

**Crises**  
in the  
**History of the Papacy**

A Study of  
Twenty Famous Popes whose Careers and  
whose Influence Were Important in the  
Development of the Church and  
in the History of the World

By

**Joseph McCabe**

Author of "Peter Abelard," "Life of Saint Augustine," etc.

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## PREFACE

PROBABLY no religious institution in the world has had so remarkable a history, and assuredly none has attracted so large and varied a literature, as the Papacy. The successive dynasties of the priests of ancient Egypt were, by comparison, parochial in their power and ephemeral in their duration. The priests of Buddha, rising to an autocracy in the isolation of Thibet or mingling with the crowd in the more genial atmosphere of China or cherishing severe mysticisms in Japan, offer no analogy to the Papacy's consistent growth and homogeneous dominion. The religious leaders of the Jews, scattered through the world, yet hardened in their type by centuries of persecution, may surpass it in conservative antiquity, but they do not remotely approach it in power and in historical importance. It influences the history of Europe more conspicuously than emperors have ever done, stretches a more than imperial power over lands beyond the most fevered dreams of Alexander or Cæsar, and may well seem to have made "Eternal Rome" something more than the idle boast of a patriot.

Yet this conservative endurance has not been favoured by such a stability of environment as has sheltered the lamas of Thibet or the secular priests of the old Chinese religion. The Papacy has lived through fifteen centuries of portentous change, though it seemed

in each phase to have connected itself indissolubly with the dominant institutions and ideas of that phase. The Popes have witnessed, and have survived, three mighty transformations of the face of Europe. They had hardly issued from their early obscurity and lodged themselves in the fabric of the old Roman civilization when this fell into ruins; but they held firmly, amidst the ruins, the sceptre they had inherited. One by one the stately institutions of the older world—the schools, the law-courts, the guilds of craftsmen, the military system, the municipal forms and commercial routes—disappeared in the flood of barbarism which poured over Europe, but this institution, which seemed the least firmly established, was hardly shaken and was quickly accepted by the strange new world. A new polity was created, partly under the direction of the Popes, and it was so entirely saturated by their influence that religion gave it its most characteristic name. Then Christendom, as it was called, passed in turn through a critical development, culminating in the Reformation; and the Papacy begot a Counter-Reformation and secured millions beyond the seas to replace the millions it had lost. The third and last convulsion began with the work of Voltaire and Rousseau and Mirabeau, and has grievously shaken the political theory with which the Papacy was allied and the older religious views which it had stereotyped. Yet today it has some 35,000,000 followers in the three greatest Protestant countries, the lands of Luther, of Henry VIII., and of the Puritan Fathers.

It must seem a futile design to attempt to tell, with any intelligent satisfaction, within the limits of a small volume the extraordinary story of this institution. No serious historian now tries to command more than

a section of the record of the Papacy, and he usually finds a dozen volumes required for the adequate presentment of that section. Yet there is something to be said for such a sketch as I propose to give. If we take four of the more important recent histories of the Papacy—those of Father Grisar, Dr. Mann, Dr. Pastor, and Dr. Creighton—we find that the joint thirty volumes do not cover the whole period of Papal history even to the sixteenth century; and the careful student will not omit to include in his reading the still valuable volumes of Milman and of Dr. Langer. In other words, he must study more than fifty volumes if he would have an incomplete account of the development of the Papacy up to the time of the Reformation, and more than that number if he would follow accurately the fortunes of the Papacy since the days of Paul III. The history of the Papacy is very largely the history of Europe, and this voluminous expansion is inevitable. On the other hand, the general student of the history of Europe and the general reader who seeks intellectual pleasure in “the storied page” are not only repelled by such an array of tomes, but they have no interest in a vast proportion of the matter which it is incumbent on the ecclesiastical historian to record. One wants a view of the Papacy in the essential lines of its development, and they are usually lost, or not easily recognized, in the conscientiously full chronicles. Is it possible to give a useful and informing account of the *essential* history of the Papacy in a small volume?

The rare attempts to do this that have been made have failed from one or other of two causes: they have either been written with a controversial aim and therefore have given only the higher lights or darker shades of the picture, or they have been mere summaries of

the larger works, mingling what is relevant and what is not relevant from the developmental point of view. The design which occurs to me is to write a study of the Papacy by taking a score of the outstanding Popes—which means, in effect, a score of the more significant or critical stages in the development of the Papacy—and giving an adequate account of the work and personality of each. The evolution of the Papacy has not, like the evolution of life in general, been continuous. It has had periods of stagnation and moments of rapid progress or decay. Of the first hundred Popes, scarcely a dozen contributed materially to the making of the Papacy: the others maintained or marred the work of the great Popes. It is the same with the environment of the Papacy, which has influenced its fortunes as profoundly as changes of environment have affected the advance of terrestrial life. There have been long drowsy summers closed by something like ice ages; there have been convulsions and strange invasions, stimulating advance by their stern and exacting pressure. I propose to select these more significant periods or personalities of Papal history, and trust that the resultant view of the Papacy will have interest and usefulness. The periods which lie between the various Pontificates which I select will be compressed into a brief account of their essential characters and more prominent representatives, so that the work will form a continuous study of the Papacy.

In the selection of a score of Popes out of more than two hundred and fifty there is room for difference of judgment. The principle on which I have proceeded is plain from the general aim I have indicated. The story of the Papacy may fitly be divided into two parts: a period of making and a period of unmaking. Taking the terms somewhat liberally, one may say that the

first period reaches from the second to the fourteenth century, and that the subsequent centuries have witnessed an increasing loss of authority, especially in the catastrophic movements (from the Papal point of view) of the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries. A selection of significant Popes must, therefore, include the great makers of the Papacy, the men whose vice or incompetence brought destructive criticism upon it, and the men who have, with varying fortune, sought to defend it against the inroads of that criticism during the last four centuries. One must make a selection neither of good Popes nor bad Popes, but of the Popes who, in either direction, chiefly influenced the fortunes of the institution; and, in order that no important phase may be omitted, a few men of no very pronounced personality must be included.

Regarded from this point of view, the history of the Papacy may be compressed within limits which rather accentuate than obscure its interest, and, at the same time, a very ample account may be given of some of its more instructive phases. The first phase, before the Bishop of Rome became a Pope, in the distinctive sense of the word, is best illustrated by taking the bishopric of Callistus at the beginning of the third century. The Roman bishopric was then one of several "apostolic Sees," rarely claiming authority over other bishoprics, and still more rarely finding such a claim acknowledged: thrown somewhat into the shade by the vastly greater strength of the Eastern churches, yet having an immense and as yet undeveloped resource in the tradition, which was now generally accepted, that it had been founded by the two princes of the apostles. There was, however, in three hundred years, no Roman bishop sufficiently endowed to develop this resource, and the

fourth century still found the Roman See so little elevated that its African neighbours disdainfully rejected its claim of authority. Then the far-reaching change which followed the conversion of Constantine bestowed on it a material splendour and a secular authority which gave it a distinctive place in Christendom, and a study of the life of Bishop Damasus shows us the extension of its prestige and the exploitation of its tradition; while the founding of a rival imperial city in the East and the obliteration of all other apostolic Sees withdrew half of Christendom from Roman influence before its ecumenic claim was fully developed.

The fall of the western Roman Empire enfeebles the once powerful and independent provincial bishops and gives a more spiritual outlook to the successors of Peter who sit among the ruins of Rome. The life of Leo the Great illustrates this concentration on religious power amidst the autumnal decay of the more material power and of the wealth which had inflated and secularized some of his predecessors. The life of Gregory the Great marks the culmination of this development. The material world seems to be nearing dissolution and the old Roman spirit of organization, which is strong in Gregory I.; is directed to the creation of a moral and religious dictatorship. There are still flickers of independence in remote bishoprics, and the East is irrecoverably removed, but the disordered state of Christendom cries for a master. Europe is young again, with a vicious impulsive youth, and the rod of Rome falls healthily on its shoulders; and the paralysis of civic government and land-tenure in Italy inevitably casts secular functions and large possessions upon the one effective power that survives. An elementary royalty begins to attach to the Papacy: the function of ultimate



tribunal in that violent world is imposed on it almost by public needs: and, though Gregory is personally disdainful of culture, the Church, and the monastic refuges it consecrates, preserve for a wiser age to come some proportion of the wisdom of the dead age.

With Hadrian I. a new phase opens. The possession and administration of "patrimones," or bequeathed estates, give place to the definite political control of whole provinces, under the protection of a powerful and conveniently remote King of the Franks. In the ninth century, Nicholas I. consolidates and extends the new power, both as temporal and spiritual ruler. The vice and violence of Europe still justify or promote the growth of a great spiritual autocracy, and the illiteracy of Europe—for culture has touched its lowest depth—permits the imposition on it (in the "False Decretals," etc.) of an impressive and fictitious version of the bases of Papal claims. Then Rome, which has hitherto had singularly few unworthy men in the chair of Peter, becomes gradually degraded to the level of its age, and the Papacy passes into the darkness of the Age of Iron: which is fitly illustrated by the Pontificate of John X. Gregory VII. shows its restoration to spiritual ideals and the union of monastic severity with the Papal tradition; and this steady creation of a machinery for dominating the vice and violence of Europe is perfected in the extraordinary work of Innocent III., who would, for its moral correction, make Europe the United States of the Church and treat its greatest monarchs as satraps of the Papacy.

After Innocent, the Papacy degenerates. A renewed school-life, the influence of the Moors, the evolution of civic life and prosperity, and the rise of powerful kingdoms stimulate the intelligence of Europe, while the

political connexions in which the temporal power entangles the Papacy lead to a degeneration which cannot escape the more alert mind of the laity. During a long exile at Avignon the Papal court learns soft ways and corrupt devices—illustrated by the life of John XXII.—and the Great Schism which follows the return to Rome causes a moral paralysis which permits the Pontificate of an unscrupulous adventurer like John XXIII. The prosperous sensuality of the new Europe infects an immense proportion of the clergy: war, luxury, and display entail a vast expenditure, and the more thoughtful clergy and laity deplore the increasing sale by the Popes of sacred offices and spiritual privileges. The body of lay scholars and lawyers grows larger and more critical, while the Papal Court sinks lower and lower. The Papacy is fiercely criticized throughout Europe, and the resentment of its moral complexion leads to a discussion of the bases of its power. The earlier forgeries are discovered and the true story of its human growth is dimly apprehended. The successive Pontificates of Alexander VI., Julius II., and Leo X. exhibit this dramatic development: a flat defiance by the Papal Court of the increasing moral sentiment and critical intelligence of Europe. Men are still so dominated by religious tradition that, apart from an occasional heresy, they generally think only of “reform” and reforming councils. When Luther strikes a deeper note of rebellion, the echo is portentous, and neither reform, nor violence, nor persuasion succeeds in averting the disruption of Christendom. In Paul III., we have the last representative of the Papacy of the Renaissance wavering between the grim menace of Germany and the unpleasantness of reform. In Sixtus V. and Benedict XIV. we study two of the great efforts of the new Papacy

to preserve the remaining half of its territory. In Pius VII., Pius IX., and Leo XIII. we see the Papacy meeting the successive waves of the modern revolution.

In composing this sketch of Papal history, or, rather, study of its critical phases, I have gratefully used the larger modern histories to which I have referred. Dr. Ludwig Pastor's *History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages*<sup>1</sup> is, for the period it covers (1300–1550), the most valuable of all Papal histories. The Catholic author is not less courageous than scholarly, even if we must recognize some inevitable bias of affection, and he has enriched our knowledge by a most judicious and candid use of unpublished documents in the Secret Archives of the Vatican. Dr. H. K. Mann's *Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages*,<sup>2</sup> which covers the ground from Gregory I. to Innocent III., is based upon an ample knowledge of the original authorities, but is much less candid and reliable, and seems to be intended only for controversial purposes. Dr. Creighton's learned and judicious *History of the Papacy from the Great Schism to the Sack of Rome*<sup>3</sup> must be corrected at times by the documents in Pastor. Father H. Grisar's incomplete *History of Rome and the Popes in the Middle Ages*<sup>4</sup> is a learned and moderate partisan study of the Papacy in the first four centuries. The older works of Dr. J. Langer,<sup>5</sup> Dean Milman,<sup>6</sup> Gregorovius,<sup>7</sup> and Ranke are by no means superfluous to the student, though more

<sup>1</sup> English trans., 1891, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Ten vols., 1902–1914.

