared.<sup>2</sup>

At the fourth session, as previously arranged, the question of the *Tome* was again brought forward. The bishops of Illyria and Palestine expressed their conviction of Leo's orthodoxy, but at the same time suggested that his letter

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vi, 1046-7. Cf. Leo, *Ep.* ciii, where Leo himself quotes the sentence with slight verbal differences, though it will be observed that, at the close of the letter (Migne, p. 992), the Pope alludes to himself, with significant change of phrase, not as Bishop of the Elder Rome, but as Head of the Universal Church ; and that he represented his relation to the Council as being rather more commanding than the sentence as quoted in Mansi suggests. He takes the credit of what had been done mainly to himself, and speaks of the Council as consenting to what he had done. In Mansi the Pope and the Council are represented as co-operating to effect what was actually accomplished. Evagrius (*H.E.*, ii, 4, 18), it will be observed, gives great prominence to the action of the Pope.

<sup>2</sup> Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 4, 5.

was liable to be misunderstood ; their scruples, however, were removed by a personal conference with the Legates,<sup>1</sup> and the *Tome* was finally accepted by the whole Council, though the Egyptian bishops made some difficulty about subscribing on technical grounds,<sup>2</sup> which had nothing to do with the question of faith, and which need not therefore detain us here.

In the fifth session, on October 22, the harmony of the Council was much disturbed. When the doctrinal formula which had been unanimously agreed to at the last session was read, some objections were raised,<sup>3</sup> and another definition, for which Anatolius appears to have been responsible, was brought forward. This did not satisfy the Legates, who went so far as to threaten to withdraw, and for a time the dispute waxed high. The commissioners, however, threw their weight into the scale of Leo, and insisted that the assembled bishops should receive his doctrine into the creed.<sup>4</sup> Eventually they so far compromised as to suggest the appointment of a commission to review the definition,<sup>5</sup> by whom a formula was drawn up which met with general approval.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vii, 32 ; Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Mansi, vii, 49 *seq.* ; Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Mansi, vii, 100-101.

<sup>4</sup> Mansi, vii, 105-6.

<sup>5</sup> Mansi, vii, 105.

<sup>6</sup> Mansi, vii, 117.

At the sixth session the Emperor and Empress attended the Council in state to place their *impri-matur* upon what had been accomplished, and to be greeted with the enthusiastic acclamations of the assembled prelates.<sup>1</sup>

The principal business of the Council was now accomplished. The remaining sessions were mainly concerned with purely Eastern affairs, and, save for one matter which was decided in the fifteenth session, have no special claim upon our attention.

At the close of the fourteenth session the legates and the imperial commissioners withdrew. It is hardly open to doubt that the absence of the former from the following session was deliberate and premeditated ; for it is hardly conceivable that no rumour of what was intended to be done had got abroad, in which case these gentlemen may very well have thought it wise not to be present on this particular occasion. Thus they would at once avoid taking part in the proceedings and retain their freedom of criticism, and the semblance of right to protest. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that this sitting was rendered memorable by the passing of the famous twenty-eighth canon, which assigned to the see of Constantinople substantive patriarchal rank,

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vii, 127 *seq.* ; Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 4 *sub fn*, 18.

equal rights with, and precedence immediately after the Elder Rome.

The way for this extension of the prerogative of the Patriarch of the Eastern capital was prepared by one or two earlier canons, to which perhaps some reference should be made. The ninth canon of Chalcedon<sup>1</sup> gave to the Patriarch of Constantinople the right to try on appeal the cause of a defendant metropolitan outside his own immediate jurisdiction. The twelfth canon<sup>2</sup> recognized, and the seventeenth<sup>3</sup> specifically asserted, that the ecclesiastical status of a city should be determined by its civil standing.

The principle of equating the civil and ecclesiastical greatness of cities was not by any means, by the middle of the fifth century, a novelty in the East; it had in fact been a matter of practice for some time.<sup>4</sup> The frankness with which the principle was avowed at Chalcedon is, however, significant. From the Eastern point of view, thus thrown into sharp relief, the ecclesiastical greatness of the Elder Rome was simply and solely the consequence of her unique position

<sup>1</sup> For the text of this and the following canons, with valuable commentary, reference may be made to Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. iii, pp. 394 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Hefele, *ib.*, p. 398.

<sup>3</sup> Hefele, *ib.*, pp. 402-4.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the ninth canon of Antioch (341); Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. ii, p. 69.

in civil history. Against this point of view Leo, as a matter of course, strongly protested, arguing that this equating of the civil and the ecclesiastical was quite unwarranted, that things secular were the expression of one principle, and things sacred of another and quite different principle. Leo gave point to what he had to say upon this topic by reference to the Saviour's promises to St. Peter, and the emphatic assertion of the existence of the one only rock, upon which alone anything stable can be built up. Constantinople may be a royal see, but nothing can make it apostolic.<sup>1</sup>

To the Fathers of Chalcedon, however, in accordance with the principle to which they had given such unambiguous expression in their seventeenth canon, it must have appeared that the Bishop of the Eastern capital was entitled to the very highest rank; to rank similar, in fact, to that which was universally accorded to his brother in the West. These views, as we have seen, had already found expression seventy years before at the second General Council,<sup>2</sup> but it was now decided to place the prerogative of the Patriarch upon a more certain and definite footing. This, it need hardly be said, was

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, civ, 3; Migne, p. 995.

<sup>2</sup> In Canon 3. Cf. Beet, *R. S.*, ii, pp. 62-3.



done in the celebrated twenty-eighth canon,<sup>1</sup> which was now promulgated, and in which, after an appeal to the third canon of Constantinople, the ecclesiastical authority of Rome is dogmatically asserted to have been conceded on account of its character as the imperial city. For a precisely similar reason, therefore, as the home of imperial and senatorial authority, the like privileges are awarded to the most holy see of New Rome, the incumbent of which shall henceforth enjoy substantive, as distinguished from honorary, rank immediately after the chief pastor of the older capital. This award was made a reality by the conferring of an extensive patriarchal jurisdiction upon the Patriarch of Constantinople.

From what has been already said the reader will have inferred that, while professing to be a re-enactment of the third canon of Constantinople, the new canon was in reality a good deal more than that. It may perhaps be well to make this point quite clear.

By the earlier canon the Patriarch of Constantinople had been given honorary precedence

<sup>1</sup> Hefele, *Hist. Councils*, vol. iii. pp. 411 *seq.* In his extensive and acute commentary upon the canon in question the learned author appears, at times, slightly to transgress the bounds of strict historical impartiality, and betrays at any rate a trace, if not more than a trace, of bias in favour of the Roman contention. See especially p. 415.

before all other Eastern and African bishops, but still remained, nevertheless, without any real patriarchal authority. By degrees, however, successive Bishops of Constantinople began, in fact, to exercise such authority—a practice which the great John Chrysostom appears to have originated.<sup>1</sup> Short as had been his tenure of the patriarchal throne, Anatolius himself had already done so by his appointment of Maximus to the patriarchal and apostolic see of Antioch in the place of Domnus, who had been deposed by the Robber Council.<sup>2</sup> These exercises of prerogative, it may be observed in passing, Rome did not suffer to go entirely unchallenged. On the other hand, it must be admitted that, occasional objection notwithstanding, Rome had practically recognized the Patriarch of the younger capital as enjoying the position accorded to him in 381. This being so, it is difficult to resist some suspicion of Leo's entire good faith when we find him writing to the Empress Pulcheria in terms which imply that he was not even aware that the said canon had been other than a dead letter in the East.<sup>3</sup> For at this very Council his legates, to whom, as we have seen, the Pope gave precise written instructions, had openly recognized the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Theod., *H. E.*, v. 28; Soc., *H. E.*, vii, 28, 48.

<sup>2</sup> Leo, *Epp.*, civ, 4, 5; cvi, 2; Migne, pp. 995-7, 1003.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, cv. 2; Migne, p. 1000.

right to precedence which had been given to the Archbishop of the Eastern capital seventy years before; indeed, one of the counts upon which Dioscorus was charged by them was that he had not allowed Flavian to occupy his rightful place. "We will," said they, "please God, recognize the present Bishop Anatolius as the first (after us), but Dioscorus made Flavian fifth." <sup>1</sup>

The passing of the twenty-eighth canon made necessary another session on November 1, the sixteenth and last. The legates made a vigorous protest against what had been done. Lucentius, most inconsistently going back upon the recognition which was involved in his allowing Anatolius to rank immediately after himself and his colleagues at an earlier stage of the proceedings, roundly declared that the rights accorded to the see of Constantinople eighty years before had never been admitted by Rome: <sup>2</sup> any such recognition, he went on to say, would be a violation of the Nicene decrees, which the Pope had charged them to uphold.

Legate Paschasinus now read the sixth canon of Nicaea in a spurious Western form beginning "Rome has always held the primacy," <sup>3</sup> a form

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vi, 607.

<sup>2</sup> Hefele's defence of the legate's attitude is acute, but not entirely convincing. See *op. cit.*, p. 415.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. note on p. 190 *ante*.

which the Eastern bishops at once repudiated, and which, even if correct, was, to say the least of it, not decisive against the new canon, which still left to Rome the first place. It would indeed, as a glance at the canon itself will show, have been wiser on the part of the legates to have confined themselves to its accepted form. Changing their ground the latter now raised the objection that the new canon had been passed under constraint. The Council denied this, and reaffirmed it by acclamation. Having left no stone unturned in their endeavours to prevail upon the assembled Fathers to rescind the offensive canon, but without effect, it only remained for the legates to make their protest, which was done by Lucentius, who coupled with it the demand that it should be entered upon the minutes, which was accordingly done. The Council now closed, and the canon so strongly objected to by the papal representatives went forth with its most deliberate approval.

We have already seen that it is difficult to resist some suspicion of the good faith of Leo in this matter : the same remark holds good of his legates. They appear to have absented themselves from the fifteenth session on the pretext that they had received no instructions with respect to the subject to be discussed. At the sixteenth session, however, when challenged,

they did produce instructions from the Pope, by which they professed to regard themselves as bound to resist any attempt to alter the relation of bishops among themselves on the ground of the civil status of their sees. Again, when making their vigorous though far from convincing protest against the violation of the Nicene decrees, they could hardly have been in ignorance that Leo had not long before himself violated, in addition to various canons of several lesser Councils, the fifth canon of Nicaea by his admission of the excommunicated Celidonius into his own communion.<sup>1</sup> Was the sixth canon of Nicaea more sacred than the fifth? or is there here an implicit claim on the part of his legates that the Pope, and the Pope alone, was superior to conciliar decrees? No such claim was explicitly made, nor is there any evidence that Leo seriously entertained it. The general impression which the whole incident leaves upon the mind of the student is that the legates fell back upon the Nicene decrees without any serious conviction on this point, simply in the hope of serving their turn thereby. When all was over they appear to have informed the Pope that the assembled bishops gave their consent to the twenty-eighth canon only under constraint—a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 182 *ante*; also the admission of Leo's predecessor Julius, Beet, *R. S.*, ii, pp. 30-1.

statement which, as we have already seen, was certainly untrue. On any other supposition the conclusion is forced home upon us that Leo himself, when complaining that consent had been so extorted,<sup>1</sup> deliberately wrote what he knew to be false. It is impossible to save at once the good faith of both the Pope and his representatives.

On behalf of the Council a letter was, early in November, forwarded to the Pope, in which official information of what had taken place was conveyed to him.<sup>2</sup> Three of the four chapters of which the letter consists were all that the recipient could desire. The terms in which he was addressed by the Fathers of Chalcedon were of the most flattering description. He is the interpreter to them all of the voice of the blessed Peter ; as head over the members he had captained their deliberations in the persons of his representatives.<sup>3</sup> The letter then went on to speak in the strongest terms of the crimes of the wild beast Dioscorus, who had ventured to assail

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, cxiv, 2 ; Migne, p. 1031.

<sup>2</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, xcvi ; Migne, pp. 951 *seq.* Two slightly different versions of this letter are printed in Migne, to the latter of which is appended a list of signatures, among which the names of the legates do not appear. I have followed the Greek version. For a list of canons, among which can. 28 is not included but subscribed by the legates, see Mansi, vii 400.

<sup>3</sup> Cap. i.

even him to whom the guardianship of His vineyard had been committed by the Saviour Himself, and had had it in mind to excommunicate even him who was zealous to unite the body of the Church.<sup>1</sup> The matter of Dioscorus being dealt with, the letter then passes on to that of the twenty-eighth canon,<sup>2</sup> which is brought to the notice of the Pope in as attractive a light as possible. The writers were at pains to point out that the purpose which they had had in view was not so much that of adding to the prerogatives of the see of Constantinople as to secure the peace of the metropolitan cities, which were apt to be troubled by outbreaks of faction on the occasion of the decease of their respective bishops. It would be well, therefore, to have some supreme ecclesiastical authority reasonably near at hand, and thus able to intervene at such times to preserve peace. They had therefore given conciliar recognition to what had been a matter of custom for a considerable period, by confirming the decree of the Fathers of Constantinople with reference to the bishop of that city. It was true, they admitted, that the papal representatives

<sup>1</sup> Cap. ii. Anatolius had committed himself to the statement that Dioscorus was condemned, not on the doctrinal count, but because he had excommunicated Leo, and had disregarded a threefold citation to appear before the Council. Mansi, vii. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. 4.

had strongly resisted the passing of this canon ; but, with some ingenuity, they contrive to suggest that they had been under the impression that the legates had so acted in order that the Pope himself might have the pleasure of personally approving the same. They therefore begged him to honour their decree by adding his own vote, as they had given their consent to his decree, i.e. that concerning the faith. His consent would, moreover, give pleasure to the Emperor, who had sanctioned the Pope's doctrinal decree as law. They also added that the see of Constantinople had fairly earned some recognition at his hands, by its hearty co-operation with him in the matter of the faith.

In the following month the Emperor followed up the conciliar epistle with a letter from himself.<sup>1</sup> After congratulating the Pope upon the restoration of peace to the Church, and speaking in complimentary terms of his contribution to the doctrinal settlement, the Emperor went on to express his own feeling that the confirmation of the Constantinopolitan decree was as it should be, since this "most splendid city is called the Younger Rome." Notwithstanding the protest of the legates, he further expressed the hope that

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, c., Migne, pp. 970 *seq.*, where two slightly different versions may be found. Again I follow the Greek, pp. 972-4.



the Pope would fall into line with the Fathers of the Council, and informed him that he was sending ambassadors, Lucianus and Basilius, to confer with him in detail concerning the whole bearings of the case. The Emperor concluded his letter with a request, equivalent to a command, that the Pope would see to it that the decisions of the Council be observed for the future.

At the same time Anatolius also wrote,<sup>1</sup> though in a very much humbler, not to say abject, strain. After striving to conciliate the good will of the Pope by informing him that his religious zeal had called forth the admiration of all,<sup>2</sup> and that his letter had met with universal acceptance, and making reference to the definition of faith which had been drawn up by the Council,<sup>3</sup> together with sundry other matters which had come under consideration, he at last somewhat timidly approached what was, no doubt, the real subject of his letter, the twenty-eighth canon.<sup>4</sup> In very deferential terms the writer mentioned what had taken place, and, expressing his own confidence in the kindly feelings of his correspondent, suggested that the opposition of the legates had impressed him as being due to a misunderstanding of the real sentiments of their

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, ci; Migne, pp. 975-84.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Cap. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Cap. 4.

master, whom he claimed as standing in a paternal relation to his own see. In short, assuming a confidence which can hardly have been real, Anatolius endeavoured by his humble and deferential tone to placate the anticipated anger of the Pope, and to win from him the much desired recognition of his new dignity.

Leo's indignation at what he could hardly regard as otherwise than a personal defeat was extreme. The subject is dealt with at length by him in four letters, which are all dated May 22, 452. His reply to Marcian<sup>1</sup> takes the form of a strong protest, in which he attributes the new canon to the ambition of Anatolius,<sup>2</sup> who, however, can by no means make his see apostolic.<sup>3</sup> He begs the Emperor to put a check upon that prelate's lust of power. To the Empress Pulcheria<sup>4</sup> he wrote that the great place to which Anatolius had attained by the kindness of that august lady herself and his own consent, should have sufficed him; that nothing out of keeping with the Nicene decrees can hold good<sup>5</sup> (though, as we have already observed, the writer himself had not always held them inviolate in his own methods of procedure); and that, by the author-

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, civ; Migne, pp. 991-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Cap.* 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Cap.* 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep.*, cv; Migne, pp. 997-1002.

<sup>5</sup> *Cap.* 2.

ity of the blessed Apostle Peter, he must therefore declare the canon null and void.<sup>1</sup>

To Anatolius also he addressed a letter<sup>2</sup> in similar strain. His ambition had led him to assail the Nicene decrees; and in so doing he had infringed the rights accorded to the sees of Alexandria and Antioch.<sup>3</sup> He had abused for his own ambition a Holy Council assembled only for the extinction of heresy and the confirmation of the faith.<sup>4</sup> The Nicene decrees must hold good until the end of time, and any variation from them must be annulled. In the way of humility, not of ambition, the Bishop of Constantinople may attain the summit of desire.<sup>5</sup> Of the earlier canon, now unlawfully enlarged

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 3.                   <sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cvi; Migne, pp. 1001-09.

<sup>3</sup> Cap. 2; cf. also Cap. 5. Anxious as Leo professed himself to be to safeguard the rights of these important patriarchal sees, it should not be overlooked that the Patriarch of Antioch, Anatolius' nominee, had been a party to the elevation of his brother of Constantinople over his own head, and had signed the offending canon. The new Patriarch of Alexandria was also little likely to repudiate the action of the Council by which his own appointment had been made. Leo therefore *appears* as being more jealous for these patriarchs than they were for themselves; but it is hard to resist the conclusion that he thought less of their rights than of the privilege of Peter, whence in his eyes these sees gained their great importance, Antioch by direct connexion, Alexandria indirectly through St. Mark. Most of all, of course, he feared a rival, which Constantinople conceivably might become, but which neither Alexandria nor Antioch could ever be.

<sup>4</sup> Cap. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Cap. 4.

and reaffirmed, no notice had been given to the Roman See, and it had been invalid from the first.<sup>1</sup>

The last of this group of four letters was addressed to Julian of Cos.<sup>2</sup> It is very brief, and is concerned with Julian's attitude with respect to the point under discussion, which did not appear to the writer to be all that he could desire.

In the following February the Emperor replied to the Pope,<sup>3</sup> urging him no longer to delay his confirmation of the Chalcedonian decrees; for his withholding of it was giving rise to doubt and misunderstanding, which it was imperative should be at once removed. The letter was both sharp and to the point. Leo now began to think of making concessions, and, having in the meantime again written to both the Emperor and the Empress,<sup>4</sup> on March 21, 453, he replied to the demand of the former by giving his confirmation to the doctrinal decisions of the late General Council,<sup>5</sup> a confirmation which, of course, did not cover what he was pleased to regard as a violation of the Nicene decrees. He was still more explicit on this latter point in a companion letter to the bishops who had been present at the Council.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 5.    <sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cvii; Migne, pp. 1009-10.

<sup>3</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, cx; Migne, pp. 1017-20.

<sup>4</sup> *Epp.*, cxi, cxii; Migne, pp. 1019-24.

<sup>5</sup> *Ep.*, cxv; Migne, pp. 1031-35.

<sup>6</sup> *Ep.*, cxiv; Migne, pp. 1027-31.

Passing over some further correspondence in which the matter is again referred to, and in which the Patriarch of Constantinople is the subject of unfavourable remark, it may be convenient to mention here that, about a year after Leo had given his formal consent to the doctrinal decrees of Chalcedon, he received a letter from Anatolius <sup>1</sup> even more abject than that referred to in a previous page. It can hardly be described otherwise than that of a suffragan to his superior. Deprecating the wrath of the latter, Anatolius protested that he would not dream of disobeying the Pope. In the affair of Aetius and Andrew <sup>2</sup> he had given proof of this, by restoring the one and excluding the other, thus reversing his own actions. As to the offending canon he pleaded that he was not in any way to blame ; the clergy of Constantinople and the bishops of the province had demanded it. Its confirmation, however, he allowed to depend upon the Pope.

With this, the amplest recognition of his authority that even Leo could desire from the second bishop in Christendom, peace was restored ; and the future correspondence of the Patriarchs of the two Romes was couched in friendly terms. The submission of Anatolius was complete, and as such Leo accepted it with satisfaction.

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, cxxxii ; Migne, pp. 1082-4.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Leo, *Ep.*, cxi-cxiii.

Leo was now able to assume that, as it had not received his confirmation, the canon was given up ; yet, in actual practice, Anatolius and his successors did retain the prerogatives which it conferred and did not fail to exercise them.<sup>1</sup> From time to time protests were raised against this practice by several of Leo's successors ; but at length their protests died out, though Rome never gave express and formal recognition to the canon. When, however, a Latin Empire and Latin Patriarchate had been established at Constantinople in the early thirteenth century, the famous Lateran Council of 1215, convoked by the greatest sovereign and world-ruler who perhaps, ever occupied the papal throne, in its fifth canon<sup>2</sup> did at length decree that the see of Constantinople should rank immediately after that of Rome and before those of Alexandria and Antioch.

We have dwelt at what perhaps to some may seem to be excessive length upon certain incidents of the Council of Chalcedon because of their extreme interest as revealing what could and what could not be done, in the middle of the fifth century, by a pope greater than the world as yet had ever seen, and one of the greatest who ever sate in St. Peter's chair.

Leo could preside by legate at a Council which

<sup>1</sup> Liberatus, writing one hundred years later, remarks upon this. See *Brev.*, c. 13 ; Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 68, p. 1014.

<sup>2</sup> Mansi, xxii, 989-92.

he did not convoke, which was in fact assembled in opposition to his expressed desire. He could secure abundant expressions of reverence and esteem. His teaching was ranked with that of Athanasius and Cyril; the *Tome* was enthusiastically accepted as being in some sort an official standard of orthodox belief; and his legates, with the countenance and assistance of high officers of state, were able to induce the Council to amend in form its definition of the faith. But his judgement, both as to the individual defendant and as to the doctrine involved, was first reviewed and found correct, and then, and then only, was confirmed; and the Pope himself admitted such confirmation to be necessary. His version of the Nicene canons was rejected as corrupt. A canon which he both disliked and feared was enacted in spite of his legates' protest; and, although he did secure an appearance of submission, was almost immediately put into force in spite of his own. He himself might denounce it and annul, but though, wherever possible, he does drag in the name of the Prince of the Apostles, he does not venture to plead against it the prerogative of Peter, but simply professes to uphold the rights of the great patriarchates and the Nicene canons.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bright, *History of the Church*, 313-451, pp. 416-7; Riddle, *History of the Papacy*, vol. i, pp. 180-1.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE POPE AND THE NATIONS : GREATNESS AND DEATH OF LEO

The Huns—Battle of Chalons—Attila in North Italy—Rome threatened—*Leo Salvator Romae*—Murder of Aetius—Political Chaos—Reaping the Whirlwind : Assassination of Valentinian III—Petronius Maximus Emperor—Genseric—Vandal Sack of Rome—Leo's Amazing Activity—Troubles in Palestine—Cappadocia and Constantinople—Discontent in Alexandria—Proterius Patriarch-Elect—Riot and Bloodshed—Pope and Patriarch—"The Cat" and "The Stammerer"—Murder of Proterius—"The Cat" in a Bishop's Throne—The Pope's Attitude—The Emperor Leo—*The Second Tome*—"The Cat" Expelled—Timothy Solofaciolus—Celibacy and Confession—Eclipse of the Western Throne—Death of Leo—Character of his Rule—The Papal Monarchy.

WHILE Leo had been busied with the theological discussions of the East, storm-clouds had been gathering upon the political horizon nearer home ; they overspread the sky, dark and threatening, and ere long the very existence of Rome herself, the ancient mistress of the world, seemed to be grievously imperilled.



The dread Attila and his Huns were almost at her gates.