<sup>3</sup> Six vols., 2d ed., 1897.

<sup>4</sup> English trans., 1911, etc.

<sup>5</sup> *Geschichte der römischen Kirche*, 1881, etc.

<sup>6</sup> *History of Latin Christianity*.

<sup>7</sup> *The City of Rome in the Middle Ages*, English trans., 1900, etc.

recent research or judgment often corrects them. Less extensive works will be noted in the course of each chapter, and I owe much to industrious older authorities like Baronius, Tillemont, Raynaldus, Mansi, etc. I have, however, had the original authorities before me throughout. The earlier chapters are, indeed, based almost entirely on the Latin or Greek sources, and, in the later chapters, at every point which seemed to inspire differences of judgment I have carefully weighed the original texts. For the later mediæval period, however, Creighton, Pastor, and Gregorovius have so generously strengthened their works with quotations and references that, except at a few points, I may direct the reader to their more comprehensive studies. The narrow limits which are imposed by the particular purpose of this work forbid either the constant quoting of passages or the design of enlarging on some of the remarkable scenes to which it at times refers. The severe condensation, after the first few chapters, has entailed a labour only second to that of research, and I can only trust that the abundance of fact will afford some compensation for the lack of elegance. Happily the earlier controversial method of writing Papal history has so far yielded to candid research that the points in dispute—as far as fact is concerned—are comparatively few. Where they occur—where grave and accepted historians of any school dissent—the evidence is more liberally put before the reader.

J. M.

Christmas, 1915.

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# **Crises in the History of the Papacy**

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## CHAPTER I

### ST. CALLISTUS AND THE EARLY STRUGGLE

AT the close of the second century after the birth of Christ the Christian community at Rome still saw no human prospect of that spiritual mastery of the world which they trusted some day to attain. They lived, for the most part, in the Transtiberina, the last and least reputable section of the great city, beyond the shelter of its walls. In that squalid and crowded district between the Janiculus and the Tiber dwelt the fishers and tanners and other poor workers; and the Jews, and others who shunned the light, found refuge among their lowly tenements. Near that early ghetto, from which they had issued, most of the Christians lingered. Still they were a small community, and still the might of Rome bade them crouch trembling at the gates, lost among the tombs and gardens of the Vatican or the dense poverty at the foot of the Janiculus. Across the river they would see, above the fringe of wharves and warehouses, the spreading line of the Roman people's palaces, from the Theatre of Pompey to the Great



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Circus: perhaps they would hear the roar of the lions which might at any time taste Christian flesh. Beyond these was the seething popular quarter of the Velabrum, sending up to heaven at night a confused murmur and a blaze of light at which the Christians would cross themselves; and on either side of the Velabrum, the stern guardians of its superstition, were the hills which bore the gold-roofed temple of Jupiter and the marble city of the Cæsars. More than one hundred and fifty years had passed since the death of Christ, yet his followers waited without the gates, little heeded by the million citizens of Rome.

The old gods were dying, it is true. In many a cool *atrium* there must have been some such discussion about the successor of Jupiter as has been finely imagined by Anatole France; but assuredly not the weirdest of the Syrian visionaries who abounded would have said that, in a few centuries, those neglected fields beside the Neronian Circus at the foot of the Vatican would become the centre of the world, and that men and women would come from the farthest limits of the Empire to kiss the bones of those obscure Christians. Men talked of the progress of the cult of Mithra, which spread even to distant Eboracum, or the success of the priests of Isis or of Cybele, but few thought about the priests of Christ. Earlier in the century, Pliny had written to court to say that he had found, spreading over his province, a sect named the Christians, whose beliefs seemed to him "an immoderate superstition"; though they had, he said, under pressure, abandoned their God in crowds; and he had little doubt that he would extinguish the sect. Few even of the Christians can have imagined that within two centuries their cross would be raised above the proudest monuments of

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Rome, and that the eagles of Jove and the rams of Mithra would lie in the dust.

Toward the end of the second century the Roman Christians can hardly have numbered twenty thousand. Dr. Dollinger estimates their number at fifty thousand, but the letter of Bishop Cornelius, on which he relies, belongs to a later date and is not accurately quoted by him.<sup>1</sup> The Bishop says that, in his time, the Roman Church had forty-four priests, fourteen deacons and subdeacons, and ninety-four clerics in minor orders. The crowd of acolytes and exorcists must not be regarded in a modern sense; most of them would never be priests. At that time, there was not a single public chapel in Rome and it would be an anachronism to regard each of the thirty or forty priests of Rome as a rector in charge of more than a thousand souls. The Christians gathered stealthily in the houses of their better-endowed brethren to receive the sacred elements from poor glass vessels, and Tertullian blushes to learn that they are found among the panders and gamblers who have to bribe the officials to overlook their illegal ways.<sup>2</sup> The fact that they supported fifteen hundred poor, sick, and widows need not surprise us when we remember what an age of parasitism it was. At least a fourth of the citizens of Rome lived on free rations and had free medical service. There were, in fine, thirty years of development between the time of Cornelius and the time of Callistus.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, it was nearly a century and a half, tradition said,

<sup>1</sup> It is preserved in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, vi., 43.

<sup>2</sup> *De Fuga a Persecutione*, xiii.

<sup>3</sup> The number of interments in the Catacombs cannot very well be regarded as evidence. Archæologists differ by millions in estimating the number, and the populous Church after Constantine still buried in the Catacombs, at least until the Pontificate of Damasus.

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since Peter and Paul had baptized crowds on the banks of the Tiber. One cannot today add anything to the discussion of that tradition and I will very briefly state the evidence. The First Epistle of Peter—which is not undisputed—says<sup>1</sup>: “The Church that is in Babylon saluteth you,” and Babylon is very plausibly understood to mean Rome. Next, about the year 96, Clement of Rome, writing to the Corinthians, speaks vaguely of a “martyrdom” of Peter and Paul, and seems to imply that it took place at Rome.<sup>2</sup> About the middle of the following century, we find it believed in remote parts of the Church—by Papias in Hierapolis and Dionysius at Corinth—that Peter had preached the Gospel at Rome.<sup>3</sup> Ignatius of Antioch also seems to imply that Peter and Paul founded the Roman community.<sup>4</sup> Irenæus and Tertullian and later writers know even more about it—the later the writer, the more he knows—but the historian must hesitate to use their works. There is a respectable early tradition that Peter and Paul preached the Gospel at Rome and suffered there some kind of martyrdom, during or after the Neronian persecution. Peter is not called “bishop” of Rome by any writer earlier than the third century, and the belief that he ruled the Roman Church for twenty-five years seems to be merely the outcome of some fanciful calculations of Anti-Pope Hippolytus.

Of the earlier bishops, Linus and Anacletus (or Anencletus), we know only the names.<sup>5</sup> Then a faint

<sup>1</sup> V., 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Epistle*, v.

<sup>3</sup> See Eusebius, ii., 15, and iii., 40, for the words of Papias, and ii., 25, for the testimony of Dionysius.

<sup>4</sup> *Letter to Romans*, iv.

<sup>5</sup> Even the names and order are given differently in early writers. I follow, as is now usual, the order given by Epiphanius (xxvii., 6) and Irenæus.

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light is thrown on the metropolitan Church by the letter of Clement, its third Bishop. We find an ordered community, with bishop, priests, and deacons; perhaps we conceive it more accurately if we say, with overseer, elders, and servants. Then the mists thicken again and a line of undistinguished names is all that we can discern until the consecration of Bishop Victor in the year 189.

One would like to know more about Bishop Victor. He seems to have been the first Pope, in the familiar sense of the word. "Pope" was, we know, a common title of bishops until the sixth century, but Victor is one of the makers of a distinctive Papacy. We shall, presently, find Tertullian speaking, with his heaviest irony, of "the bishop of bishops, the supreme pontiff," and, although he is probably referring to Callistus, he is echoing the words of some other bishop. History points to Victor, who peremptorily cut off the Eastern churches from communion because they would not celebrate Easter when he did. They were not much concerned, but Victor's premature assertion of leadership marks the beginning of the Papacy.

The Roman Church was wealthier than those of the East, or had a few wealthy members in the city. It sent sums of money to more needy communities and received flattering requests for advice. It was, however, singularly lacking in intellectual distinction, and it produced no scholar to refute the subtle Gnostics and fiery Montanists who came to it. The waves of heresy which raged over the East broke harmlessly on the Italian shore of Christendom. One must not imagine that it was isolated from the East by difference of tongue. Until the end of the third century, it was wholly Greek: more isolated from Rome than from Corinth. Nor is

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it less inaccurate to say that the Latins were more interested in administration than in speculation. There is little trace of organization until the days of Callistus. One is more disposed to conceive the Roman Church shivering in poverty amid the wealth and culture of the metropolis. The disdainful language of the intellectuals and the wonderful success of Stoicism in the second century excluded it from the educated world; while its secrecy, its stern abstinence from games and festivals, its scorn of the gods, and the shadow of deadly illegality which brooded over it, made it less successful in appealing to the people than the other Eastern religions.

If, however, the Roman See made little impression in Rome, it made some progress in the Church. As the fragments of Papias and Dionysius show, Christians were saying, far away in the East, that it had been founded by Peter; and the Gospels plainly made Peter the chief of the apostles. The Roman See did not yet speak of having inherited the primacy of Peter, and it had very little share in the prestige of Rome. It must rise higher in the eyes of men, and at the end of the second century it was rising. Marcia, the robust ex-slave who shared the brutal pleasures of Commodus and was mistress of his harem of three hundred concubines, had a grateful recollection of earlier Christian kindness, and she secured peace and favour for the Church. Here it is that, for the first time, a clear light falls upon the Christian community at Rome and upon its bishops.

In the year 217 (or 218), Bishop Callistus succeeded Bishop Zephyrin, who had followed Victor. From the fourth century he has been counted one of the greatest of the early Popes. Two of the historic cemeteries bore

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his name, and there were a Church of St. Callistus (or Calixtus, as the Latins sometimes misspell it) and a Square of St. Callistus in the Trastevere district. Martyrologies honoured him as a witness to the faith, and (probably from the seventh century) the *Acta* of his martyrdom, including a most impressive account of his virtues and miracles, might be consulted in the archives of Sta. Maria in Trastevere. From these materials, Moretti composed an eloquent biography of the saint, and even the Bollandists, more discreetly, and with disturbing hints that Christian scholars were saying naughty things about the *Acta S. Callisti*, set their learned seal upon his diploma of sanctity and martyrdom.

Contemporary with Callistus, the saint and martyr, was Hippolytus, the scholar and saint and martyr. They were the two shining jewels of the Roman Church. The many works of Hippolytus had strangely disappeared, and tradition was not even sure of which town he had been Bishop; but there was evidence enough to connect him with the Roman Church and to justify the claim that he was the Origen of the West. When, in 1551, a broken marble statue of Hippolytus was discovered at Rome, it was devoutly restored and set up in the Lateran Museum. And just three hundred years afterwards, in 1851, there was given to the world a lost work of the saintly scholar, from which it is plain that he was the first Anti-Pope, and that the Pope whom he opposed and reviled was Callistus. The first book of this work, the *Refutation of all Heresies* (sometimes called the *Philosophoumena*), had long been known; the manuscript copy of Books IV. to X. was found in a monastery on Mount Athos in 1842. Now that the true character of Hippolytus is known, some doubt has

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been cast upon his scholarship, but it was considerable for his age and environment. He was one of the very few scholars of the Roman Church during several centuries, and one chapter of his work throws an interesting light on the person of Callistus and on a remarkable phase of the development of the Papacy.

The controversy about the authorship of the book and about the charges against Callistus has brought to bear upon that period all the available light; and the modern student will probably find the truth somewhere between the extremes held by the contending historians of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> De Rossi himself, indeed, while pretending to support, entirely discredits the arguments with which Döllinger, in his years of orthodoxy, sought to defend the impeccability of the Popes and to prove the moral obliquity of all who opposed them. The Italian archæologist, it is true, imputes to Hippolytus a malice which goes ill with *his* reputation for sanctity, but perhaps we shall be able to extricate ourselves from this painful dilemma without grave detriment to the character of either saint.