This is not the place to tell the story of the Huns <sup>1</sup>—how, slowly advancing from the far East, they at length, early in the fifth century, began to menace the empire itself. So threatening did their attitude become under the aggressive rule of their King Roua that, in 424, the weak and irresolute Emperor Theodosius II stooped to buy off their wrath by submitting to pay blackmail, in the form of a tribute of three hundred and fifty pounds of gold. By Roua's successors, Bleda and Attila, this amount was doubled ten years later, and later still was trebled by Attila—now sole ruler—who had fairly fallen foul of the empire in 441, and had invaded and wasted Thrace even to the very walls of the capital itself.

With the accession of Pulcheria and Marcian to the imperial throne, on the death of Theodosius in 450, the attitude of the Court of Constantinople underwent a sudden change. Less yielding than their predecessor, the new sovereigns were little inclined to pay blackmail to the Hun, and promptly withheld the now customary tribute. Attila, of course, indulged in a good deal of bluster; but, when he found that nothing was effected thereby, that abject compliance with his growing

<sup>1</sup> For the Huns see Gibbon, c. 34; also Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, vol. ii, pp. 1-109.

demands was no longer to be looked for from the Eastern throne, and perhaps also thinking that richer prey awaited him elsewhere, the Hunnish chieftain resolved to turn his attention to the West.

Attila therefore now proceeded to address himself in very insulting terms to the Western Emperor Valentinian III, whose sister Honoria he claimed, not without a show of reason afforded by that lady herself, as his betrothed.<sup>1</sup> This entanglement afforded him with abundant matter for controversy, and which, if desired, might readily be made to furnish a pretext for war ; as, in fact, it speedily did. Upon the refusal of his demand for the person of his imperial bride, together with the cession of half the Western empire as her dowry, the barbarian king immediately prepared to appeal to the arbitrament of war.

Italy, unaided, was altogether unequal to a conflict with the Hun ; and had Attila fallen upon the peninsula forthwith the result might have been fatal. Happily for Europe he preferred to take Gaul,<sup>2</sup> more than half of which was at this time governed by Teutons—Franks, Bur-

<sup>1</sup> For the romantic but not altogether edifying history of this princess, reference may be made to Gibbon, c. 35 ; Hodgkin, *Italy*, vol. ii, pp. 49-50 ; and Gregorovius, *Rome in M. A.*, vol. i, pp. 102-4.

<sup>2</sup> For Attila's Gaulish campaign see Gibbon, c. 35 ; Hodgkin, *Italy*, vol. ii, pp. 109-63.

gundians, or Visigoths, among whom the Hun doubtless looked to find allies. Posing as a deliverer, he sought to win over the Visigothic king Theodoric, who was not, however, to be so cajoled, and at once prepared to meet the invader in arms. In presence of a common peril old feuds were laid to rest, and the imperial general Aetius and Theodoric stood shoulder to shoulder for the defence of Gaul.

Without going into details it may be said that Attila's host crossed the Rhine in two divisions, one not far from the river's mouth, the other in the neighbourhood of Strasburg. City after city fell before the victorious advance of the destroyer, but at Orleans his course was stayed. To Anianus, the bishop of that city, this result was mainly due. The resolute Churchman prepared for a siege, and resolved to make a stout defence, having personally arranged with Aetius that he should relieve the place. The coming of the relieving army was, however, unavoidably delayed ; and the Huns, in spite of the vigorous resistance which they encountered, were already fighting their way into the city when Aetius at last arrived and drove them back with great loss.

Attila now withdrew in the direction of the Rhine, followed by Aetius and Theodoric. In the plain of the Marne the two hosts met in an epoch-

making conflict, the so-called battle of Chalons,<sup>1</sup> which in its consequences, if not in itself, may perhaps not unfairly claim a place among the decisive battles of the world. Though not exactly routed Attila suffered a serious reverse, and immediately withdrew from Gaul.

In the following year the Huns were again in the field,<sup>2</sup> and the tide of their invasion now swept over Northern Italy. Aquileia, after a stubborn defence, was levelled to the ground, and numerous other cities shared its fate ; until the terror of the Huns made resistance a thing no longer to be thought of. Attila took up his abode in the imperial palace of Milan, and Italy, helpless and utterly unnerved, seemed to lie prostrate at his feet. Aetius and his master prepared to seek refuge in Constantinople. Had the victor at once marched southwards Rome must have fallen. But, strangely enough, when this splendid prize was, to all intents and purposes, already within his grasp Attila hesitated, debating whether he should march upon Rome or not. Whence sprang his hesitation at this supreme moment it is impossible with certainty to say. It may have been that the spell which the mere name of Rome had long

<sup>1</sup> For a lively account of this battle see Creasy, *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World*. Hodgkin has an interesting note upon its site, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-2.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon, c. 35 ; Hodgkin, *Italy*, vol. ii, pp. 163-209.

exercised over the imagination of men had not even yet, after multiplied disasters, been entirely broken ;<sup>1</sup> and that, ruthless as he was, even Attila was more or less awestruck at the thought of becoming the ravisher of the mother-city of the world. It may have been that the sudden death of Alaric, which came upon him swiftly after he had done that very thing, wrought upon the superstition of the Hun. The ravages of pestilence among his followers at the same time probably suggested that it were well that he should seek, without delay, healthier quarters for his troops than Italy seemed likely to afford ; while the fact that the Emperor Marcian was already threatening his retreat, if he had not already fallen upon his outposts,<sup>2</sup> doubtless made him feel that if he did decide to fall back it would be advisable to do it at once. All these considerations may have contributed to the strange hesitation which seems to have oppressed Attila at this critical moment.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gregorovius, *Rome*, vol. i, p. 198, however, is of opinion that any such feeling as this can hardly have been a factor in the case. For a criticism on both sides of this question reference may be made to Riddle, *Hist. Papacy*, vol. i, pp. 181-2.

<sup>2</sup> So Idatius, *Chron.* ; Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, 31, p. 883.

<sup>3</sup> For a very interesting criticism of the somewhat conflicting accounts of the chroniclers with reference to the foregoing, and a discussion of the difficulty presented by Aetius' seeming inaction, if not cowardice, after the victory of the preceding year, see Freeman, *Western Europe in the Fifth*

At this juncture an embassy from Rome sought the presence of the Hun as he lay encamped near the southern extremity of the Lake of Garda. In their extremity the Emperor and the Senate had resolved, as a last desperate expedient, upon sending an embassy to implore Attila to grant them peace, and to withdraw. Though the embassy included the loftiest civilians of Rome,<sup>1</sup> their names have passed into oblivion, and their part in the perilous mission, which they bravely undertook at the call of duty, history has accounted little of, attributing to their associate, the Christian bishop Leo, and to him alone, the honours of the day. In the minds of men it was neither Roman consular nor Italian prefect, but God's High-priest who confronted the heathen conqueror with a spirit loftier and more commanding than his own. It might well have appeared that small enough was the chance of effecting anything with Attila, the very incarnation of the spirit of destruction, who seemed to glory in his

*Century*, pp. 361-4; for a somewhat different view, Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, p. 180.

<sup>1</sup> Cassiodorus, *Variar.*, i, 4, names only the two lay members of the embassy, to one of whom, the father of the writer, practically the whole credit of what was accomplished is ascribed, Migne, *P. L.*, 69, p. 510; Prosper, *Chron.*, and Jornandes, *De Get. Orig.*, 42, on the other hand mention Leo only, Migne, *P. L.*, 51, p. 601; 69, p. 1282; with the latter agrees *Lib. Pont.*, Ed. Duchesne, vol. i, p. 239. Cf. also appeal of the Eastern bishops to Pope Symmachus (circ. 510), Migne, *P. L.*, 62, pp. 59-60.

title *Dread of the World*, but whom monkish superstition preferred to call the *Scourge of God*, while Italy lay open and defenceless at his feet. But the ambassadors sped beyond their hopes. They found Attila, as we have seen, assailed by doubts, and therefore more easy of access than they had dared to anticipate. His friends too, laying stress upon the fate of his Gothic precursor, seem to have added their persuasions to those of Leo and his colleagues, and to have urged him to abandon the march on Rome.<sup>1</sup> A later legend tells how, supporting the undaunted priest, Attila beheld in vision two venerable men, the Apostles Peter and Paul, who threatened him with speedy death unless he hearkened to the proposals of their successor.<sup>2</sup> But, in sober truth, the calling in of supernatural agencies, so far from adding to, rather detracts from the real grandeur of the scene; though it is easy to understand how the

<sup>1</sup> So Priscus, one of our best authorities for Attila, quoted by Jornandes, *De Get. Orig.*, 42, Migne, *P. L.*, 69, p. 1282.

<sup>2</sup> The apparition is quite the decisive incident in Platina's account of the turning back of the Hun. Though far from trustworthy as to matters of fact for this period, Platina is interesting as giving utterance to the received traditions of the papal court, to which he belonged, a thousand years later. With his traditional gossip it is, however, interesting to compare the silence of the early writers. The *Lib. Pont.* (see previous note), while ascribing the whole credit of the transaction to the Pope, knows nothing about the apparition; equally silent are the other authorities already referred to, Cassiodorus, Prosper, and Jornandes.

fancies of a credulous age wrought along those lines, since even we, as we contemplate the scene through the mist of centuries, can hardly do so without a quickening of the pulse and a firing of the imagination. Rome lay defenceless in the path of a destroyer who knew no pity, the imperial armies could effect no salvation, and, as a mere counsel of despair, a Christian priest was sent to confront the heathen king. All the chances seemed to be adverse, yet what the imperial armies could not do the unarmed Leo did. Whatever other influences may have co-operated to work upon the mind of Attila, and we have already seen that there were such, it is perhaps hardly too much to say that by sheer moral force Leo conquered the conqueror, and—with much bluster, it is true<sup>1</sup>—the Scourge of God consented to leave Italy.

Although he had companions in his peril and his success, it is little open to question that, from the first, Leo was the real hero of the day. To him, more than to any other, at this crisis, the Roman Emperor,<sup>2</sup> if not the people also, looked

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jorn. *ut supra*, Migne, *P. L.*, 69, p. 1282. That Attila yielded "graciously" to the arguments or entreaties of Leo and Avienus, as the story is told by Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, p. 180, appears to be a mild exaggeration. But cf. Paulus Diaconus, *Hist. Misc.*, xv, Migne, *P. L.*, 95, p. 972.

<sup>2</sup> Paul. Diac., *Hist. Misc.*, xv; Migne, *P. L.*, 95, pp. 971-2.



for aid ; and, as they congratulated themselves, had not looked in vain. His personal prestige and that of his Apostolic Chair were, both alike, immeasurably enhanced thereby. In the person of Leo, as in that of none of his predecessors,<sup>1</sup> the Head of the Roman Church became a personage of the first importance in the State, more than the peer of senators and military chiefs—the buttress of a throne and the preserver of the social fabric. The embassy of Leo rightly claims a place in history quite apart from its dramatic picturesqueness ; it is no mere episode, but a factor exercising a determinative influence upon the historical sequence of events. This has been forcefully pointed out by an eminent modern historical writer <sup>2</sup> with the remark that “ it is no mere paradox to say that indirectly the King of the Huns contributed, more perhaps than any historical personage, towards the creation of that mighty factor in the politics of mediaeval Italy, the Pope-King of Rome.”

For the moment Rome was saved. Whatever may have been the conditions which impelled him to withdraw, Attila did fall back ; and Rome and Italy saw him no more, for he did not live to press the demands which he had put forth upon

<sup>1</sup> He had been, however, in some measure anticipated by Ambrose, who was not, of course, of his succession. See Beet, “ Ambrose of Milan,” in *P. M. Q. Rev.*, July 1909.

<sup>2</sup> Hodgkin, *Italy*, vol. ii, p. 180.

his retirement. In the course of the following year, under wretched circumstances, the great destroyer passed away.<sup>1</sup>

When the threatening shadow lifted, the joy in Rome was great ; but it took a turn little pleasing to the Pope, who gave expression to his indignation in a short but pointed sermon, which still remains to us.<sup>2</sup> The pagan superstition of the populace appears to have quite gotten the better of their Christian intelligence ; and, so far from attributing their deliverance to the divine compassion, or, as did the rest of the world, to the intervention of the Pope, they attributed it to the influence of the stars. They crowded to the Circensian games, eager to gaze upon what the angry preacher calls outrageous spectacles, rather than to the martyrs' graves. Leo might save Rome from the

<sup>1</sup> The circumstances are well known, and need not be repeated here. See Gibbon, c. 35 ; Milman, *Latin Christianity*, vol. i, p. 276 ; Gregorovius, *Rome*, vol. i, p. 299 ; Hodgkin, *Italy*, vol. ii, pp. 191-2. For the place of Attila in legend, and an interesting comparison between the Hunnish chief and Napoleon, *ib*, pp. 195-202.

<sup>2</sup> With Milman and Gregorovius I quite concur in attributing *Serm. lxxxiv* to this occasion, as against the editors of Leo in Migne, *P. L.*, 54, pp. 431-2, who attribute it to that of the departure of the Vandals. The text of the sermon itself gives indication of the existence of a state of reckless and unrestrained festivity in the city, which could hardly have been possible amid the havoc wrought by the Vandal invasion. The case is well put by the above-mentioned historians, to whom reference may be made ; *Latin Christianity*, vol. i, p. 277 ; *Rome*, vol. i, p. 200.

terrible Hun, but even he could not avail to save her from herself and from the vices of her wretched ruler, which were speedily to precipitate another crisis, to inflict upon her great humiliation and distress, and finally to wreck the empire in the West.

It may perhaps at this point be desirable to depart from the strictly chronological sequence of Leo's activities that we may continue to follow the fortunes of the empire during the period which intervened between the deliverance from Attila and the onslaught of the Vandals three years later, when the great Churchman again emerged into prominence as the only bulwark of the State. As, a generation earlier, the murder of the foremost general she possessed <sup>1</sup> precluded the sack of the city by Alaric; so now, the first act of a new tragedy was the murder of Aetius, the victor of Chalons. The real explanation of the fall of Aetius at the very summit of his power and renown, conqueror of the Huns, and holder of the highest civil office, is more or less a matter of conjecture, the outcome of some Court intrigue the exact certainty of which must probably remain beyond the reach of historical research.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Stilicho; cf. pp. 13-14 *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> For an interesting study of this incident and its consequences, culminating, of course, with the coming of the Vandals, and a critical survey of the authorities, which do not invariably give quite the same impression as to the actual

The chroniclers, though not with entire unanimity, do, however, afford something more than a suggestion that, apart from the envy excited in the mind of a weak man in the highest position by the fame and success of another whose reputation quite overshadowed his own, the breach between the Emperor and his most conspicuous lieutenant was widened by, if not entirely due to, the imperial ambitions of the latter—ambitions on the part of the General, as in the case of Stilicho before him, not for himself, but for his son. Valentinian seems to have given some sort of promise to wed one of his daughters to a son of Aetius ;<sup>1</sup> when the latter pressed this claim certain members of the courtier circle, prominent among whom was the eunuch Heraclius, appear to have made it their business to hint suspicions of the loyalty of the General in the jealous ears of their imperial master. Heraclius, possibly assisted by the Senator Petronius Maximus,<sup>2</sup> was at pains to fan the flame

course of events, see Freeman, *Europe in Fifth Century*, pp. 264-70. The historical significance of Aetius' death is also clearly put by Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, pp. 180-3.

<sup>1</sup> So Prosper, *Chron.*, Migne, *P. L.*, 51, p. 604. Sidonius Appol., *Carm.* v, 203-6, rather suggests that it was the wife of Aetius who thus sought an imperial alliance and the purple for her son Gaudentius ; Migne, *P. L.*, 58, p. 664.

<sup>2</sup> Idat., *Chron.*, suggests and Marcellinus, *Chron.*, explicitly says that Pet. Max. was involved in the murder of Aetius ; Migne, *P. L.*, 51, pp. 884, 929. For the murder see also Prosper, *Chron.*, Migne, *P. L.*, 51, p. 604 ; Cassiod., *Chron.*, Migne, *P. L.*, 69, p. 1245 ; Paul. Diac., *Hist. Misc.*, xv, Migne, *P. L.*,

of his master's wrath, and did so with such success that Aetius was lured to the palace, where he met his death at the Emperor's own hand. The deed was as foolish as it was wicked. In the words of the historian Procopius, it was that of a man—Sidonius<sup>1</sup> would have said, of a senseless *half-man*—who uses his left hand to cut off his right. It was the first act of a tragedy in the course of which the murderer and his abettors alike were destined to meet the doom of their victim.

Having thus rid himself of the strongest bulwark of his throne, Valentinian, the victim of his own unbridled passions, rushed on to his well-merited fate. The Emperor, by one of the basest of tricks, had violated the wife of Petronius Maximus, who speedily avenged the outrage upon his domestic honour by the assassination of the ravisher—a deed which was the more easily accomplished owing to the fact that the latter had, with consummate folly, placed among his immediate entourage several of the retainers of the murdered Aetius.<sup>2</sup>

95, p. 971. Procopius, *De Bell. Vand.*, i, 4 (ed. Haury, pp. 328-9), informs us that Pet. Max., burning with desire to avenge the domestic wrong referred to in the sequel, made away with Aetius as the chief hindrance in the way of his revenge. Evagrius, *H. E.*, ii, 7, is less explicit; he mentions the murder, but is silent as to its author or authors.

<sup>1</sup> *Carm.*, vi, 359; Migne, *P. L.*, 58, p. 688.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the chroniclers Prosper, Victor Tuniensis, Idatius, Marcellinus, Cassiodorus—Migne, *P. L.*, 51, p. 604; 68, p. 943; 51, pp. 884, 929; 69, p. 1245; Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 7;

In shame and in disgrace thus passed the Western line of the great Theodosius, an event significant out of all proportion to the personal importance and individual worth of Valentinian himself. For a legitimate heir of the Theodosian house might perhaps have prevented some of the troubles which speedily befel Italy, and thus have postponed, if not averted, the collapse of the empire in the West.

Petronius Maximus ascended the throne which he had rendered vacant, and, within the first weeks of her widowhood, forced the Empress Eudoxia into unwilling wedlock with himself. The secret of her bridegroom's complicity in the taking off of her former lord did not long remain hidden from the new-made wife, who forthwith resolved, at all costs, to be revenged. Despairing of any other means to accomplish her purpose, she summoned the Vandal Genseric, already the terror of the Mediterranean, and the conqueror of Africa and Sicily, to turn his arms against Rome, promising to second his efforts from within.<sup>1</sup>

Paul. Diac., *Hist. Misc.*, xv, Migne, *P. L.*, 95, p. 972 ; Procop., *D. B. V.*, i, 4, p. 329. For a critique of these accounts which do not all entirely agree in detail see Freeman, *op. cit.*, p. 367, where some doubt is expressed as to the story about the wife of Maximus. If a mere legend, it was, however, widely current, and there is no *prima facie* unlikelihood of its correctness. I have therefore retained it in the text. Among recent historians, it is accepted by Milman and Gregorovius.

<sup>1</sup> So Procop., *Idat.*, *Marc.*, *Paul. Diac.*, *Evag.*, refs. as in

Genseric eagerly responded to the call, and landed at the Tiber's mouth. In face of this new calamity the Roman populace joined with the immediate followers of Eudoxia in a general insurrection against the new Augustus, to whom they were indebted for it. Almost before he could even think of flight Maximus was torn in pieces, and his remains flung into the Tiber.<sup>1</sup>

Valentinian's murder was avenged; but the onset of the Vandals was not stayed thereby. Genseric marched on Rome, where no measures of defence had been taken, and where there was none to meet his coming save the heroic bishop who had confronted Attila three years before. Unarmed, at the head of his clergy, Leo went forth to meet the invader, who, however, already in sight of his prey, was not to be turned back as Attila before him. Yet Leo did not go forth entirely in vain. Genseric, though he declined to stay the hand of the spoiler, did consent to

preceding note. Again the authorities show some differences—Prosper, for instance, does not refer to Eudoxia, simply mentioning the coming of the Vandal in the second month of Maximus' reign—and Gregorovius, *Rome*, vol. i, p. 207, suggests that the story, as it stands, is somewhat open to doubt. That this element of doubt should be present here, as elsewhere, is hardly to be wondered at, when one bears in mind the underhand character of the whole series of transactions which culminated in the Vandal sack.

<sup>1</sup> Authorities as in the two preceding notes.

rest at that, and to spare the city the horrors of fire and sword.<sup>1</sup>

With a thoroughness that overlooked nothing, and did not even spare the treasure of the churches the sack was carried out. Among the spoils borne off by the Vandals was the sacred plunder brought to Rome by Titus after the fall of Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> The invaders, however, did not content themselves merely with the material wealth garnered in from every treasury in Rome, whether public or private, sacred or profane. The persons of the Roman aristocracy were carried off, and among the captives was the Empress Eudoxia, the last survivor of the cunning schemers whose intrigues had wrought so ill for Rome. Valentinian, Heraclius, and Maximus alike had sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind; and now Eudoxia also, in her turn, was compelled to drink the bitter harvest-cup, though not quite so deep as they.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the intervention of Leo, *Prosp. Chron.*, Vict. Tun., *Chron.*, Paul. Diac., *Hist. Misc.*, xv—Migne, *P. L.*, 51, pp. 605-6; 68, p. 943; 95, p. 975. *Liber Pont.* mentions Leo's efforts to repair the damage inflicted upon the city by the Vandals, but is silent as to his intervention: Duchesne, vol. i, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> For an interesting account of the sack, and especially of the spoils obtained see Gregorovius, *Rome*, vol. i. pp. 210-14; cf. also Milman, *Latin Christianity*, vol. i. pp. 279-81; Hodgkin, *Italy*, vol. ii, pp. 286-7; Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, p. 235. For the authorities previous references will be sufficient guide.

<sup>3</sup> For the fortunes of Eudoxia and the Roman captives



Though his intervention had not been attended with the success of his appeal to Attila, Leo had none the less really effected some alleviation of the distresses which had fallen upon the city. The fact that he, and he alone, at such a crisis, had availed to effect anything, that he had stood forth a second time as the shield of Rome, could not but greatly enhance the prestige which he had gained three years before. At this fateful moment the Pope could hardly be regarded as otherwise than by far the most important personage in Rome and in Italy. The dispersion of the aristocracy must, in equal measure, have contributed to raise the relative importance of the clergy as compared with the other classes in the community. Comparatively speaking, at all events, the Church had once more abode in strength when every other social institution had been shaken to its base. The shadowy forms of several puppet-emperors flit quickly by ; but the Supreme Pontiff sits firm in St. Peter's chair, unfaltering and unappalled, unquestionably the foremost man in Rome.

reference may be made to Gibbon, c. 36 ; Milman, *Lat. Christ.*, vol. i, pp. 280-2 ; Gregorovius, *Rome*, vol. i, pp. 214-5 ; Hodgkin, *Italy*, vol. ii, pp. 287-9. The authorities are generally as cited above. Nicephorus Callistus, *H. E.*, xv, 11, Migne, *P. G. L.*, 147, p. 37, may perhaps be added. He is comparatively full, though it should be said that, for this period, he is rather compiler than independent authority.

It could hardly have been counted as a fault to the Pope, if, during these troubled years, confronted as he was by political upheaval and national calamity, and morally compelled, both as leading citizen and Christian bishop, to intervene in public matters, his hold upon ecclesiastical affairs had shown some weakening of grip. But this was far from being the case. His correspondence during this eventful time reveals Leo's remarkable power of concentration, and is a fine tribute to his modesty. That he was no boaster is shown by the fact that while in his sermons there is only one allusion to passing events, and that of a kind very proper to a Christian bishop,<sup>1</sup> in his contemporary letters there is not even the most passing reference to the writer's great public services, nor does he even mention the startling events which were passing around him, and which would certainly have dominated the mind and filled the letters of a smaller man. So far was he from being obsessed by his political activities, and so completely was he master of his thoughts, that when ecclesiastical affairs demanded his attention, undistracted by the tumult round him, he turned his mind to the matters immediately in question with an intensity of interest and a fullness of attention that is quite remarkable, and cannot fail to make one feel how equal to all

<sup>1</sup> *Serm.*, lxxxiv, see p. 266 *supra*.

emergencies Leo really was. From the correspondence, for instance, which followed upon the conclusion of the Council of Chalcedon, and which has already claimed our attention in the previous chapter, we should never have inferred that the Huns were at the gates of Rome, still less that they and their chieftain, when hope of salvation appeared to have flickered out, had been turned back from the defenceless capital by the intervention of the writer himself. Amid all distractions, Leo writes with an interest in his immediate subject which at times rises to the height of passion, whence the reader would naturally infer that his mind was occupied solely with the establishment of doctrinal truth, or the ecclesiastical rank of his brother of Constantinople.