Callistus was, in the days of Commodus, a slave of the Christian Carpophorus, according to the *Liber Pontificalis*.<sup>2</sup> He was the son of a certain Domitius

<sup>1</sup> Bunsen's four-volume *Hippolytus and his Age* (1852) was sharply attacked by Döllinger (*Hippolytus and Callistus*, English translation, 1876) and more judiciously handled by G. B. de Rossi in his *Bulletino di Archeologia Cristiana* (1866, pp. 1-33). Milman (*History of Latin Christianity*, vol. i.) and Ch. Wordsworth (*St. Hippolytus and the Church of Rome*, 1853) supported Bunsen. The work itself is translated in *The Ante-Nicene Library*, vol. vi.

<sup>2</sup> This anonymous catalogue of the Popes, which I must often quote, is a quaint mixture of accurate archives and inaccurate rumours. The first part seems to have been written in the sixth century, and it was continued as a semi-official record. See the Introduction to Duchesne's edition.

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who lived in the Transtiberina. The master entrusted the slave with money to open a bank, and the faithful put their savings into it, but it became known after a time that Callistus had—to quote the text literally—“brought all the money to naught and was in difficulties.” He fled to the Port of Rome, whence, after leaping into the sea in despair, he was brought back to the house of Carpophorus and put in the *pistrinum*, the domestic mill in which slaves expiated their crimes. The faithful, prompted by Callistus, begged his release on the ground that he had money on loan and could repay. He had no money, however, and he could think of nothing better than to make a disturbance in the synagogue on the Sabbath, for which the Jews took him before the Prefect Fuscianus<sup>1</sup> and described him as a Christian. He was scourged and was sent to the silver or iron mines of Sardinia—the Siberia of the Empire—from which few returned. But, shortly afterwards, Marcia obtained the release of the Christians, and although Bishop Victor had not included the name of Callistus in the list, Callistus persuaded the eunuch to insert it. Victor, however, reflecting on the hostility of his victims, sent him to live, on a pension provided by the Church, at Antium.

This narrative has been subjected to the most meticulous criticism, as if it were something novel or important to accuse a Pope of having committed certain indiscretions in his youth. It suffices to say that, while Dollinger is, in the end, reduced to claiming that Hippolytus was probably not in Rome at the time, the more learned De Rossi is so impressed by the minuteness and (as far as it can be checked) the accuracy of the account

<sup>1</sup> Fuscianus was Prefect between the years 186 and 189, so that we have an approximate date of these events.



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that he believes Hippolytus to have been a deacon of the Church at the time and so to have had official knowledge of the facts. The single point of any importance is open to a humane interpretation. Did or did not Callistus embezzle the money? If he did, how came he to be elected bishop? If he did not, how comes his sainted rival to call him, as he does, a fraud and impostor? We may remember that financial troubles of this kind are peculiarly open to opposite interpretations. Hippolytus, Victor, and Carpophorus, it seems, took the less charitable view; but it would not be unnatural for others to persuade themselves, or be persuaded by Callistus, that he was merely the victim of circumstances.

Victor died in 198 and was succeeded by Zephyrin, "an ignorant and illiterate man," says Hippolytus. Callistus, who had ceased to be a slave when he was sentenced to penal servitude, was recalled to Rome and, apparently, made first deacon (now called archdeacon) of the Church. He was put in charge of a cemetery in the Appian Way which the community had just secured, and this cemetery bears his name to this day. Hippolytus, who was indignant, charges Callistus with ambition, and says that Zephyrin was avaricious and open to bribes; which we may humanely construe to mean that the able administration of Callistus enabled the Bishop to live in some comfort. Nor need we despair of finding a genial interpretation of his further charge, that the deacon induced Zephyrin to meddle with questions of dogma, and then, behind the Bishop's back, diplomatically sympathized with both the contending parties. The truth is that the Latins were sorely puzzled by the subtleties with which the Greeks were slowly and fiercely shaping the dogma that the Father

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and Son were one nature, yet two persons, and both Zephyrin and Callistus stumbled.

Callistus is further described as assisting Zephyrin in the "coercion," or, as others translate, the "organization" of the clergy, and this point is of greater interest. As far as one can construe the barbarous Latin of the *Liber Pontificalis*, Zephyrin decreed that the priests were not to consecrate the communion for the people. The sacred elements were to be brought to them, on glass patens, from the altar at which the bishop said mass. Probably this is the "coercion" to which Hippolytus refers, as the aim was, plainly, to emphasize the subordination of the clergy. I would further venture to suggest, against the learned Father Grisar, that this was also the occasion when the sphere of the Roman bishop was divided into twenty-five *tituli* (or parishes). The *Liber Pontificalis* describes how Urban I., the successor of Callistus, substituted silver for glass vessels at the altar, and expressly speaks of "twenty-five patens."

We must conclude that Callistus was able as well as persuasive, and we are not surprised to learn that, when Zephyrin died in 217 (or, according to another account, 218) he was chosen Bishop. It was customary, until long afterwards, to choose the bishop from the body of deacons, but Hippolytus and his friends were indignant at the election of the ex-slave, and a schism occurred. Hippolytus had the support of the minority of precisians and correct believers: Callistus was the favourite of the majority. Epithets of which the modern mind can hardly appreciate the gravity were hurled from camp to camp. "Patripassian," thundered Hippolytus: "Ditheist" retorted Callistus. It is quite clear that the scholar set up a rival See at Rome. He says that Callistus, when he was elected, "thought"

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that he had attained his ambition, and this must mean that he claimed himself to be the true Bishop of Rome. Later tradition, concealing the ugly schism, left the bishopric of Hippolytus in the air, or placed it at the Port of Rome, twenty miles away. But this picture of daily combats implies that both bishops were in Rome, and the little flock was rent and agitated by the first Papal schism.

The dogmatic issue between the rivals cannot profitably be discussed here. The Church was then in an early phase of the great Trinitarian controversy, and, under Victor and Zephyrin, the Roman clergy had favoured the simpler, or unitarian, view. Sabellius, who has given his name to one form of unitarianism, was in Rome and was supported by the deacon Callistus: indeed, his rival says that it was Callistus who seduced Sabellius. However that may be, Callistus shrewdly perceived he could not meet his learned opponent on that ground. He disowned Sabellius, and soon lost himself in a maze of technical theology into which I will not venture to follow him. To theologians I leave also the discussion of the charge that Callistus favoured the rebaptizing of converted heretics.

It is the charges of a practical or disciplinary nature which best illustrate the character of Callistus and make his Pontificate a milestone in the history of the Papacy. When we have made every possible allowance for exaggeration, they show that Callistus infused a remarkable spirit of liberalism into the Christian discipline and made smooth for the tender feet of the Romans the rough ways of his Church.

The first charge is that Callistus admitted grave sinners to communion, if they did penance. The ancient discipline is well known. Those who committed

## St. Callistus and the Early Struggle 13

one "mortal" sin after baptism could never again be admitted to communion. They were the pariahs of the community, bearing in the eyes of all the ineffaceable brand of their sin. There was as yet no central power to define mortal sins, but sins of the flesh were, beyond doubt, in that category, and, as such were not uncommon at Rome, a rigorous insistence on the old discipline hampered the growth of the Church. Callistus, with princely liberality, abolished it. "I hear," says Tertullian, "that an edict has gone forth. The supreme Pontiff, that is to say, the Bishop of Bishops, announces: I will absolve even those who are guilty of adultery and fornication, if they do penance."<sup>1</sup> So the narrow gates were opened a little wider to the warm-blooded Romans, and the Church grew.

But, while modern sentiment will genially applaud this act of the first liberal Pope, the fifth charge in the indictment, which I take up next, seems graver. The Greek text of Hippolytus is here particularly corrupt and ambiguous, but the translation given by the Rev. J. M. Macmahon in the *Ante-Nicene Library* is generally faithful:

For even also he permitted females, if they were unwedded and burned with passion at an age at all events unbecoming [more probably, at a seasonable age], or [and] if they were not disposed to overturn their dignity through a legal marriage, that they might have whomsoever they would choose as a bedfellow, whether a slave or free [freedman],

<sup>1</sup> *De Pudicitia*, i. Döllinger, on no apparent ground, and against all probability, refers this to Zephyrin, and some older writers think that the indignant Puritan is quoting an African bishop. We must agree with De Rossi that Tertullian has Callistus in mind, especially when we find Hippolytus saying that he was "the first" to do this. An earlier attempt of an Eastern bishop might easily have escaped Hippolytus.

## 14 Crises in the History of the Papacy

and that they, though not legally married, might consider such an one as a husband.<sup>1</sup>

The Bishop goes on to describe in technical language, which need not be reproduced here, how the practice of abortion spread among Christian ladies as a result of this license.

The apparent gravity of the charge has, however, so far disappeared since the days of Döllinger that we are now asked to admire the bold and exalted charity of Callistus. He is, of course, referring to the Roman law which forbade the widow or daughter of a senator, under pain of losing her dignity of *clarissima*, to marry a free-born man of lower condition; a slave or freedman she could not validly marry. There cannot have been very many ladies of senatorial rank in the Church at that time, seeing that, seventy years after the conversion of Constantine, St. Augustine found "nearly the whole of the nobility" still pagan.<sup>2</sup> There were, however, some, as the inscriptions in the Catacombs show, and their position was painful. They must either mate with a Christian slave or freedman, and be regarded by the law and their neighbours as living in concubinage: or marry a free-born Christian of low degree and thus forfeit their rank: or devote their virginity or their widowhood to God. The Church was concerned that they should not marry pagan senators, who would scoff at their superstitions and would dissipate their fortunes. Callistus told them that he would recognize as valid in conscience unions with slaves or freedmen which the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. vi., p. 346. This is a fair, if inelegant, rendering of the Greek text given by Duncker and Schneidewin in their edition of the *Refutation*, and it corresponds with the Latin translation given by those editors and with De Rossi. Döllinger is alone in his interpretation.

<sup>2</sup> *Confessions*, viii., 2.

## St. Callistus and the Early Struggle 15

State did not countenance. The number of ladies to whom the license extended must have been small, and Hippolytus evidently exaggerates the occasional scandals which followed. The impartial historian, however, will hardly regard the action of Callistus as a humanitarian protest against caste-distinctions. Such distinctions were maintained by the Church for centuries afterwards in its legislation about the clergy, and, on the other hand, the measure was profitable to the Church. In practice, indeed, these secret marriages would easily lead to disorder. A Christian lady would, if she were to keep her union secret, merely choose a "husband" among her slaves or freedmen, and would be tempted to use illicit means when her "marriage" threatened to be exposed too plainly to pagan eyes.

The other charges against Callistus show a general policy of liberality. He decreed that a bishop who was convicted of mortal sin was not necessarily to be deposed: he permitted men who had been twice or thrice married to become deacons or priests: he directed that "men in orders" must not be disturbed if they married. Some writers think that, in the latter case, he was referring only to men in minor orders, but that would not have been a daring innovation. Hippolytus, in fact, makes his policy and his character clearer by telling us, indignantly, how Callistus searched the Scriptures for proof that the Church must be wide enough to embrace both saints and sinners. There had been clean and unclean animals in the ark: Christ had said that the tares must grow up with the wheat: and so on. His reputation for liberality spread so far in the Church that, while Tertullian grumbled in Africa, a quaint Syrian charlatan named Alcibiades was attracted from the East to

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Rome. He brought a mystic work, given to him by two angels of the imposing height of ninety-six miles each, and he proclaimed that his new form of baptism absolved even from certain gross sins which he very freely and suggestively described.