Leo's eye was indeed upon all parts of the world ; and he assumed to himself the oversight of the affairs of all the Churches, even in respect of matters, some at any rate of which, one would have thought, would at such a time have appeared to be of second-rate importance. Thus, in the spring and summer of 453, we find him, among other admonitions, urging upon Julian of Cos and Theodoritus of Cyrus <sup>1</sup> the importance of guarding the pulpit, warning them that neither monk nor layman be allowed to preach, that being a function proper to the priest alone. He then

<sup>1</sup> *Epp.*, cxviii, 2, cxx, 6. Migne, pp. 1040, 1054.

enters into correspondence with the Emperor Marcian and the same Julian,<sup>1</sup> in which he again busies himself with the question of the Easter celebration.

In spite of its defeat at Chalcedon the Eutychian faction was by no means finally suppressed, nor had it lost the power of still troubling the peace of the Church. It was among the monks that this heresy had the firmest hold, and to them the ecclesiastical troubles of the closing years of Leo's pontificate were mainly due. Hard upon the conclusion of the Council Palestine was in an uproar. The monks, headed by one Theodosius, had recourse to violence. Jerusalem was seized, the Patriarch Juvenal expelled from his see, and a monkish partisan installed in his place.<sup>2</sup> The news of these riotous proceedings was apparently about the first thing to greet the Pope on his return from the memorable interview with Attila. In November 452 he addressed a letter to Julian of Cos,<sup>3</sup> who was at this time his representative at the imperial court of Constantinople, urging him

<sup>1</sup> *Epp.*, cxxi, cxxii; cf. also cxxvii, 2, cxxxi, 2, cxxxviii. Leo's desire for unity, to a large extent conceived by him as uniformity, is manifest in this correspondence.

<sup>2</sup> *Evag.*, *H. E.*, ii, 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, cix; Migne, p. 1014-8. This letter is perhaps the most striking illustration of Leo's modesty and power of concentration, referred to above. The thrilling experience through which he had just passed, so far as any indication in the letter is concerned, is as though it had never been.

to bring the matter before the attention of the Emperor, so that steps might at once be taken to terminate the scandal. The Emperor's response was as ready as even the Pope could desire, and his reply to the representations of the latter took the form of an edict addressed to the offending monks, which contributed not a little to the restoration of order, and called forth warm commendation from St. Peter's chair.<sup>1</sup>

Leo next addressed the Empress Eudocia, who, having aroused the jealous suspicions of her sister-in-law Pulcheria, had been compelled to retire from Court, and had betaken herself to Palestine, where she was believed to be giving her countenance to, if not actually encouraging, the excesses of the monks. This letter, and an earlier one, now lost, were written by the Pope at the secret request of the Emperor Marcian.<sup>2</sup> There is, however, in the letter now extant, no hint of any indiscretion on the Empress's part, still less anything in the nature of a specific charge, but merely an exhortation, couched in somewhat general terms, the gist of which is that she should use her influence on behalf of the Catholic faith.

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Epp.*, cxv, 2, cxvi, 1, cxvii, 2; Migne, pp. 1033-5, 1036-7, 1038.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cxxiii; Migne, pp. 1060-1. Cf. also *Ep.*, cxvii, 3. It is from this passage that we infer that a letter had already been sent by the Pope to Eudocia, not later than the third week in March. The second letter was written in June 453.

The same messenger who bore the letter to Eudocia—at least so we may, with something approaching certainty, presume—also bore one addressed to the monks of Palestine.<sup>1</sup> This letter, which is much more lengthy than the preceding, opens with a reminder of the writer's sense of responsibility for the welfare of the universal Church, coupled with a reference to the *Tome*, which is referred to in terms which imply that it should be regarded as a sufficient exposition of Catholic doctrine. Leo then proceeds, in a tone of studied moderation, once more to explain the faith as lying between two extremes, each alike pernicious, avoiding the Nestorian heresy on the one hand, and the Eutychian on the other.

How far this letter carried conviction to the minds of the disturbers of the peace, how far they were overawed by fear of the imperial wrath, it is impossible to say. At all events, the state of things in the troubled district speedily improved; and Leo's anxiety on this account was not prolonged, for in the January of the following year he was able to write to Constantinople<sup>2</sup> expressing his pleasure and thanks on hearing that the dispossessed patriarch had been restored to his see.<sup>3</sup> When writing to the latter, some eight

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, cxxiv; Migne, pp. 1062-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Epp.*, cxxvi, cxxvii, 1; Migne, 1069-71.

<sup>3</sup> Though no details are given, from a remark of Evagrius

months later, upon certain theological matters,<sup>1</sup> Leo takes the opportunity of congratulating the reinstated prelate upon a happy issue out of his afflictions.

From Leo's correspondence we learn that it was not only in Palestine that the behaviour of the monks was a cause of anxiety to him. In Cappadocia one George was stirring up trouble just at the moment when affairs in Palestine were almost at their worst. Leo was not satisfied that the matter was being handled with sufficient energy, and strongly urged upon his representative Julian<sup>2</sup> that he should rouse the Emperor to take such measures as the circumstances appeared to demand. This was in the April of 453, and shortly afterwards it became manifest that even in Constantinople itself trouble was being stirred up by misdirected monkish zeal. To this Leo drew attention in the May of the following year in a letter addressed to the Emperor himself.<sup>3</sup> That the Pope did not write in vain, and that Marcian quickly roused himself to put a

(ii, 5) it appears that the conduct of Juvenal on his restoration left something to be desired, and by no means gave back complete tranquillity to the disturbed province. This, perhaps, is hardly a matter for surprise, as such mention of this prelate as we meet with in the history of the period does not leave the impression that he represented the highest type of Christian bishop.

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, cxxxix, 1; Migne, p. 1103.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cxviii, 2; Migne, p. 1040.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, cxxxvi, 4; Migne, p. 1100.

check upon Eutychian intrigue, is made clear by the thanks which Leo tendered to him,<sup>1</sup> in the spring of 455, for having ejected from their monasteries the principal offenders, Carosus and Dorotheus.

The troubles at Alexandria were much more serious.<sup>2</sup> It had been a matter of no great difficulty to effect the deposition of the Patriarch Dioscorus at Chalcedon ; but the situation thus created in the deposed prelate's metropolitan city was far less easy to deal with. A large, apparently a very large, proportion of the members of his flock were deeply hurt by the action of the Council, and still looked upon Dioscorus as their rightful head. The triumph of orthodoxy was regarded by them as little better than a renaissance of Nestorianism, and Dioscorus himself as a victim of the upholders of that perversion of the truth against which his great predecessor Cyril had so valiantly done battle. When required, therefore, to elect a successor to the deposed patriarch the difficulty at once became acute. To Dioscorus, so they argued, the Alexandrian Church had been espoused ; they could not, therefore, without incurring the guilt of adultery,

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, cxi, 2 ; Migne, p. 1111.

<sup>2</sup> For an excellent account, at once popular and scholarly, of the Alexandrian troubles reference may be made to Bright, *Roman See*, pp. 296-309.



enter into new relations with another.<sup>1</sup> Ultimately, however, continued opposition to the imperial mandate was felt to be impracticable ; while the very difficulty of their situation must have led not a few of the more thoughtful among them to consider that Dioscorus, despotic, lawless, red-handed in his methods, as he admittedly had been, was no meek and unresisting victim, nor yet the *beau ideal* of a persecuted saint. As the personal unpleasantness likely to accrue from too protracted a resistance to the imperial will became more and more an actual probability, it is difficult not to believe that it gradually dawned upon the minds of not a few in Alexandria that Dioscorus had long and diligently sowed the wind and now was beginning to reap the whirlwind in his turn. However that may be, it was at length decided to elect. Proterius, upon whom the suffrages of the electors fell, apparently received a unanimous vote,<sup>2</sup> which may perhaps have been the more readily obtained because the Patriarch-elect had been formerly a trusted official of Dioscorus.

It might perhaps have been hoped that, with the election of Proterius, some measure of peace would have been restored to the Church of Alexandria. But the unanimity of the electing synod, possibly itself half-hearted, found no re-echo out

<sup>1</sup> Liberatus, *Brev.*, c. xiv ; Migne, *P. L.*, 68, p. 1016.

<sup>2</sup> Liberat., *Ib.*

of doors. Scarcely had the Patriarch-elect been installed in his chair, when the Dioscorians and their opponents were at issue, and the city again aflame.<sup>1</sup> The civil authorities now deemed it high time to intervene, and the military were called upon to quell the tumult. But the troops were powerless to scatter the mob—one of the fiercest in the world; they were unmercifully pelted, put to rout, and driven to take refuge in the old temple of Serapis. The temple was given to the flames, and the luckless soldiers perished in the conflagration.<sup>2</sup> A brigade of troops was hurriedly dispatched from Constantinople, and Florus, who exercised the double authority of imperial prefect and military commandant, at once took drastic measures, stopping the dole of bread, closing the baths, and prohibiting the public spectacles. But the licence of the new troops aggravated the disorder, and Florus, yielding either to the dictates of humanity or prudence, finally consented to meet the people in the hippodrome. The Governor cancelled his prohibitions, and the people, for their part, promised to return to their obedience, and comparative quiet was temporarily restored.

Proterius, in the meantime, had informed the Pope of his election. The latter acted upon this occasion quite in the manner of a supreme author-

<sup>1</sup> Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Evag., *Ib.*

ity, upon whom, in the last resort, rested the responsibility for the right ordering of all ecclesiastical affairs. Before committing himself to the election he required of the Patriarch-elect an explicit assurance of his orthodoxy. This the latter duly gave in terms which the Pope referred to as entirely satisfactory.<sup>1</sup>

Some months later Leo wrote to Proterius again.<sup>2</sup> The tone of this letter is quite in keeping with his earlier attitude; it is distinctly that of an official superior to his subordinate, opening with a reminder of the duty owed by Alexandria to the Apostolic See, with the usual mention of St. Peter and St. Mark, whose personal relations were held to determine those of the two great sees which claimed them as their respective founders. Proterius is then admonished to clear himself from all suspicion of Nestorian heresy by publicly reciting certain passages from Athanasius, Theophilus, and Cyril, and by making quite clear to his hearers that the *Tome* did but hand on their tradition.<sup>3</sup> He is also urged to support the writer in his resistance to the impudent ambition of Constantinople, a matter which touched the

<sup>1</sup> *Epp.*, cxiii, 3, cxxvii, 1; Migne, pp. 1027, 1071-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cxxix; Migne, pp. 1075-8. This letter is dated March 10, 454. Cf. also *Epp.*, cxxx, cxxxi. In these two letters Leo gives instructions that the *Tome* should be translated into Greek for the benefit of the Alexandrians.

<sup>3</sup> Cap. 2.

Patriarch of Alexandria nearly, for the offending canon of Chalcedon had cost him a step in ecclesiastical rank.<sup>1</sup> Leo, as we have already seen, in this affair posed as the defender of the rights of the great Apostolic Sees, precedence of which had been given to Constantinople by the new legislation. He doubtless, therefore, took it for granted that he could look with some confidence to the Alexandrian archbishop to share in the defence of his own rights. But, as events actually fell out, Proterius, throughout his brief and troubled patriarchate, had a grimmer defence to conduct than that of a mere point of ecclesiastical precedence.

Of the correspondence between Proterius and Leo, with reference to the date of the Easter celebration, some mention has already been made, and it is unnecessary to dwell upon it in detail here. As a distinguished modern Church historian,<sup>2</sup> to whom the events of this period were thoroughly familiar, has remarked, the investigation of this Easter problem doubtless came to the harassed patriarch as a welcome distraction from the deepening anxieties which beset him day by day. He was called to live and labour in an atmosphere of suspicion and unrest, a spirit of disloyalty was abroad, and it is not too much to suppose that a policy of boycott with respect to

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Bright, *Roman See*, p. 301.

their archbishop was pursued by not a few members of his flock.<sup>1</sup> One ancient historian informs us that, during the greater part of his pontificate, Proterius had to depend upon a military guard for safety,<sup>2</sup> and, in view of the tragic termination of his rule and of his life, there seems to be no reason for doubting his correctness.

His unanimous election notwithstanding, Proterius was scarcely enthroned when the bad feeling among certain of his clergy already showed itself. The leaders of the revolt, for it was no less, were a priest Timothy, known as "The Cat," and a deacon Peter, nicknamed "The Stammerer," who refused to communicate with him because, in his diptychs,<sup>3</sup> he ignored Dioscorus and commemorated the Council of Chalcedon. On their refusal to return to duty at his

<sup>1</sup> Leontius, *De Sect.*, v, i (Migne, *P. G. L.*, 86, p. 1228) says that not a single Alexandrian would communicate with Proterius. We can, however, hardly accept this as a literal statement of the case; the narrative of Evagrius, for instance, to which reference has already been made, indicates clearly enough that Proterius must have had his partisans; while his unanimous election, though, doubtless, imperial pressure and a desire to effect a settlement of some sort had not a little to do with it, must count for something against so extreme a statement. But the unhappy sequel reveals how widespread was the feeling of disaffection and the unpopularity against which this unhappy patriarch had to contend.

<sup>2</sup> *Liberat.*, *Brev.*, xv; Migne, 68, p. 1017.

<sup>3</sup> For the meaning of this term reference may be made to the *Protestant Dictionary*, *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopædia*, or similar work.

command, Proterius in synod pronounced against them the sentence of deposition.<sup>1</sup> Four or five bishops and a few monks appear to have actively supported the revolt, and to have been included in their condemnation, and in the imperial sentence of exile with which it was followed up.<sup>2</sup>

These open revolters did not, however, represent the whole extent of the mischief; for with the movement which they conspicuously represented there was apparently a good deal of more or less concealed sympathy, in some cases expressed by withdrawal from communion, in others doubtless remaining without overt expression until the opportune moment should arrive. The attitude of the malcontents appears to have been, at all events in part, grounded upon misapprehension of a point of metaphysical theology which they did not really understand. "They took for granted that the late Council had to all intents and purposes been striking at Cyril through Dioscorus; and that what was at stake was Christ's single and divine personality, as against the error which had resolved the Incarnation into a signal association between the divine Word and a pre-eminent saint."<sup>3</sup> To meet the theological difficulty the Emperor Marcian now

<sup>1</sup> Liberat., *ib.*; Mansi, vii, p. 1062.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Aeg. Episc. ad Leo. Aug.*, Mansi, vii, p. 525; Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Bright, *Roman See*, pp. 302-3.

intervened, and addressed to the dissatisfied a letter couched in gentle and persuasive terms, in which he endeavoured to clear up all misapprehension as to the orthodoxy of their Archbishop, and as to the doctrinal definition of the late Council.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Emperor hoped to win the seceders back to the Catholic allegiance. But they were not so to be won over; the imperial intervention seems rather to have provided them with another cry—that the Egyptian adherents of the Council of Chalcedon, to use a term which came into vogue in the middle of the seventeenth century, stood for an Erastian Church; and even “to this day the poor remnant of orthodoxy in Egypt is weighted with a name which in that connexion is a stigma, ‘Melchites’ or ‘Men of the King.’”<sup>2</sup> Under this shadow, and protected by imperial troops, “the Emperor’s Bishop” had to bear a heavy burden, and to do his work as best he could.

On the death of Marcian, in January 457, the malcontents thought that they saw their opportunity. Timothy ventured back to Alexandria. This is not the place to tell the story of his intrigues among the monks, the stealthy, catlike nature of which earned for him the nickname by which he has been distinguished from other bearers of the name Timothy ever since. Having laid his

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vii, p. 481.

<sup>2</sup> Fright, *Roman See*, p. 303.

plans, "The Cat" made his appeal to the mob, which in Alexandria was proverbially lawless and formidable. Taking advantage of the absence of the military commander Dionysius, and backed up by a fierce and disorderly rout, he procured for himself an irregular consecration as Patriarch of Alexandria at the hands of two of the bishops who had been in trouble with him before.<sup>1</sup> After acting as archbishop for a few days he was expelled by Dionysius on his return, whereupon the mob, by way of revenge, made for the house of Proterius, whom they slew in an adjacent church whither he had fled for refuge.<sup>2</sup> The murder of the Archbishop, whose fate was shared by several of his clergy, was followed by the vilest outrages perpetrated upon his corpse—a wretched celebration of the Easter Festival! Another disgraceful chapter of anarchy and murder was thus added to the far from edifying history of the Alexandrian Church.

Though there is no evidence to show that he was directly implicated in this outrage, the now triumphant "Cat" was quite prepared to turn the lawlessness of others to his own advantage, and straightway took possession of the now vacant

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vii, 525; Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 8; Liberat., *Brev.*, xv, Migne, *P. L.*, 68, p. 1017.

<sup>2</sup> For a vivid picture of the outrage see the letter addressed by the Egyptian bishops to the Emperor Leo, Mansi, vii, pp. 526-7; Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 8; Liberat., *ut supra*.



patriarchate, which he held until ejected by the Emperor Leo three years later. From the seat which he thus usurped Timothy did not hesitate to anathematize the Patriarchs of Rome, Constantinople, and Antioch, together with the whole orthodox party.<sup>1</sup>

That Leo had been watching the course of affairs in Alexandria even before the tragic upheaval which has just come under our attention, is manifest enough from the not infrequent references thereto which are to be found in his letters during the two years which followed the month of April, 453.<sup>2</sup> On March 11, 455, just on the eve of the tragedy, in a letter to Julian of Cos,<sup>3</sup> the Pope mentions the fact that a legate, a man of rank dignified by the title of *Spectabilis*<sup>4</sup> had been sent from the imperial court to Alexandria, and expresses his wish to know, at the earliest opportunity, how he had sped.

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vii, p. 529.

<sup>2</sup> See *Epp.*, cxviii, 2, cxxvi, cxi; Migne, pp. 1040, 1070, 1109. Cf. also cxxix, cxxx, cxxxi, to which reference has already been made.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, cxli, 1; Migne, p. 1110.

<sup>4</sup> For the titles in use at the imperial court see Gibbon, *ch.* 17; Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, p. 40; or work of reference. The title *Spectabilis* is often rendered "respectable," though perhaps "distinguished" would be a fairly satisfactory equivalent, not too remote from the literal meaning of the word. So far as a modern equivalent is concerned we may leave it a moot point whether "His Excellency John" or the "Right Hon. John" would be the more suitable; for the title *Spectabilis* seems to have ranked somewhere between

After the murder of Proterius the Pope's correspondence with reference to Alexandrian affairs becomes, as might have been expected, very considerable. Into the details of this correspondence, extending over a period of nearly four years, until the very eve of Leo's death in fact, it is unnecessary to enter here.<sup>1</sup> His correspondents, it may however be mentioned, included his namesake, the Emperor Leo, who had succeeded Marcian in the purple, Julian of Cos, Anatolius, and Gennadius his successor in the chair of Constantinople, the Patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem, Timothy Solofaciolus, who eventually replaced his namesake "The Cat" at Alexandria, various bishops addressed by name, the Egyptian bishops collectively, and the presbyters and deacons of Alexandria. To any and to all, in fact, who by any possibility might contribute to a settlement of the Alexandrian disorders, Leo unweariedly addressed himself.

To the Emperor Leo, of course, beyond all others, the Pope looked for help. In the July following the murder of Proterius he addressed to him a strong appeal upon the subject,<sup>2</sup> coupled

them, higher than the latter, perhaps hardly so high as the former.

<sup>1</sup> By those who wish for fuller information reference may be made to *Epp.*, cxliv-cl, cliv, clvi-clviii, clx, clxiv, clxix, clxx-clxxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cxlv; Migne, pp. 1113-4.

with a request that he would intervene to secure a Catholic successor to the murdered Proterius. This letter was speedily followed by a second, dated September 1,<sup>1</sup> couched in terms which we to-day should be inclined to regard as servile, though of course we cannot fairly judge the forms of address used in writing to great personages in the fifth century as we should judge similar forms if used in the twentieth. The letter is short and in general terms presses upon the Emperor the need of taking effective measures to defeat the wiles of the unorthodox.

The Pope was not, however, the Emperor's only correspondent with reference to Alexandrian affairs. To him the Egyptian bishops also wrote,<sup>2</sup> giving a full account of the intrigues of Timothy, and of the distressing circumstances under which Proterius had met his death. Timothy himself also wrote to the Emperor,<sup>3</sup> giving his own version of the happenings at Alexandria—a letter which appears to have been received with the suspicion and contempt that its writer had not unfairly earned.

The Emperor's reply was in the form of a circular which was, it appears, addressed not to the Pope, but to Anatolius by name, and in general

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, cxlviii; Migne, pp. 1117-8.

<sup>2</sup> Mansi, vii, pp. 524-30; cf. *Evag.*, *H. E.*, ii, 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Evag.*, *Ib.*

terms to the metropolitans throughout the Roman world, among whom, of course, the Pope must be included.<sup>1</sup> Under cover of this letter copies of petitions which had been received both for and against Timothy were enclosed, that with these before them the orthodox episcopate might form its own judgement upon the case. Anatolius in particular is bidden to assemble in Council the bishops in the neighbourhood of the capital, together with the clergy, for the purpose of investigation ; from which we may infer that the metropolitans elsewhere were expected to call together local councils for a similar purpose. A copy of this letter was also sent to certain of those strange beings whose asceticism was the wonder of the Christian world, conspicuous among whom was the notorious Simon,<sup>2</sup> who conceived that he was doing eminent service for God by lounging away his life on the top of a pillar.

Whatever the Pope may have thought of the Emperor's specific injunctions to Anatolius,<sup>3</sup> in

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, vii, pp. 521-2 ; Evag., *H. E.*, ii, 9.

<sup>2</sup> For the esteem in which this senseless fanaticism was held see Evag., *H. E.*, i, 13 ; and for Simon's reply giving his adhesion to the Confession of Chalcedon, *ib.*, ii, 10.

<sup>3</sup> It is of course possible that the terms of the copy of the letter which Leo received were so modified as to avoid any invidious comparisons between the power and prerogatives of the bishops of the Eastern and the Western capitals. But even so the fact remains that the Emperor did not treat the Pope as a metropolitan apart, as on his own theory he cer-

his reply to his imperial namesake<sup>1</sup> he shows no sign of resentment or consciousness of having received a slight, but on the other hand seized the opportunity which it afforded for the re-enforcement of his views. His letter is respectful yet dignified; it is that of a strong man conscious of his strength, of a ruler of men conscious of his authority; without being elaborately self-assertive it leaves much to be inferred. The prerogative of Peter is indeed alluded to,<sup>2</sup> but its bearing upon that of his successor is not made explicit, though the authority of his apostolic see is touched upon in passing.<sup>3</sup> The Emperor is warned of the peril to which Catholic orthodoxy is exposed, and is urged to take vigorous action, that his zeal may counterpoise the laxity of Anatolius—a sly hit, perhaps, at one whom the writer feared might become a serious rival to himself, but to whom he had sent a letter only three months before, in September 457, couched in very different terms.<sup>4</sup>

During these months of anxiety Leo had written several other letters, among which we may note one<sup>5</sup> to Basil, the newly-appointed Patriarch of Antioch. To this great prelate the Pope addressed himself as to a subordinate, if not as a tainly claimed to be. There is no hint here of a spiritual monarchy enthroned in St. Peter's chair.