The Church grew during these years of peace, of able organization, and of humanization. Callistus "made a *basilica* beyond the Tiber"—the *Liber Pontificalis* says—and there is an interesting passage in the *Historia Augusta* which seems to refer to this first Christian chapel at Rome. The biographer of Alexander Severus says (c. xliii.) that the Emperor wished to give the Christians the right to have public chapels, but his officials protested that "the temples would be deserted—all Rome would become Christian." This is obviously a piece of later Christian fiction. In a more plausible paragraph, however, Lampridius tells us that the Christians occupied a "public place," to which the innkeepers laid claim, and the Emperor decided that "it was better for God to be worshipped there in some form than for the innkeepers to have it." It is probable enough that this inn is the *taverna meritoria* (wine shop and restaurant) referred to by Dio Cassius<sup>1</sup>: among the portents which accompanied the struggles of Octavian a stream of oil had burst forth in this hostel in the Transtiberina. We know from Orosius<sup>2</sup> that the Christians claimed the occurrence in later years as a presage of the coming of Christ. The age, if not the disputed ownership, of the place suggests a dilapidated, if not deserted, building; and if we may in one detail trust that interesting romance, the *Acta S. Callisti*, we have a picture of the Christians of the third century meeting at last, under their enterprising

<sup>1</sup> XLVIII.

<sup>2</sup> VI., 18.

## St. Callistus and the Early Struggle 17

Bishop, in the upper or dining room of this humble old inn in the despised Transtiberina. This was the high-water mark of a century and a half of progress.

Only one other act is authentically recorded of the brief rule of Bishop Callistus: he directed his people to fast on three Sabbaths in the year. This may seem inconsistent with his genial policy, but we must remember that rigorists abounded at Rome and demanded sterner ways. Callistus, apparently, merely sanctioned some slight traditional observance and thus virtually relieved the faithful of others.

It may be fascinating to conjecture what so enterprising a Pope would have done with the ecclesiastical system if he had lived long enough, but Callistus died, according to the best authorities, in the year 222, four or five years after his consecration. He did not die a martyr. In opening his account of the career of Callistus, the rival Bishop says: "This man suffered martyrdom when Fuscianus was Prefect, and this was the sort of martyrdom he suffered." It is inconceivable that Hippolytus should use such language in Rome after the death of Callistus if the Pope had really suffered for the faith. No Christian was executed at Rome under Alexander Severus. We must suppose that after his death, if not during his life, Callistus was applauded as a martyr because of his banishment to Sardinia, and probably this gave rise to the legend of his martyrdom, which first appears, as a bald statement, in the fourth century. The *Acta S. Callisti* may be traced to about the seventh century, and may be a pious contribution to the rejoicing of the faithful at the transfer of his bones to Sta. Maria in Trastevere.<sup>1</sup> The recklessness

<sup>1</sup> Neither this church nor the Basilica S. Callisti can have been the original meeting-place, though the latter may have been founded on it.



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with which the writer describes the gentle and friendly Alexander Severus as a truculent enemy of the Christians was noted even by mediæval historians, and the narrative is now regarded as, in the words of Döllinger, "a piece of fiction from beginning to end." Yet Father Grisar<sup>2</sup> describes Callistus as a martyr.

Hippolytus maintained his little schism under Urban I. and Pontianus, while the orthodox community prospered in the sun of imperial favour. Then the grim Maximinus succeeded Alexander on the throne, and the clouds gather again over Christendom. We just discern Pope and Anti-Pope, Pontianus and Hippolytus, passing together to the deadly mines of Sardinia. Later legend generously reconciled the rivals and gave to both of them the martyr's crown; but the authority is late and worthless. In whatever manner he ended his career, Rome was too proud of its one scholar to darken his memory, and the names of Hippolytus and Callistus shone together in ecclesiastical literature until that fateful discovery among the dusty parchments of the monks of Mount Athos.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Rome and the Popes in the Early Middle Ages*. i., 313.



## CHAPTER II

### ST. DAMASUS AND THE TRIUMPH

IN the year 355, the Christians of the imperial city startled their neighbours by a series of violent and threatening demonstrations. Armed crowds of them filled the streets, and monks and sacred virgins hid themselves from the riot. An inquiring pagan would have learned that the Emperor Constantius, who had waded to supremacy through a stream of blood, was attempting to force on their Bishop and themselves the damnable heresy of Arius. A few weeks before, Constantius had sent his eunuch with rich presents to Liberius, suavely asking him to condemn a certain fiery Athanasius who resisted the heresy. Liberius had courageously refused, and, when the eunuch had cunningly left the gifts beside the tomb of St. Peter, the Bishop had had them cast out of the church. When the exasperated eunuch had returned to the Emperor at Milan, the Christian community had prepared for drastic action, and it was presently known that the civic officials at Rome had received orders to seize the Bishop and send him to Milan. The Christians threatened resistance, and for a few days the city was enlivened by their turbulence. At last, Liberius was dragged from his house at night and taken to Milan; and, since he bravely resisted the Emperor to his face, he was sent on to remote and inhospitable Thrace.

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Then the clergy, and as many of the faithful as could enter, gathered in their handsome new *basilica* on the site of the Laterani Palace and swore a great oath that they would know no other bishop as long as Liberius lived. One, at least, of the clergy set out—no doubt amidst the cheers of the people—to accompany his Bishop into exile; this was the deacon Damasus, who was destined to be the next Pope of prominence in the Roman calendar.

The scene reminds us forcibly of the dramatic transformation which had taken place since, a century before, Pope and Anti-Pope had been sent in chains to the mines. For fifty years after that date the *Liber Pontificalis* is a necrology, a chronicle of gloomy life in the Catacombs. Eleven Popes out of the thirteen who followed Urban I. are—most of them wrongly—described as martyrs, and the record of their actions shrinks to a few lines. At last, with Bishop Eusebius, the chronicle brightens and lengthens; and then, under the name of Silvester, it swells to thirty pages and glows with tokens of imperial generosity. The darkest hour of the Church has suddenly changed into a dazzling splendour.

The historical revolution reflected in this early chronicle of the Popes is well known. For eighty years after the death of Callistus, the hope of the faithful was painfully strained. The Decian persecution (249–251) sent some to the heroic death of the martyr, many to the corrupt officials who sold false certificates of apostasy, and very many back to the pagan temples. Then another schism and another Anti-Pope appeared; and the alliance with St. Cyprian and the African bishops, which had at first promised aid against the schismatics, ended in a contemptuous repudiation by the African

bishops of Rome's claim to jurisdiction. The Valerian persecution dissolved the feud in blood, and, then, forty years of peace enabled the Roman Christians to recover and to extend their domain. Two or three small *basilica* were erected or adapted. But, in the year 303, the new hope was chilled by the dreaded summons of the persecutor, and, for the last time, stern-set men and gentle maidens set out to face the headsman. Rome did not suffer much in the next seven years of persecution, but one can imagine the feelings of the faithful when they saw century thus succeed century without bringing any larger hope even of a free place in the sun. And then, in rapid succession, came the triumph of Constantine, the issue of their charter of liberty (the Edict of Milan, 313), the imperial profession of Christianity, the grant to the Christian clergy of the privileges of Roman priests, and the building of large *basilica* and scattering of gold and silver over their marble altars. Even the transfer of the court to Constantinople hardly dimmed the new hope. It remained "a new form of ambition to desert the altars," the pagans murmured, and no one dare thwart the zeal of the clergy.

So, by the year 355, when deacon Damasus makes an inglorious entrance into history, Rome had a large Christian community and at least half a dozen churches. But Christendom was now overcast by the triumph of Arianism and an Arian Emperor, and the struggle put an insupportable strain on the character of the faithful. At first, the prospect at Rome was brave and inspiring. They would all be true to their martyr-bishop; with that thrilling cry in his ears the deacon set out for Thrace. In a very short time, he was back in Rome, having changed his mind: "fired with ambition," his critics said. And, in another short time, the chief deacon Felix,

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who also had taken the oath, listened to the Arian court and became Bishop of Rome; and Damasus and most of the clergy transferred their loyalty to him. Then, in two or three years, Liberius grew tired of Thrace, and signed some sort of heretical formula, and came back to Rome; and the bloody struggle of Pope and Anti-Pope led to a train of sorrows which darken the life of St. Damasus.

He had been born, probably at Rome, though his father is said to have been a Spaniard, about the year 304.<sup>1</sup> The father had been a priest in the service of the little *basilica* of St. Lawrence in the city—I am not impressed by Marucchi's contention that he was a bishop—and had brought up Damasus in the same service. The mother Laurentia was pious: the sister Irene consecrated her virginity to God. Damasus became, and remained, a deacon, and was at least in his fiftieth year when he turned his back upon the heroic road to Thrace. He was popular in the new Christian Rome, which Jerome describes so darkly; envious folk called him "the tickler of matrons' ears," and even worse. But we lose sight of him again for ten years after his first appearance.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> His latest biographer, the learned Father Marucchi, says 305, but St. Jerome does not say that he was "eighty years old" at death (in 384); he says, "nearly eighty." See Father Marucchi's *Il Papa Damaso* (1907) and *Christian Epigraphy* (English trans. 1912), M. Rade's *Damasus, Bischof von Rom* (1882) is a little more critical.

<sup>2</sup> The less flattering statements about Damasus are generally taken from a certain *Libellus precum*, or petition, which was presented to the Emperors by two hostile, though esteemed and orthodox, priests about the year 384. The attack on Damasus is, however, in a preface to the petition, which was probably not put before the Emperors. We must make allowance for bitter hostility, but we shall find some of their strangest statements confirmed by the highest authorities. The *Libellus* is reproduced in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. iii.

## St. Damasus and the Triumph 23

The events of those ten years are, however, important for the understanding of Damasus and his Church, and must be briefly reviewed. That the clergy had, in the presence of the people, sworn to be true to Liberius, and that the majority of them broke their oath, is confirmed by St. Jerome in his Chronicle. Jerome, a decisive authority, tells also of the fall of Liberius, and this is also recorded by Athanasius, who writes the whole story. When Felix consented to be made bishop, the people were so infuriated that he had to be consecrated by the Emperor's Arian bishops in the palace: a group of eunuchs nominally representing the people, who raged without. Most of the clergy accepted Felix, but a minority, with the mass of the people, refused to do so, and, for two years, he gave his blessing to very thin congregations, or to empty benches. Then the Emperor came to Rome, and an imposing deputation of noble Christian ladies prevailed on him to recall Liberius. The Great Circus provided a new sensation for its 400,000 idlers when an imperial messenger announced that henceforward Liberius and Felix would rule their respective flocks side by side in Rome. "Two circums-factions, so two bishops," the pagan majority ironically replied: but the Christian laity ominously thundered, "One God, one Christ, one Bishop." So when Liberius, "overcome by the weariness of exile and embracing the heretical perversity" (says St. Jerome in his Chronicle), returned to Rome, he was received "as a conqueror." His loyal flock, finely indifferent to the way in which he had purchased his return, lined the route as men had done to welcome a triumphing general in the old days.

This must have been about the end of 357 or the beginning of 358, and we shall not dwell on the scenes which followed. Felix and his followers were driven

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out of the city. Getting reinforcements, apparently, they returned and took possession of the Basilica Julii in the Transtiberina; but the mass of the faithful, led by Christian senators or officers, took the church by storm, and again swept them out of Rome. The *Liber Pontificalis* records that a number of the clergy were slain in the battle, and, becoming hopelessly confused between Pope and Anti-Pope, it awards these followers of Felix the palm of martyrdom. But it appears that the Felicians were strong, and for six years held several of the smaller churches; rival clerics and laymen could not meet in the baths and streets without violent results. However, Felix died in 365, and Liberius wisely adopted his clerical supporters.<sup>1</sup>

Damasus remains in decent obscurity during these years, and we may assume that he repented his mistake, and renewed his allegiance to Liberius. But Liberius followed his rival in the next year (366) and the real career of Damasus opened. A well-known passage in the *Res Gestæ* of the contemporary pagan Ammianus Marcellinus<sup>2</sup> tells how, by that time, the Bishop of Rome scoured the city in a gorgeous chariot, gave banquets which excelled those of the Emperor, and received the smiles and rich presents of all the fine ladies of Rome; and the querulous old soldier is not surprised, he says, that Damasus and his rival Ursicinus

<sup>1</sup> The *Liber Pontificalis*, which gives these events, first lets the schismatic Felix die in peace, and then introduces into the series of Pontiffs a Felix II., saint and martyr! To this day the fortunate Felix bears these honours in the liturgy. It was discovered, in 1582, that the Anti-Pope Felix had been confused with a real saint and martyr of that name, and the question of displacing him was debated at Rome. But the miraculous discovery of an inscription in his favour put an end to criticism. The genuine authorities are agreed that Felix died comfortably in his house on the road to the Port of Rome.

<sup>2</sup> XXVII., 3.

(as the name runs in official documents) were "swollen with ambition" for the seat, and stirred up riots so fierce that the Prefect was driven out of Rome, and, after one fight, a hundred and thirty-seven corpses were left on the floor of one of the "Christian conventicles." Jerome,<sup>1</sup> Rufinus,<sup>2</sup> and other ecclesiastical writers of the time place the fatal rioting beyond question, and we may therefore, with a prudent reserve, follow the closer description given in the *Libellus*.

As soon as the death of Liberius became known, in September, 366, the remnant of his original supporters met in the Basilica Julii, across the river, and elected the deacon Ursicinus, who was at once consecrated by a provincial bishop. It was an act of defiance to Damasus, the popular candidate, whom they were determined to exclude. Then, say these writers, Damasus gathered and bribed a mob, armed with staves, and for three days there was a bloody fight for the possession of the basilica. A week after the death of Liberius (or on October 1st), Damasus marched with his mob, now effectively reinforced by gladiators, to the Lateran Basilica, and was consecrated there. After this, he bribed the Prefect Viventius to expel seven priests of the rival party, but the people rescued them and conducted them to the Basilica Liberii, or Basilica Sicinini (now Sta. Maria Maggiore), in the poor quarter across the river. In this chapel the rebels were at worship in the early morning of October 26th when a crowd of gladiators, charioteers, diggers (or guardians of the Catacombs), and other ruffians (in the pay of Damasus, of course) fell on them with staves, swords, and axes, and an historic fight ensued. The Damasians stormed the barricaded door, fired the sacred building, mounted

<sup>1</sup> Year 369.

<sup>2</sup> II., 10.



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the roof, and flung tiles on the Ursicinians. In the end the corpses of one hundred and sixty—Ammianus was too modest—followers of Ursicinus, of both sexes, lay on the floor of the blood-splashed chapel, and Ursicinus and his chief supporters were sent into exile.

Such is the tale of woe of the priests Faustinus and Marcellinus, and there is no doubt whatever that for months the most savage encounters desecrated the chapels and Catacombs of Rome. As to whether Damasus was or was not elected in his Church of St. Lawrence in the city *before* the election of Ursicinus the authorities are not agreed; and it must be left to the decision of the reader whether those who secured his triumph were really a hired mob of gladiators and diggers or a troop of pious and indignant admirers. Jerome, whose modern biographer, Amédée Thierry,<sup>1</sup> plausibly contends that he was studying in Rome at the time, expressly says that the followers of his patron Damasus were the aggressors, and that many men and women were slain. Rufinus is more favourable to the cause of Damasus, but he admits that the churches were "filled with blood."

The Emperor seems not to have been convinced by the report of the triumphant faction, and in the following year he permitted Ursicinus and his followers to return to Rome. But the trouble was renewed, and the Anti-Pope was again banished. His obstinate admirers then met in the Catacombs, and another fierce and fatal fight occurred in the cemetery of St. Agnes, where the servants of Damasus surprised them. It is clear that Damasus had the support of the wealthy and the favour of the pagan officials, but his rival must have controlled a very large, if not the larger, part of the

<sup>1</sup> *Saint Jerome*, 1867.

people. The forces engaged, and the growth of the Christian body, may be estimated from the fact that, as Ammianus says, the Prefect Viventius was compelled to retire to the suburbs. He was promptly replaced, in the attempt to control the rioters, by the ruthless and impartial Maximinus, the Prefect of the Food-distribution; and clerics and laymen were indiscriminately put to the torture and punished. At length, in 368, one of the last of the sober old Roman patricians, Prætextatus, became Prefect, and put an end to the riots. The reflections of Prætextatus and Symmachus and other cultivated pagans are not recorded, but we are told by St. Jerome that, when Damasus endeavoured to convert the Prefect, he mischievously replied: "Make me Bishop of Rome and I will be a Christian."

Ursicinus went to din his grievances into the ears of provincial bishops, and there seems to be good ground for the statement in the *Libellus* that some of these were indignant with Damasus. It is at least clear that Damasus went on to obtain from the Emperor a concession of the most far-reaching character. The imperial rescript making this concession—one of the really important steps in the history of the Papacy and of the Church—has strangely disappeared, but we find the bishops of a later Roman synod (in 378 or 379) writing to Gratian and Valentinian that, when Ursicinus was banished, the Emperors had decreed that "the Roman bishop should have power to inquire into the conduct of the other priests of the churches, and that affairs of religion should be judged by the pontiff of religion with his colleagues."<sup>1</sup> A later rescript of Gratian indicates that the Bishop of Rome was to have five or seven colleagues with him in these inquir-

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio*, iii., 625.

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ies<sup>1</sup>; and further light is thrown on the matter by St. Ambrose who observes<sup>2</sup> that, by a degree of Valentinian, a defendant in a religious dispute was to have a judge of a fitting character (a cleric) and of at least equal rank. Possibly the truculent impartiality of Maximinus was the immediate occasion for asking this privilege, and Valentinian would not find it unseemly that bishops should adjudicate on these new types of quarrels. But we have in this last document the germ of great historical developments. The clergy were virtually withdrawn from secular jurisdiction; the spiritual court was set up in face of the secular. Moreover, if defendants were to be judged only by their equals, who was to judge the Bishop of Rome?

Damasus at once used his powers. He convoked a synod at Rome, and we may realize the enormous progress that the Church had made in fifty years when we learn that ninety-three Italian bishops responded to his summons. On a charge of favouring Arianism, which seems to cloak a real charge of favouring Ursinicus, the bishops of Parma and Puteoli were deposed by the synod, and they appealed in vain to the court. Henceforward bishops—under the presidency of the Bishop of Rome—were to judge bishops. The cultivated and courtly Auxentius of Milan was next condemned, but he was too secure in the favour of the Empress to do more than smile. Neither he nor his great successor, St. Ambrose, acknowledged any authority over them on the part of the Roman bishop.

From this synod, moreover, the bishops wrote to the Emperor to ask that secular officials should be instructed to enforce their jurisdiction and sentences, and we shall hardly be unjust if we suspect the direct or

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, iii., 628.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xxi.

indirect suggestion of Damasus in their further requests. They asked that bishops might be tried *either* by the Bishop of Rome *or* by a council of fifteen bishops, and that the Bishop of Rome himself might, "if his case were not laid before an (episcopal) council," defend himself before the Imperial Council.<sup>1</sup> This bold attempt of the Roman bishop to judge all bishops, yet be judged by none, seems to have displeased the Emperor, who may have consulted the Bishop of Milan. We have, at least, no indication that the privilege was granted. But the other points were granted, and instructions were issued to the secular officers, in Gaul as well as in Italy, apprising them of the juridical autonomy of the Church and of their duty to enforce its decisions. Out of his troubles Damasus had won a most important step in the making of the Papacy.

Unfriendly critics might suggest that Damasus paid a price for these powers. A curious passage in the historian Socrates<sup>2</sup> tells us that, in the year 370, Valentinian decreed that every man might henceforward marry two wives. The statement is often rejected as preposterous, but we know that Valentinian had, shortly before, divorced his wife, Severa, in favour of the more comely Justina, and it is probable enough that he passed a law of divorce. The learned Tillemont blushes when he finds no ecclesiastical protest at the time against this flagrant return to pagan morals.

However that may be, Damasus, from his palace by the Lateran Basilica, continued to strengthen his new authority and to regulate the disordered Church. Rome still harboured numbers of rebels, and they seem to have caused him serious annoyance by a persistent charge that, in earlier years, he had sinned with a

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, iii., 624.

<sup>2</sup> IV., 26.

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Roman matron. A converted and relapsed Jew was put forward as the chief witness to the charge, and, when the young Emperor Gratian had failed to impress Rome by his personal assurance that Damasus was innocent, a Roman synod of forty-four bishops professed to investigate and dismiss the accusation. Ursicinus was now, however, living at Milan, and it is not implausibly suggested that his insistence made some impression on the puritanical young Emperor. The case was submitted to the Council of Aquileia in 380, at which St. Ambrose presided, and the bishops declared the innocence of Damasus and demanded the secular punishment of his accusers, who were now scattered over Europe. The Roman rebels then masked their hostility by joining an eccentric, though orthodox, sect in the capital whose ascetic leader bore the name of Lucifer. On these Luciferians in turn the hand of Damasus fell with ruthless severity. Their renowned Macarius, the champion faster of the time outside the Egyptian desert, was physically dragged into court and banished, and the "police" pursued them from one secret meeting-place to another. It is at this time that Faustinus and Marcellinus, who had joined the rigorous sect, addressed their *Libellus* to the Emperors.

Over the remainder of Italy and over Gaul Damasus did not press the virtual primacy which he had won from the imperial authorities, and the later language of Leo and Gregory makes it advisable for us to grasp clearly the situation in the fourth century. There was no question of Papal supremacy. No important decision was reached by Damasus apart from a synod, and the See of Milan was not regarded as subordinate in authority to that of Rome; though St. Ambrose naturally expressed a peculiar respect for the doctrinal tradition of

a church that had been founded by the great apostles. When the Spanish Priscillianists applied to Italy for aid, they appealed, says Sulpicius Severus, "to the *two* bishops who had the highest authority at that time." When the great struggle with the pagan senators over the statue of Victory took place in 382, it was Ambrose who championed Christianity, Damasus merely sending to him the Roman petition. But Damasus knew the theoretical strength of his position, and knew, as a rule, when to enforce it. In 378, the Emperors severed Illyricum (Greece, Epirus, Thessaly, and Macedonia) from the Western Empire. Damasus at once contrived that its bishops should look not to the Eastern churches but to himself for direction and support, and from that time onward the Bishop of Thessalonica became the "Vicar" of the Bishop of Rome.

We must leave this vague and imperfect primacy in the West, with its secular foundations, and turn to the more interesting and adventurous course of the diplomacy of Damasus in the East. The narrow limits within which each of these sketches must be confined forbid me to attempt to depict the extraordinary confusion of the Eastern Church. It must suffice to say, in few words, that the struggle against paganism was almost lost in the fiery struggle against heresy, and that the hand of the Arian Valens smote the orthodox as violently and persistently as the hand of any pagan emperor had done. The various refinements of the Arian heresy, the lingering traces of old heresies, and the vigorous beginnings of new heresies, rent each church into factions as violent as those of Rome, and made each important See the theatre of a truculent rivalry. Constantinople, or New Rome as it loved to call itself, was the natural centre of the Eastern religious world, but it

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was overshadowed by the Arian court and its growing pretensions were watched by the apostolic churches of Antioch and Alexandria almost as jealously as by Old Rome. The triumph over paganism had, before it was half completed, given place to a dark and sanguinary confusion, from the shores of the Euxine to the sands of the Thebaid.

In 371 St. Basil appealed to Damasus for assistance. He sent the deacon Dorotheus with a letter<sup>1</sup> asking the Italians to send to the East visitors who might report to them the condition of the churches. Damasus, not flattered by the lowliness of the embassy or by the smallness of the request, and still much occupied in the West, merely sent his deacon Sabinus. To a further impassioned appeal from Basil he gave no clearer promise of aid, and Basil indignantly observed that it was useless to appeal to "a proud and haughty man who sits on a lofty throne and cannot hear those who tell him the truth on the ground below."<sup>2</sup> Basil made further futile appeals to the West, though not to Damasus, and at length, in 381, the Eastern bishops met in the Council of Constantinople, discussed their own affairs, and, in a famous canon, awarded the See of Constantinople a primacy in the East. Shortly afterwards a synod was held in Italy, under Ambrose, and it sent to the Emperor Theodosius a letter in which the concern of the Italians was plainly expressed.<sup>3</sup> The bishops ask Theodosius to assist in convoking an Ecumenical Council at Rome, and say that "it seems not unworthy that they [the Eastern bishops] should

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, ccxv.; see also *Ep.*, ccxxxix. and cclxvi., for violent language. All the letters of the Popes, up to Innocent III., are in this work quoted from the Migne edition.