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, clvi; Migne, 1127-32.      <sup>2</sup> Cap. 2.      <sup>3</sup> Cap. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep.*, cli; Migne, pp. 1121-2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ep.*, cxlix; Migne, 1119-20.

subject. Basil is informed that he had been guilty of a dereliction of duty in omitting to inform the Pope of his ordination, such being, he is reminded, the custom of the Church; and, a little later on that the care of all the Churches rests upon the shoulders of the writer. Basil is then exhorted to stand firm for Chalcedonian orthodoxy, and against the murderers of Proterius. To the Patriarch of Jerusalem and several other important bishops Leo also forwarded a similar exhortation,<sup>1</sup> again mentioning his sense of general responsibility for the well-being of the Church at large. In the following month he is busy writing a kindly letter to the orthodox Egyptian bishops,<sup>2</sup> who had taken refuge at Constantinople, consoling them in their affliction, and holding out the hope of better times.

The Emperor meanwhile had bethought himself of another General Council, as a means whereby the present unrest might be brought to an end. This idea was scouted by the Pope,<sup>3</sup> who utterly repudiated the suggestion of re-opening in this way the question of the faith which had already been determined.<sup>4</sup> He will send legates to Constantinople, not, however, to discuss what is no longer open to discussion, but to set forth "what

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, cl; Migne, pp. 1120-1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cliv.; Migne, 1124-5. Cf. also *Epp.*, clviii, clx.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, clxii; Migne, 1143-6.

<sup>4</sup> Cap. 1.

is the rule of the apostolic faith.”<sup>1</sup> So Leo wrote on March 21, 458, and on August 17, the legates apparently set out,<sup>2</sup> bearing with them a long dogmatic epistle which is not infrequently referred to as the *Second Tome*,<sup>3</sup> a title which in itself explains the general purport of the missive. It is a somewhat extended exposition of the writer’s own doctrinal position, and is intended as a reply to the criticisms of those who were endeavouring to convince the Emperor that his theological views were infected with a Nestorian taint. This statement of his own belief is supported by an ample weight of patristic evidence to its orthodoxy and correctness. This lengthy and important letter, we might almost say pamphlet, may not improperly be termed Leo’s *Apologia pro vita sua*.

Without going into any further detail respecting Alexandrian affairs we may observe that, early in 460, Timothy was ejected by the Emperor Leo from the patriarchal throne to which he had passed through riot and bloodshed, and which he had occupied for three years as an avowed enemy of the Chalcedonian formula.

When the Pope received the welcome intelligence of the expulsion of Timothy he addressed a letter of congratulation and thanks to the Em-

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, clxiv; Migne, p. 1148.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, clxv; Migne, pp. 1155-90.

peror, at the same time urging the importance of at once providing Alexandria with an orthodox archbishop.<sup>1</sup> "The Cat," meanwhile, had been allowed to come to Constantinople. This greatly annoyed the Pope, who, however, whether from prudential or other motives, made no mention of his vexation in writing to the Emperor. The omission was rectified in another letter, written upon the following day, June 18, 460, to one to whom he felt that he could freely speak his mind. The Patriarch Anatolius had passed away in 458, and had, meanwhile, been succeeded in the chair of New Rome by Gennadius.<sup>2</sup> To the last-named Leo dispatched a letter,<sup>3</sup> more or less dictatorial in tone, in which he gave expression to his discontent that the overthrown usurper, a subject for discipline rather than for hospitality, had been allowed to remain in the capital, where his presence was fraught with peril to the Catholic faith. Timothy was shortly afterwards sent into banishment,<sup>4</sup> but exactly to what extent this was due to the demand of the Pope it is difficult to say.

Another Timothy, known as Solofaciolus<sup>5</sup>— Timothy "Whitecap" we might perhaps call him—

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, clxix; Migne, pp. 1212-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Evag., H. E.*, ii, 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, clxx; Migne, 1214-5.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Evag., H. E.*, ii, 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Liberat., Brev.*, xvi; Migne, *P. L.*, 68, p. 1019.



had meantime been appointed to the see of Alexandria, and for sixteen years, until "The Cat" again appeared upon the scene, the Church of Alexandria was at peace. The new Patriarch appears to have been a worthy and kindly-disposed man, who won the love even of those of his opponents who still declined to enter into communion with him.<sup>1</sup> His appointment was greeted by Leo with his full approval, and the last extant letters of the great Pope were letters of congratulation addressed to Solofaciolus himself, to the higher clergy of Alexandria, and to certain of the Egyptian bishops whom it is unnecessary here to name.<sup>2</sup> These letters all bear the date August 18, 460, and with their dispatch, so far as history is concerned, Leo's work was done. In the following year the greatest pontiff who had as yet occupied the Roman chair, in his turn, went his way. He had lived just long enough to see orthodoxy supreme, and the religious peace for which he had so strenuously fought at last an accomplished fact.

It is now necessary that we should retrace our steps, for there still remain one or two letters, written in the latter half of Leo's papacy, which seem to call for at any rate a passing mention.

<sup>1</sup> *Liberat.*, *ib.*, p. 1021. "Though we do not communicate with thee we love thee."

<sup>2</sup> *Epp.*, clxxi, clxxii, clxxiii; Migne, pp. 1215-8.

The first of these letters is one, dated June 14, 453, addressed to Maximus of Antioch,<sup>1</sup> to the occupant, that is to say, of a patriarchal and apostolic see, and one, moreover, like Rome herself, reputed to be of Petrine origin. The tone of authority in which Leo addresses this great prelate is very marked, and appears to indicate a complete unconsciousness upon the writer's part that any sort of equality between himself and one whom he regarded as the third bishop of Christendom<sup>2</sup> was even thinkable.

The remaining letters, all written in the course of the year following March, 458, to which it seems desirable that some attention should be called, are addressed to the Bishops of Aquileia, Ravenna, Narbonne, and collectively to a considerable group of Italian bishops.<sup>3</sup> These letters, which are all alike concerned with matters of discipline, ritual, and Church order, are yet of no little interest as showing the authoritative manner in which Leo gave directions with reference to the various points touched upon, as matters proper to be decided by himself. Into details it would be wearisome to go, and happily quite unnecessary. It may, however, be mentioned that the Pope puts his *imprimatur* upon, if

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, cxix; Migne, pp. 1041-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cvi, 5; Migne, p. 1007.

<sup>3</sup> *Epp.*, clix, clxvi, clxvii, clxviii; Migne, pp. 1135-40, 1191-1211.

he does not exactly originate, usages which point in the direction of the celibacy of the clergy,<sup>1</sup> already in sight, and by-and-by to become the law of the Church. Again, although of course the practice of private confession had been, for a considerable period, known in the Church, more particularly in monastic circles, it had met with some clerical opposition elsewhere. As against the dissentients, Leo, in his letter to the Campanian and other bishops,<sup>2</sup> for the first time gave official recognition to and confirmed private confession as an ecclesiastical institution. His intention in so doing may have been a kindly one, but the practice which he thus assisted to establish has unhappily wrought no little evil, and has proved to be so open to abuse that it has been a cause of grievous scandal to the Church.

It will no doubt have been observed that in Leo's later correspondence, after the Council of Chalcedon and during the course of the Alexandrian troubles, for instance, in his protests and appeals to the imperial power there is no mention of the Western throne, but all are directed to the East. That this should have been so is readily enough to be explained by the state of political chaos, amid which the independence

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, clxvii, 3. This long and detailed letter well illustrates Leo's attitude to matters such as those referred to in the text.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, clxviii, 2.

of the Western throne was rapidly crumbling to pieces. It may therefore be desirable at this point to give some idea of the course of civil events and of the fortunes of the Western throne during the declining years of Leo's life. It will not, however, be necessary to do this in more than the briefest outline, for with his intervention at the time of the Vandal onset upon Rome in 455, the great Pope, to all intents and purposes, disappears from civil history.

The Emperor Maximus, as we have seen, had miserably perished while the Vandals were advancing upon Rome. As the tide of barbarism rolled backward the throne of the West was thus left vacant. The sole survivors of the Western line of Theodosius, the Empress Eudoxia and her daughters, had been borne away into captivity, and no member of the imperial house was left as a legitimate claimant to the purple.<sup>1</sup> Under these circumstances the Western throne now became the prey of ambitious generals. Such was Avitus, who in Gaul, with the aid of Theodoric, the Visigothic king, assumed the purple in July 455. The Roman Senate was forced to sanction what was already an accomplished fact; and invited Avitus to the city, though at heart regarding him as an interloper to be gotten rid

<sup>1</sup> On this point cf. Bury's remarks, *Later Roman Empire*, p. 183.

of as soon as an opportunity presented itself. With the aid of Count Ricimer, a barbarian of royal descent who had found a career in Italy, this was accomplished in the early autumn of the following year, when Avitus, vainly seeking to secure himself by exchanging his imperial mantle for a bishop's robe, met an untimely death.

The real power was now in the hands of Ricimer, with whom began the rule of the mercenaries in Italy. For six months he governed Rome, accepting the title of Patrician. Then, preferring to play the rôle of kingmaker rather than that of king, he permitted his favourite Majorian to ascend the throne (April 1, 457). Though the reverse of spontaneous and free, this election nevertheless gave universal satisfaction. People, Senate, and even the Emperor Leo, all agreed in welcoming the selection of Majorian. The new Emperor was indeed a man of rare virtue, the noblest civil ruler that Rome had seen for long. Called to the throne in a time of ruin and distress, he expressed his determination to rule according to law ; and his edicts give evidence of a wisdom and humanity which command respect.<sup>1</sup> But for all his wisdom and virtue Majorian could not avert the impending doom of the empire in the

<sup>1</sup> For a pleasing sketch of Majorian reference may be made to Gregorovius, *Rome*, vol. i, pp. 222-7.

West. He did but vainly set himself to stay the course of a torrent which swept him away.

Having attempted without success to chastise Genseric in 460, his fate quickly overtook him. Ricimer, by this time fully awake to the fact that the Emperor of his own creation was by no means minded to be his puppet, took him prisoner on August 2, 461, and, five days later, caused him to be put to death. With Majorian vanished the last hopes of Rome; and the storm-clouds rapidly darkened over the city and the State.

Rome soon suffered an even greater loss. Within a month or two of the murder of Majorian, Leo also went his way.<sup>1</sup> He had lived to see peace restored to the Church and orthodoxy triumphant. He had, it is true, also lived to see the State degraded, and brought face to face with political ruin. Yet the very difficulties of the State, and the civil degradation which had fallen upon Rome, but served to enhance the prestige of his chair, and to strengthen the power of the Church, which alone appeared to rise superior to the downward tendency that prevailed in every other public institution. Empires might pass away, but the Church, founded upon a rock, seemed to be eternal;

<sup>1</sup> There is some little uncertainty as to the exact date of the death of this great pontiff; it was, however, in one of the later months of 461, possibly on November 10.

imperial and royal thrones might totter to their fall, but the chair of Peter, firm-set by the very hand of God, was destined to remain the seat of authority for ever. So at least it seemed to not a few of the more thoughtful men of the fifth century.

Leo, the great champion of Peter's rights, was not unfittingly interred in the porch of St. Peter's; even in death he was still to be the guardian of Peter's gate. But in the following century his tomb was removed thence and a monument erected to his memory within the church. He was the first Pontiff to be thus honoured. "His tomb perished; but an altar was dedicated anew to his memory by Clement XI in 1715, in the chapel of the Madonna Colonna in St. Peter's, and above it has been placed the famous relief of Algardi, which represents Attila shrinking back in terror before Leo and the Apostles Peter and Paul."<sup>1</sup> Thirty-nine years later another tardy honour was done to the great fifth-century Pontiff. In 1754 Benedict XIV decreed to him the title and the cultus of a Doctor of the Church,<sup>2</sup> and in all the long line of popes none perhaps deserved the honour more. Not by any means the greatest intellect of the Church which claims an Augustine, to name but one among its *laureati*, at Chal-

<sup>1</sup> Gregorovius, *Tombs of the Popes*, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Benedict's brief is printed in Migne, *P. L.*, 55, pp. 337-40.

cedon Leo was, in sober fact, the Doctor of the Church in a measure to which few others have attained ; and the honourable title, thus tardily bestowed, was alike wisely given and worthily won. Yet after all no title can really add to Leo's fame. He is one of those men who are above all titles, and who, for what they are in themselves and for what they have achieved by reason of their own inherent strength, stand out in the pages of history as themselves the makers of history, the shapers of the destiny of smaller men ; and who, when in silence they fare them forth into the Unseen, leave the impress of their personality upon the years that are to come. Such was Leo the Great, and his shadow rested upon the Roman Church until Gregory appeared.