<sup>3</sup> Mansi, iii., 631.

submit to the Bishop of Rome and the other Italian bishops"; though they "do not claim any prerogative of judgment." It is interesting to note at this stage how the Bishop of Rome does not yet stand apart from the other Italian bishops or claim jurisdiction over the East. In a letter written by Damasus somewhere about this time to certain oriental bishops, there is question of "reverence for the Apostolic See" and of the foundation of that See by Peter, but such language is rare and premature, and is not implausibly ascribed to St. Jerome, who was then at Rome.<sup>1</sup> To the Eastern emperor and to the Eastern patriarchs it is not addressed.

Theodosius ignored the request, and sanctioned the holding of another Council at Constantinople. The Westerns had, in the meantime, announced an Ecumenical Council at Rome for the summer of 382, and invited their Eastern brethren. From one cause or other, the proceedings at Rome were delayed, and, while the Italians still anxiously awaited the response to their invitation, a letter came with the message that the Eastern bishops had settled the questions in dispute, and they regretted that they had not "the wings of a dove" in order that they might fly from "the great city of Constantinople" to "the great city of Rome." The letter is a model of polite and exquisite irony.<sup>2</sup> The statesmanship of Damasus had hopelessly miscarried, and the Eastern and Western branches of Christendom were farther than ever from uniting under his presidency.

A more intimate aspect of the character of Damasus is disclosed when we consider the condition of the Roman clergy during his Pontificate. It almost suffices to recall that an imperial rescript of the year 370 forbade

<sup>1</sup> The letter is in Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History*, v., 10.

<sup>2</sup> Theodoret, v., 9.



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priests and monks to visit the houses of widows and orphans, and declared that legacies to them were invalid. St. Jerome himself deploras that there were solid reasons for thus depriving the clergy of a privilege which every gladiator enjoyed, and that the law was shamefully frustrated by donations.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, in 372, the law was extended to nuns and bishops, and for nearly a hundred years the Roman clergy bore the stigma which was implied by such a prohibition.

Jerome's letters ruthlessly depict the condition of the Roman community. Fresh from his austerities in the desert of Chalcidia, the impulsive monk was as ready to denounce vice as to encourage virtue, and evidences of singular laxity mingle with heroic virtue in his vivid pages. On the one hand he directed, in the sobered palace of Marcella on the Aventine, a group of noble dames in the practice of the most rigorous piety and the cultivation of sacred letters. The populace even threatened to fling him into the river, when the lovely and high-born Blesilla terminated her austerities by a premature death, and even Christian writers fiercely contested this introduction into Rome of the ideals of the Egyptian desert. But, on the other hand, Jerome's directions to his pupils incidentally betray that, beyond his little school of virtue and learning, he saw nothing but sin and worldliness. In plain and crude speech he warns his pupils to shun their Christian neighbours and distrust the priests. Sombre as are many of the letters which Seneca wrote in the days of Nero, not one of them can compare with Jerome's lengthy letter to the gentle maiden Eustochium.<sup>2</sup> He fills her virgin mind with a comprehensive picture of frailty and frivolity, and tells her that she may regard, not as a Christian,

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* lii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xxii.

but as a Manichæan, any austere-looking woman whom she may meet on the streets of Rome. He denounces "the new genus of concubines," the "spiritual brothers and sisters," who share the same house, even the same bed, and, if you protest, complain that you are evil-minded. Eustochium is to avoid gatherings of Christian women, and must never be alone with these clerics, who, exquisitely dressed, their hair curled and oiled, their fingers glittering with rings, spend the livelong day wheedling presents out of their wealthy admirers. I omit the graver details given in this and other letters of the outraged monk.

The impartial historian cannot regard with reserve the criticisms which Ammianus passed on his pagan fellows and then literally accept Jerome's more severe strictures on his fellow-Christians. There is exaggeration on both sides. Yet no one now questions that the Christian community at Rome, lay and clerical, had in the days of Damasus fallen far below its ideals, and it is not pleasant that we find little or no trace of an episcopal struggle against this corruption. It is sometimes said that the rescript which prevented priests from inheriting was passed at the request of the Pope. For this statement there is no historical ground whatever, and it is in the highest degree improbable. It is clear that prosperity had lowered the character of the Church, from its bishop down to its grave-diggers; and the laments of St. Ambrose at Milan, of St. Chrysostom at Antioch and Constantinople, and of St. Augustine in Africa, indicate a general relaxation. The Roman world must pass through another severe and searching trial before men like Leo I. and Gregory I. arise in it.

This conception of Damasus as a courtly and lenient

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prelate is not materially modified when we regard his more strictly religious work. He restored the Church of St. Lawrence, in which he and his father had served: he built a tiny *basilica*—little more than a princely tomb for himself, Marucchi believes—on the Via Ardeatina: he erected a new baptistery at St. Peter's. These are not exceptionally impressive works of piety in so prosperous an age.

Damasus was an artist: not—if we judge him by his *Epigrams*—a man of much inspiration, but one who perceived the value of art in the service of religion. Jerome tells us that he wrote in prose and verse on the beauty of virginity, but we know his very modest poetical talent only from the surviving fifty or sixty inscriptions with which he adorned the graves of the martyrs or the chapels.<sup>1</sup> He had a genuine passion for the adornment and popularization of the Catacombs. They were already falling into decay, and Damasus cleared the galleries, made new air-shafts, and decorated the more important chambers with marble slabs and silver rails. No doubt he did this in part with a view to attracting the pagans, but there can be little doubt that he had a strong personal sentiment for the work.

With the assistance of Jerome, he also endeavoured to improve the literary standard of the Church. Jerome revised the "Old Italian" translation of the Bible; and it seems probable that the canon of the Scriptures which has until recently been regarded as part of a "Gelasian Decree" was composed by Jerome, under the authority of Damasus, and promulgated by a Roman synod. The canon can hardly be due to the pen which wrote the rambling and uncultivated list of books which fol-

<sup>1</sup> The best collection is Ihm's *Damasi Epigrammata* (1895).

lows it; probably a later hand united the two and ascribed them to Gelasius.<sup>1</sup>

The eighteen years' Pontificate of Damasus came to a close in 384. He is not in the line of heroic Popes. He was, at his elevation, in his seventh decade of life and his remaining energy was largely spent in struggling against the disastrous consequences of his election. He succeeded rather by geniality of temper and the services of others than by strong personal exertion. But he was lucky in his opportunities. He had control of the new wealth of the Papacy, and the Emperors with whom he had to deal were the indifferent or undiscerning Valentinian and the pious and youthful Gratian. Hence he added materially to the foundations of the mediæval Papacy. One might almost venture to say that the dogmatic Roman conception of a primacy inherited from Peter dates from the scriptural discussions of Damasus and Jerome. They were not the authors of that conception, but it would henceforward form the essential part of the Papal attitude.

<sup>1</sup> There is a third part of this "Gelasian Decree," which assigns to the Papacy an absolute primacy derived from Peter. It is improbable that this was due to Damasus. A letter hitherto ascribed to Pope Sirianus (*Ep.*, x. in Migne) has lately been claimed for Damasus (Babut, *La plus ancienne décrétale*, 1904), but there is not enough evidence to date it. It is a series of directions, better known as *Canons of the Romans to the Bishops of Gaul*, on the subject of clerical celibacy, fallen virgins, etc.

## CHAPTER III

### LEO THE GREAT, THE LAST POPE OF IMPERIAL ROME

**D**URING the half-century which followed the death of Damasus occurred two of the decisive events in the transformation of the Roman Empire into Christian Europe. Paganism was destroyed, and the Empire was shattered. Jerome had, with rhetorical inaccuracy, described the great temple of Jupiter as squalid and deserted in the days of Damasus. Now it was in truth deserted, for the imperial seal was set on its closed doors; and the same seal guarded the door of the temples of Isis and Mithra. The homeless gods had sheltered for a time in the schools and in patrician mansions, but these also had fallen with the Empire. The southern half of Europe became a disordered, semi-Christian world, over which poured from the northern forests fresh armies of barbarians. The City of Man was wrecked; and it was not unnatural that the Papacy should aspire to make its old metropolis the centre of the new City of God.

Two Popes of weak ability had followed Damasus, and witnessed, rather than accomplished, the ruin of the old religion. It was Ambrose who had directed the convenient youth of Gratian and Valentinian II., and had dislodged the pagans and other rivals at the point of the spear. Innocent I. (402-417) was a greater man: an upright priest, an able statesman, a zealous believer

in the divine right of Popes. Milman has finely drawn him serenely holding his sceptre at Rome while the Emperor cowered behind the fortifications at Ravenna. While Rome tumbled in ruins about him, he continued calmly to tell the bishops of Gaul and Spain and Italy what the "Apostolic See" directed them to do. His puny yet bombastic successor, Zosimus, maintained the solitary blunder, without the redeeming personality, of Innocent, and might have wrecked the Papacy if he had not died within a year or so. The worthier Boniface and still worthier Celestine restored Roman prestige in some measure, and, in 440, after the edifying but undistinguished Pontificate of Sixtus III., Leo the Great entered the chronicle.

Leo, a Roman of Tuscan extraction, was the chief deacon of the Roman Church, and corresponded with Cyril of Alexandria on Eastern affairs. It was probably at his instigation that the learned Cassianus wrote his treatise *On the Incarnation of Christ*. In 440, Leo was sent by the Emperor to reconcile the generals Aetius and Albinus, who quarrelled while the Empire perished. Sixtus died in his absence, and Leo was unanimously elected to the Papacy. Toward the close of September he returned to Rome, and glanced about the troubled world which he had now to rule.

The dogmatic Papal conception, which we find dawning in the mind of Damasus and see very clear in the mind of Innocent I. and his successors, reached its full development, on the spiritual side, in the mind of Leo the Great. This development was inevitable. There were Eastern, and even some Western, bishops who maintained, against Leo, that the prestige of the Roman See was merely the prestige of Rome, but the answer of the Papacy was easy and effective. In the Gospels which

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Europe now treasured, Peter was the "rock" on which the Church was built, and to him alone had been given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Had the Church lost its foundation when Peter died? Were the keys buried beside the bones of Peter in that marble tomb at the foot of the Vatican? There was, from the clerical point of view, logic in the Roman bishop's claim to have inherited the principedom. Leo from the first hour of his Pontificate was sincerely convinced of it. His sermons are full of it. To him is committed "the care of all the Churches": a phrase which he bequeaths to his successors. He is the new type of Roman, blending the ideas of Jerome and Augustine. The wreck of the City of Man matters little. What matters is that these Arian Goths and Vandals are trampling on the City of God: that the churches of Gaul and Spain and Italy and Africa and the East are in disorder, and the successor of Peter must restore their discipline. He is so absorbed in his divine duty that he does not notice how the circumstances favour him. Every other lofty head in the Empire is bowed, and from the seething and impoverished provinces hundreds are looking to the strong man at Rome.

His early letters are the letters of a Supreme Pontiff. The African bishops, he hears, suffer dreadful disorders in their churches. Elections to church-dignities are bought and sold: even laymen and twice-married clerics become bishops. With serene indifference to the earlier history of the African Church and its tradition of independence, he peremptorily recalls the canons and insists on their observance.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately for him, the long struggle against the Donatists and the devastating onset of the Vandals have enfeebled, almost annihilated,

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

the African Church, and there is none to question his authority.

He hears that Anatolius has been made Bishop of Thessalonica, and writes<sup>1</sup> to remind him that he is the "vicar" of the Roman bishop, the successor of Peter, "on the solidity of which foundation the Church is established." When, at a later date, Anatolius uses his power harshly, he sternly rebukes him. And it is interesting to notice what the discipline is on which he insists in this letter.<sup>2</sup> Even subdeacons shall not marry, or, if they are married, shall not know their wives. We are very far away from Callistus.

Another aspect of Leo's character appears in his treatment of the Manichæans at Rome: an interesting illustration of how he kept the strength and serenity of the old Roman though lacking his culture. Leo had a terribly sombre idea of the Manichæans. They lingered in obscure corners of the metropolis, and met stealthily, just as Christians had done two centuries earlier; and of them were told, as had been told of the obscure Christians, dreadful stories. Leo conducted a great inquisition in 444, and brought the Manichæan bishop, with his "elect," to a solemn judgment before the clergy and nobles of Rome. There, he says,<sup>3</sup> they all confessed that the violation of a girl of ten years was part of their ritual. He called down upon them the secular arm, and crushed them in Rome and Italy. What sort of a judicial process was employed to elicit this extraordinary confession—so utterly at variance with all that we know of the ascetic Manichæans—we are not told. But we are painfully reminded of a similar declaration of Augustine in his old age.<sup>4</sup>

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xiv.

<sup>3</sup> Sermon xvi.

<sup>4</sup> See the author's *Saint Augustine and His Age*, p. 409.



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In Gaul, the Pope encountered one of the last opponents of Papal aims in the West. The province was completely demoralized by the triumphant barbarians and by the arrival of lax clergy from Africa. In a letter of uncertain date,<sup>1</sup> Leo gives us a dark picture of the state of things in the southern provinces, and this is more than confirmed in the work of the Marseilles priest Salvianus, *De Gubernatione Dei*. Laymen pose as bishops, Leo says: priests sleep with their wives, and marry their daughters to men who keep concubines: monks serve in the army, or marry: and so on. From this disordered world men were ever ready to appeal to the authority of Rome, and, in 445, a Bishop Celidonius came to complain of the harshness of his metropolitan, the austere and saintly Hilary of Arles. Hilary followed his Bishop to Rome, and, when Leo decided against him, the saint made use, says Leo,<sup>2</sup> of "language which no layman even should dare to use and no priest to hear," and then "fled disgracefully" from Rome.

Again we are in a dilemma between two saints, and we must weigh as best we can the letters of Leo against the biography of Hilary. It will be found a general truth of early Papal history that the man who *appeals* to Rome is heard more indulgently than the opponent who did not appeal. Hilary, who had deposed the Bishop in plain accordance with the rules, resented Leo's conduct, and scoffed at his supposed supremacy. He then apprehended violence, and stealthily left Rome for Gaul. Leo thereupon—or after hearing new charges against Hilary—wrote to the bishops of Vienne<sup>3</sup> that they were released from obedience to Hilary, who was thenceforward to confine himself to Arles. Whether Hilary ever submitted or no we have no certain know-

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, x., 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, x.

ledge, but the affair had an important sequel. In the same year (449), an imperial rescript,<sup>1</sup> confessedly obtained by Leo, confirmed the sentence, and added:

We lay down this for ever, that neither the bishops of Gaul nor those of any other province shall attempt anything contrary to ancient usage, without the authority of the venerable man, the Pope of the Eternal City.

Even in the height of this quarrel other provinces were not neglected, as a few letters of the year 447 amply show. The letter to the Spanish Bishop Turribius of Astorga<sup>2</sup> is notable as the first explicit Papal approval of the execution of a heretic. It is usual to point out that the errors of Priscillian, the heretic in question, were believed to include magical practices (then a legal and social crime) as well as Manichæan and Gnostic tenets. But we must recognize one of the most terrible principles of the Middle Ages, and something far more than social zeal, in the following words of Leo:

Although ecclesiastical mildness shrinks from blood-punishments, yet it is aided by the severe decrees of Christian princes, since they who fear corporal suffering will have recourse to spiritual remedies.

Here is no reference to legal or social crimes, but to an error which concerns the ecclesiastic. Similar letters, enforcing discipline in the accents of an undisputed head of the Church, were sent to the bishops of Sicily,<sup>3</sup> the bishop of Beneventum,<sup>4</sup> and the bishop of Aquileia.

These quotations from the letters and sermons of Leo will suffice, not only to show the untiring energy and

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, xi., in Migne.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xv.

<sup>3</sup> XVI. and xvii.

<sup>4</sup> XIX.

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lofty aim of the man, but to convince us that the primacy of Rome in the West is now won. West of the Adriatic, St. Hilary is the last great rebel against the Roman conception. It is true that this spiritual supremacy is still, in part, reliant on "the severe decrees of Christian princes," but the imperial authority is fast fading into nothing, and in another generation the Papal autocracy will stand alone. Leo was not ambitious. Something of the instinctive masterliness of the older Roman may be detected in his actions, but he was a profoundly religious man, seeking neither wealth nor honours of earth, convinced at once that he discharged a divine duty and exerted an authority of the most beneficent value to that disordered Christendom. The calamities of Europe had changed the empty glories of a Damasus into a power second only to that of Octavian.

When we turn to the East we have not only a most valuable indication of the evolution of Christendom into two independent and hostile Churches, but an even more interesting revelation of subtle and unexpected shades in the character of Leo. The great Pope, aided by the very calamities of the time, fastens his primacy on Europe; and, with even mightier exertions and the most tense use of all his resources, he proves that an extension of that primacy to the East is for ever impossible.

His friendly correspondence with Cyril of Alexandria was resumed in the year 444, and, in the adjustment of their differences, Leo made concessions. In the same year, Cyril died, and his successor Dioscorus was addressed with the same recognition of equality. There are differences in points of discipline, but Leo is content to say<sup>1</sup>: "Since the blessed Peter was made

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

chief of the apostles by the Lord, and the Roman Church abides by his instructions, it is impossible to suppose that his holy disciple Mark, who first ruled the Church of Alexandria, gave it other regulations." Five years later, however, Leo received from the East an appeal against the Bishop of Constantinople, and a notable conflict began.

In the unending struggle in the East over the nature of Christ, the monks, a fierce and turbulent rabble living on the fringes of the great cities, had been the most effective champions of orthodoxy, and great was their excitement when the archimandrite (or abbot) of one of their large monasteries outside Constantinople was accused of heresy. The heresy is really diagnosed as such by the proper authorities, but it is not superfluous for the historian to observe that the monk Eutyches was godson of the most powerful eunuch at the court, and this eunuch was detested by the virtuous Empress Pulcheria and by Flavian, the Bishop of Constantinople. Eutyches was condemned by a synod in 448, and he appealed to Leo. I have observed that the appellant—especially from a province where Roman authority was disputed—always had a gracious hearing at the Lateran. In February, 449, Leo wrote to Flavian<sup>1</sup> to express his surprise that he had not sent a report of the proceedings to Rome and that he had disregarded the appeal which the monk had made from his sentence to Rome. However, since appeal *has* been made to Leo, "we want to know the reasons of your action, and we desire a full account to be communicated to us." Flavian's reply<sup>2</sup> curtly described the heresy and trusted that Leo would see the justice of the sentence.

In the early summer, the Emperors of East and West

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xxvi.

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issued a joint summons to the bishops of Christendom to assemble in Council at Ephesus, and Leo's letters indicate a feverish activity. His chief work was to write a long dogmatic letter<sup>1</sup> on the nature of Christ—a very able theological essay—to be read by his Legates at the Council. Dioscorus of Alexandria presided over this imposing assembly of 360 bishops and representative clergy, in the presence of two imperial commissioners, the Papal Legates, and the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem, yet it has passed into Western ecclesiastical history under the opprobrious title, given to it by Leo,<sup>2</sup> of “The Robbers’ Meeting.” It is quite true that the sittings dissolved in brawls, and monks and soldiers brandished their ominous weapons over the heads of the bishops, but that was not unprecedented. The main fact was that Dioscorus contemptuously refused to hear the Roman Legates, as Leo says, and induced the Council to restore Eutyches and depose Flavian. Deacon Hilary, one of the Legates, fled in terror of his life, and unfolded these enormities to Leo, whose correspondence now became intense and indignant.

For a few months, Leo made strenuous efforts to redeem the prestige of his See. We know, since 1882, that Flavian in turn appealed to Rome, but Leo needed no new incentive. He wrote repeatedly to the pious Pulcheria, to Theodosius, to his “vicar” in Thessalonica, and to the monks, priests, and people of Constantinople. He knew the situation well. Alexandria had defied Constantinople, but the case of Constantinople was weakened by the division of court-factions and the monkish support of Eutyches. It seemed an admirable

<sup>1</sup> The “Tome of Leo,” *Ep.*, xxviii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xc.

occasion for Rome to adjudicate, and Leo pressed Theodosius and Pulcheria<sup>1</sup> to summon an Ecumenical Council at Rome. In the thick of the struggle (February, 450), Valentinian III. visited Rome with the court, and Leo, with tears in his eyes, besought the Empress Galla Placidia to work for the Roman Council. Galla Placidia knew no more than the monks about theology, and was more concerned about her wayward daughter Honoria, but she urged Pulcheria to ensure the holding of the Council at Rome. Presently there came from Constantinople the news that Theodosius was dead, Pulcheria was mistress of the court, the eunuch-godfather had been executed, the monk exiled, and the Archbishop Flavian restored to his See.

But the more agreeable aspect of this situation was soon darkened by a report that the people of Constantinople had compelled Pulcheria to contract a virginal marriage with Marcian, and the new Emperor had summoned an Ecumenical Council in the East. Leo, for reasons which we may understand presently, now made every effort to prevent the holding of a Council,<sup>2</sup> but the Emperor would not endanger his position by flouting the Eastern Church, and, on October 8th, some six hundred bishops gathered at Chalcedon. Four Legates represented Leo, and were awarded a kind of presidency of the Council. Leo's great doctrinal letter was received with thunders of applause, and, when it was speedily decided to condemn Dioscorus (who had gone the length of excommunicating Leo), it was one of the Papal Legates who pronounced the sonorous sentence. But all knew that these compliments were the prelude to a very serious struggle.

After the fourteenth session, the Papal Legates and

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* xl.iii. and xlv.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, lxxxii. and lxxxiii.

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imperial commissioners affected to believe that the business of the day was over. Later in the day, however, a fifteenth session was held, and the two hundred bishops present framed the famous twenty-eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon. It runs:

As in all things we follow the ordinances of the holy fathers and know the recently read canon of the hundred and fifty bishops [of the Council of Constantinople], so do we decree the same in regard to the privileges of the most holy Church of Constantinople. Rightly have the fathers conceded to the See of Old Rome its privileges on account of its character as the Imperial City, and, moved by the same considerations, the one hundred and fifty bishops have awarded the like privileges to the most Holy See of New Rome.<sup>1</sup>

This drastic restriction of the Roman bishop to the West, and disdainful assurance that the prestige of the city of Rome was the only basis of his primacy, was read in the next session, and the Papal Legates were gravely disturbed. There can be very little doubt that, as Hefele says, the Legates had abstained from the fifteenth session because they knew that this canon would be discussed and passed. There was no secrecy about it, and there was much in previous sessions that led to it. Indeed, it is clear that Leo himself knew of the design, and this probably explains his resistance, which has puzzled many, to the holding of the Council. In the heat of the discussion, the Roman Legate, Boniface, produced this instruction from Leo: "If any, taking their stand on the importance of their cities, should endeavour to arrogate anything to themselves, resist them with all decision."<sup>2</sup> Bishop Eusebius of Dory-

<sup>1</sup> Hefele's *History of the Councils of the Church*, iii., 411.

<sup>2</sup> Hefele, iii., 425.

læum (the accuser of Eutyches) then said that he had read the third canon of Constantinople to Leo at Rome some time before the Council, and that Leo had assented to it. Leo afterwards denied this, but we must assume that he merely denied having consented, not the reading of the canon to him. It is quite clear that Leo prepared his Legates for this discussion.

It implies no reflection whatever on the character of Leo that he should instruct his Legates diplomatically to obstruct the passing of a canon which he regarded as contrary to a divine ordination. But the next act of his Legates is more serious. Bishop Paschasinus, the chief Legate, produced and read, in Latin, the sixth canon of the famous Council of Nicæa, and the Greeks were amazed to learn, when it was translated, that it awarded the primacy to Rome. There is now no doubt that this was a spurious or adulterated canon, and the feelings of the Greeks, when they consulted the genuine canon, can be imagined. The session closed in a weak compromise. The Legates were allowed to protest that the twenty-eighth canon was passed in their absence, and was injurious to the rights of their Bishop, "who presided over the whole Church." The Greeks politely registered their protest, endorsed the canon, and proceeded to indite a very Greek letter to the Roman Bishop. They express to Leo<sup>1</sup> their deep joy at the successful congress, their entire respect for "the voice of Peter," their loving gratitude that, through his Legates, he had presided over them "as the head over the members"; but they admit that one of their canons did not commend itself to his Legates and they trust that he will at once gratify their Emperor by endorsing it! Christendom was divided into two parts.