With Leo the papal monarchy may be said to have begun. In what measure this monarchical authority had been actually effective, and to what extent it had failed to establish itself, we have had perhaps sufficient indication as we have followed the course of events during his tenure of the bishopric of Rome. That it was far from having completely established itself, and was subject to obvious limitations in practice, has been manifest. But the idea was there, and it realized itself at any rate in part. The foundation upon which the imperial papacy of the Middle Ages was



to be built up had been securely laid during the first half of the fifth century, and in the laying thereof Leo had played, beyond the possibility of comparison, by far the most important part.

In the person of this great Pontiff the primacy of the Roman chair had received specific acknowledgment, and that in the highest quarters. An Eastern bishop like Theodoritus,<sup>1</sup> the Emperor Valentinian in his memorable edict of 445, and again five years later in a letter to his colleague Theodosius,<sup>2</sup> and the Empress Galla Placidia<sup>3</sup> all agree, in very explicit terms, to attribute to the Pope a world-wide spiritual overlordship. Leo himself, apparently without challenge or rebuke, by a slight change of phrase<sup>4</sup> puts into the mouth of the Fathers of Chalcedon a definite ascription to himself of the Headship of the Universal Church, a Headship, moreover, which finds its *raison d'être* in his endowment with the dignity of the Apostle Peter. Leo, as we have seen in an earlier chapter, both in his sermons and letters enlarges in considerable detail upon these claims, insisting upon the princely position divinely conferred upon St. Peter as contrasted with his brethren, and handed on unimpaired to his

<sup>1</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, lii, 1; Migne, p. 847.

<sup>2</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, lv, cf. also lxxiii; Migne, pp. 859, 899.

<sup>3</sup> Leo, *Ep.*, lvi; Migne, p. 861.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. note on p. 236 *supra*.

successors in the Apostolic Chair of Old Rome. Consistently enough with this theory the great Pontiff took upon himself the sole ultimate responsibility for the well-being of the Church throughout the world. This he did, so far at least as our knowledge goes, almost, though not quite, without protest ; and the servility of Anatolius may not unfairly be regarded as an offset to the independence of Hilary. The greatest metropolitan was, in Leo's view, practically nothing more than a papal vicar to whom he had delegated certain of his powers but not the fullness of authority. Such were consequently responsible to him for the due performance of their duty, while he himself is answerable to God alone.

In the case of the most august assembly known to the Church, the General Council, Leo's claims were equally far-reaching. The Council of Constantinople, seventy long years before, might have enacted certain canons, but, so at least he contends, they had not been brought to the notice of the Apostolic See, and therefore were invalid from the first.<sup>1</sup> This amounts to nothing less than an assertion that the papal authority was at least co-ordinate with, if not superior to, that of a General Council itself.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore for-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 252 *supra*.

<sup>2</sup> We may again draw attention to Leo's change of phrase in his own version of the sentence given at Chalcedon, as

tunate that a General Council was held during his term of office, as from his actual relations therewith we have been able to see for ourselves to what extent his claims were made good in practice on the one hand, and to what limitations his authority was subjected on the other.

The Council of Chalcedon, it will be remembered, was not only not assembled by the Pope, but in opposition to his expressed desire ; and in the proceedings which ensued he not only secured, as we have seen, a great success, but also sustained a serious reverse. Yet the fact remains that until he had placed his *imprimatur* upon its decree it seems to have been felt by not a few that the work of the Council had not attained completion. Hence the earnestness and insistence with which that confirmation was sought by no less a person than the Emperor Marcian himself.<sup>1</sup> Among the bishops of Christendom Leo's position was admittedly unique.

Leo exercised authority in every part of the Christian world. In Italy and Sicily we have seen

compared with the form in which it appears in Mansi. Leo makes the Council consent to what he has done ; the *Acta* rather suggest that the Pope and the Council had co-operated in the doing of it. Cf. note on p. 236 *supra*.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also, in this connexion, Flavian's appeal for the Pope's confirmation of the findings of his own local Council in 448 ; also Anatolius' admission that the twenty-eighth canon of Chalcedon required Leo's confirmation. Cf. Leo, *Ep.*, cxxxii,

him interposing his authority in respect of minute matters of Church order and discipline. In Africa, now so weakened and demoralized by Vandal devastations that the sturdy independence with which the interference of the Roman chair had been met a generation earlier was no longer to be thought of, he made his power felt. Assuming a tone of complete authority, the Pope seems to have ventured even so far as to reverse the decisions of the African Church as expressed by a regularly assembled Provincial Council. For Spain he laid down the course of action to be pursued in dealing with a prevalent heresy. In Gaul, though with less complete success, he also intervened, handling her primatial rights in a fashion at once arbitrary and autocratic. In Constantinople, Alexandria, Palestine, and the East generally, though perhaps hardly so markedly as in the West, Leo acted as supreme earthly Head of the Church.

As already intimated, in his dealings with the chief pastors of the Church Leo reveals the same temper. His correspondence with the greater patriarchs, Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria, with Juvenal of Jerusalem, with the Metropolitan of Gaul, to name no others, is that of a commander-in-chief with his subordinates; and, except in the case of Hilary, his letters seem to have been received without demur, and, where

offence had been given, with the most earnest efforts to placate his wrath.

This being so, it may be said that, like the fabled Phoenix, in the person of Leo a new empire arose out of the ruins of the old imperial Rome—the spiritual monarchy of the popes. True, some twenty generations had still to pass ere it reached maturity, but, in its earlier form, in the mid-fifth century it was already present. In that earlier form it was subject to many obvious limitations which it afterwards overleaped. Leo might wield a power greater than that of many kings, but he enjoyed no temporal sovereignty and did not rank among the kings of earth; much less did he claim to make and to unmake them, and that it was his to give and take away thrones and lordships, from the greatest even to the least. In purely spiritual affairs he was, moreover, by no means entirely independent of the civil sovereign. The correspondence which passed between him and a succession of emperors, to whom he wrote with a deference for which the greatest patriarch might have looked in vain, shows clearly enough that he frankly recognized their right of interference in ecclesiastical matters.

Though it fell to Leo, in a time of theological unrest, to put forth the form of sound doctrine, it should not be overlooked that he made no claim to dogmatic infallibility, nor did he raise

the least objection to the discussion of his views on the part of the Council. The *ex cathedra* utterance, as a sure and ready means whereby to terminate all doctrinal dispute, was therefore certainly not claimed by him as being among the Petrine prerogatives of his apostolic throne.

It is not to be gainsaid that the needs and the circumstances of the time in which his lot was cast contributed not a little to smooth the path to power of this great Pontiff. Distracted and wearied, Christendom lacked unity; and that lack, it doubtless seemed to many, could best be supplied by a strong ecclesiastical ruler. It was natural that men should look to Rome, the ancient home of empire, the seat of an episcopate respected for orthodoxy and strength, and already possessed of an authority held in wide respect, expecting to find there if anywhere that bond of union which the Church needed at this crisis. As events fell out, it so happened that, at the fateful moment, the Roman Church had in Leo one who could and did rise to the opportunity thus presented; and who possessed the personal respect together with the mental and moral qualities which enabled him to give the guidance which the Church required. In other words Leo's success was in part due to the fact that he was the man of his time.

That Leo's claims were not free from the taint

of arrogance is hardly to be denied ; yet we cannot in fairness brand him as an arrogant man. Of anything in the nature of personal self-seeking he stands acquitted at the bar of history. Ambitious he may have been ; but his was not the ambition of a Boniface VIII or a Napoleon. He was ambitious for his office, not for himself ; his eye was single, and he was supremely anxious to do God service and to build up His kingdom upon earth. In the proudest of his claims his words ring true, and by no means impress the thoughtful reader as being those of an adventurer making out a case for himself. They are rather the expression of the genuine convictions of a man entirely conscientious and sincere ; of a man who feels that he has a solemn duty to discharge and a great place to fill. So sure, indeed, is he of his ground that he does not hesitate to say that the repudiation of his authority is an act of spiritual suicide, a literal thrusting of oneself into hell.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever view one may take of his claims and of the autocratic temper of his rule, which of course are quite alien to the freer spirit of the present day, from the man himself it would be unfair to withhold a tribute of admiration. Leo's greatness was, as we have observed, in part due to the circumstances in which he was placed, but

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, x, 2 ; Migne, p. 630.

even more to his own high qualities of head and heart, his lofty character, and to the fact that the Church's interests, as he conceived them, were dearer to him than his own. He was, moreover, all the stronger and more effective in that the papacy which he embodied was the papacy in its earlier and, we may add, purer form. Leo was hampered in the discharge of the duties of his office by no political considerations, such as those which shaped the time-serving and shifty policy of Alexander III in his handling of the Becket case, to quote an example familiar to English readers. The sovereign papacy, with all its worldly entanglements and political complications was still to come. But, though he foresaw it not, all unconsciously Leo was one of those who opened up the way to this development ; and in the long line of Roman pontiffs he stands forth prominent, with but one or two beside him, as a supreme master-builder of the gigantic fabric of the mediæval papacy. In him, as in none before him, found expression that vast conception of an autocratic spiritual monarchy vested in the successors of St. Peter by a right divine, which was destined both for good and evil—though as time went on the evil tended to outweigh the good—to become so potent a factor in the politics as well as in the religious life of the Middle Ages ; and which, after strange vicissitudes of fortune, purged from some



of its grosser evils, and no longer able to dominate the heritage of God by sheer appeal to the imagination of mankind, is still a power to be reckoned with in international affairs, and a real force, albeit too often reactionary and unprogressive, in the religious life of the modern world.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

	Popes.	Western Emperors	Eastern Emperors.	Patriarchs of Constantinople	Patriarchs of Alexandria.
379	—	—	Theodosius I	—	—
381	—	—	—	Nectarius	—
385	Siricius	—	—	—	Theophilus
392	—	Theodosius I	—	—	—
395	—	Honorius	Arcadius	—	—
398	Anastasius	—	—	Chrysostom	—
402	Innocent I	—	—	—	—
404	—	—	—	Arsacius	—
406	—	—	—	Atticus	—
408	—	—	Theodosius II	—	—
412	—	—	—	—	Cyril
417	Zosimus	—	—	—	—
419	Boniface I	—	—	—	—
422	Celestine I	—	—	—	—
423	—	{[John]	—	—	—
425	—	Valentinian III	—	—	—
426	—	—	—	Sissinius	—
428	—	—	—	Nestorius	—
431	—	—	—	Maximian	—
432	Sixtus III	—	—	—	—
434	—	—	—	Proclus	—
440	Leo I	—	—	—	—
444	—	—	—	—	Dioscorus
447	—	—	—	Flavian	—
449	—	—	—	Anatolius	—
450	—	—	Marcian	—	—
451	—	—	—	—	Proterius († 457)
455	—	{Maximus Avitus	—	—	—
457	—	Majorian	Leo	—	—
458	—	—	—	Gennadius	—
460	—	—	—	—	Timothy
461	Death of Leo	—	—	—	—

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**25-35 City Road, and 26 Paternoster Row, LONDON, E.C.**



**RETURN TO → CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT**  
**202 Main Library**

LOAN PERIOD 1	2	3
<b>HOME USE</b>		
4	5	6

**ALL BOOKS MAY BE RECALLED AFTER 7 DAYS**

1-month loans may be renewed by calling 842-3405  
 1-year loans may be renewed by bringing the books to the Circulation Desk  
 Renewals and recalls may be made 4 days prior to due date

**DUE AS STAMPED BELOW**

LIBRARY USE ONLY		
	MAR 22 1985	
CIRCULATION DEPT.		
REC CIRC	MAR 22 1985	
	DEC 09 1980	

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