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



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The sequel matters little. The Legates returned and declared that the signatures to the canon had been extorted (as Leo afterwards wrote), though this point had been raised in their presence by the imperial commissioners, and its falsity put beyond dispute. To Marcian, to Pulcheria, and to the new Bishop of Constantinople, Anatolius, Leo wrote acrid letters, denouncing the miserable vanity and ambition of Anatolius and the violation of the (spurious) canons of Nicæa. Marcian curtly requested him—almost ordered him<sup>1</sup>—to confirm the results of the Council without delay, and Leo signed the doctrinal decisions. There the matter ended. Rome affected to treat the famous canon as invalid, and the East genially ignored the absence of Leo's signature.<sup>2</sup>

In the midst of his feverish efforts to defeat this Eastern rebellion, Leo was summoned to meet the terrible King of the Huns, and the memory of his triumph, gathering volume from age to age, has completely obliterated his failure to dominate the Greeks. Italy, painfully enfeebled by the Goths, now saw "the scourge of God" slowly descend its northern slopes and prepare for a raid on the south. Leo and a group of Roman officials met Attila on the banks of the Mincio, and the ferocious King and his dreaded Huns meekly turned their backs on Italy and retired to the East. Pen and brush and legend have embellished that won-

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

<sup>2</sup> In a letter which he wrote about the time (*Ep.*, ciii.) to the bishops of Gaul, Leo tells them that Dioscorus has been condemned, and says that he encloses a copy of the sentence. The copy appended to the letter is spurious, for it contains an allusion to "the holy and most blessed Pope, head of the universal Church, Leo . . . the foundation and rock of faith." But I do not think one can say confidently that this is the actual document sent by Leo.

derful deliverance until it has become a mystery and a miracle, but it was neither mystery nor miracle to the men who first made a scanty record of it. Jornandes<sup>1</sup> following the older historian Priscus, says that Attila was hesitating whether to advance on Rome or no at the moment when Leo and his companions arrived; his officers were trying to dissuade him, and were appealing to his superstition with a reminder of the fate of Alaric after he had sacked Rome. Prosper merely says in his *Chronicle* that Leo was well received, and succeeded. Idatius, Bishop of Aquæ Flavie at the time, does not even mention Leo in his *Chronicle*. The Huns, he says, were severely stricken by war, by famine, and by some epidemic, and, "being in this plight, they made peace with the Romans and departed."<sup>2</sup> But Rome at the time knew nothing of these fortunate circumstances, and, in the delirious joy of its deliverance, imagined the savage Hun shrinking in awe before its venerable Bishop: kept on imagining, indeed, until some pious fancy of the eighth century believed that the holy apostles had appeared beside the Pope.

When, a few years later (455) a fresh invasion threatened Rome—when the vicious incompetence of the court amid all its desolation set afoot another feud and brought the Vandals from Africa—Leo went out once more to plead for the impoverished city. Genseric was not a savage; the Vandals are libelled by the grosser implication we associate with their name today. Yet he altered not one step of his onward course at the

<sup>1</sup> *De Rebus Geticis*, xlii.

<sup>2</sup> The Chronicles of Prosper and Idatius are in Migne, vol. li. Idatius adds that Attila was threatened (in his rear) by the troops of Marcian, though we cannot trace such a movement of the Eastern troops. It was enough that Attila believed it.

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petitions or the threats of the venerable Pontiff. To say that he consented to refrain from slaying or torturing those who submitted, and from firing the city, is merely to say that Leo failed to wring any concession from the largely civilized Vandal. The aged Pontiff sadly returned with his clergy, and for a whole fortnight had to listen in the Lateran Palace to the shrieks of the women who were dragged from their homes, and to receive accounts of the plundering of his churches. The Church of St. Peter and, probably, the Lateran Church alone were spared. And when the Vandal ships had sailed away with their thousands of noble captives, including the Empress Eudoxia, and their mounds of silver, bronze, and marble, Leo had to melt down the larger vessels of the great *basilicas* to find the necessary chalices for his priests.

Ancestral feelings must have stirred unconsciously in the mind of Leo when he beheld this second ravage of the city of his fathers, but he at once resumed his Pontifical rule. On his return from the north of Italy, he had found occasion to act once more in the East as if the canon of the last Council were forgotten. Now the monks of Palestine had asserted their unyielding zeal, had driven the patriarch of Jerusalem from his seat, and had won to their cause the romantic Empress Eudoxia (of the Eastern court) whose suspected amours had brought on her a polite sentence of exile. Leo at once, somewhat superfluously, called the pious Marcian's attention to the ecclesiastical disorders in his kingdom, and, apparently at that Emperor's request, wrote paternal admonitions to Eudoxia and to the monks. It was gratifying to be able to report presently that the disorders were at an end.

Later (in 453) the monks of Cappadocia gave trouble;

and the monks and other supporters of the deposed Dioscorus at Alexandria entered upon a far graver agitation, and murdered their new archbishop. The pious Marcian, to make matters worse, died (457), and, by one of those strange intrigues which disgraced the Eastern court, Leo the Isaurian, an astute peasant, mounted the golden throne. On this man Leo's diplomatic mixture of courtly language and high sacerdotal pretensions made little impression. In spite of Leo's protests<sup>1</sup> he called another General Council, and Leo had to be content to send Legates to inform the assembled bishops what is "the rule of apostolic faith"; which he again set forth in a long dogmatic epistle.<sup>2</sup> To the last year, Leo maintained, serenely and unswervingly, his calm assumption of jurisdiction over the East. Whether he wrote to the patriarch of Antioch,<sup>3</sup> or the patriarch of Constantinople,<sup>4</sup> or the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Alexandria, he spoke as if his sovereignty had never been questioned. "The care of all the churches" lies on his shoulders. He disdains diplomacy and argument. His tone is arrogant and dogmatic in the highest degree, yet no man can read reflectively those long and imperious epistles and not realize that he spoke, not as the individual Leo, demanding personal prestige, but as the successor of Peter, obeying a command which, he sincerely believed, Christ had laid upon him.

So the Papacy was built up. Leo went his way on November 10, 461, and was buried, fitly, in the vestibule of St. Peter's. He had formulated for all time the Papal conception that the successor of Peter had the care of all the churches of the world. A bishop shall not buy his seat in Numidia: a rabble of monks shall

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

<sup>2</sup> CLXV.

<sup>3</sup> CXLIX.

<sup>4</sup> CLXX.

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not rebel in Syria: a prelate shall not harshly treat his clergy in Gaul, but the Bishop of Rome must see to it. How that gaunt frame of duty was perfected in the next two centuries, and how the prosperity of later times hid the austere frame under a garment of flesh, is the next great chapter in the evolution of the Roman Pontificate.

## CHAPTER IV

### GREGORY THE GREAT, THE FIRST MEDLÆVAL POPE

SEVENTEEN Pontiffs successively ruled in the Lateran Palace during the hundred and thirty years which separate the death of Leo I. and the accession of Gregory I. The first seven were not unworthy to succeed Leo, although one of them, Anastasius (496-498), is unjustly committed to Dante's hell for his liberality.<sup>1</sup>

During their tenure of office the Arian Ostrogoth Theodoric set up his promising kingdom in Italy, and the stricken country partly recovered. But the succeeding Popes were smaller-minded men, looking darkly on the heresy of Theodoric and longing to see him displaced by the Catholic Eastern Emperor. Their unfortunate policy was crowned by a betrayal of Rome to the troops of Justinian; and its fruit was the establishment on the throne of Peter, by

<sup>1</sup>Another of them, Gelasius (492-496), is, or was until recently, regarded as the author of the first canon of Scriptures and the first list of prohibited books. But this so-called "Gelasian Decree" does not bear the name of Gelasius in some of the older manuscripts, and is now much disputed. Father Grisar thinks that "we may take it as certain that it did not emanate from him" (*History of Rome and the Popes*, iii., 236). The canon is probably due to Damasus (see p. 36) and the rather loosely written list of books which follows it is ascribed to the later age of Hormisdas (514-523). Gelasius was an able and vigorous Pope, and would hardly issue so poor a decree.

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the unscrupulous Theodora, of the sorriest adventurer that had yet defiled it (Pope Vigilius), the reduction of Italy to the state of a province of the corrupt and extortionate East, and a lamentable dependence of the See of Rome on the whim of the Byzantine autocrat. Seeing its increasing feebleness, a new and fiercer tribe of the barbarians, the Lombards, poured over Italy; and it was a city of ruins, a kingdom of desolation, a continent of anarchy, which Gregory I. was, in the year 590, forced to undertake to control.

At Rome the monuments of what was shudderingly called a pagan age were falling, year by year, into the soil which would preserve them for a more appreciative race. In Gregory's day, across the Tiber from the old quarter, there were to be seen only the mouldering crowns of the theatres and amphitheatres, the grass-girt ruins on the Capitol and on the Palatine, and the charred skeletons of thousands of patrician mansions on the more distant hills. Forty thousand Romans now trembled where a million had once boasted their eternal empire. And, as one sees in some fallen forest, a new life was springing up on the ruins. Beside the decaying Neronian Circus rose the Basilica of St. Peter's, to which strange types of pilgrims made their way under the modest colonnade leading from the river. From the heart of the old Laterani Palace towered the great Basilica of the Saviour (later of St. John) and the mansion of the new rulers of the world. The temples were still closed, and tumbling into ruins; for no one yet proposed to convert into churches those abodes of evil spirits, which one passed hurriedly at night. But on all sides churches had been built out of the fallen stones, and monks and nuns trod the dismantled fora, and new processions filed along the decaying streets. If you

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mounted the hills, you would see the once prosperous Campagna a poisonous marsh, sending death into the city every few years; and you would learn that such was the condition of much of Italy, where the Lombard now completed the work of Goth and Greek, and that from the gates of Constantinople to the forests of Albion this incomprehensible brood of barbarians was treading under foot what remained of Roman civilization.

The book of what we call ancient history was closed: the Middle Age was beginning. Gregory was peculiarly adapted to impress the world at this stage of transition. His father, Gordianus, had been a wealthy patrician, with large estates in Sicily and a fine mansion on the Cælian hill. De Rossi would make him a descendant of the great family of the Anicii, but the deduction is strained. Gregory's mother was a saint. He inherited vigour and administrative ability, and was reared in the most pious and most credulous spirit of the time. He was put to letters, and we are told that he excelled all others in every branch of culture. Let us say, from his works, that—probably using the writings of the Latin fathers as models—he learned to write a Latin which Jerome would almost have pronounced barbarous, but which people of the sixth century would think excellent, at times elegant. There was very little culture left in Rome in Gregory's days.<sup>1</sup> About the time when

<sup>1</sup> Lives of Gregory must be read with discretion. The best and most ample source of knowledge is the stout volume of his letters, but there are early biographies by Paul the Deacon and John the Deacon. Paul wrote about 780, but his fairly sober sketch—into which miracles have been interpolated—does not help us much. John wrote about a century after this, and his fantastic and utterly indiscriminating work is almost useless. The best biography of Gregory is the learned and generally candid work of W. F. H. Dudden (*Gregory the Great*, 2 vols., 1905).



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Gregory came into the world (540), Cassiodorus was quitting it to found a monastic community on his estate, and he had the happy idea of rescuing some elements of Roman culture from the deluge; though to him culture meant Donatus and Martianus Capella rather than the classics. He succeeded, too, in engaging the industry of the Benedictine monks, to some extent, in copying manuscripts. Culture was, happily, not suffered to die. In Rome, however, it sank very low, and, for centuries, the Latin of the Papal clerks or the Popes is generally atrocious.

Gregory, in 573, was Prefect of Rome when it was beset by the Lombards. The desolation which ensued may have finally convinced him that the end of the world approached: a belief which occurs repeatedly in his letters and sermons. In the following year, he sold his possessions, built six monasteries in Sicily, converted his Roman mansion into the monastery of St. Andrew, and, after giving the rest of his fortune to the poor, began a life of stern asceticism and meditation on the Scriptures. One day he saw some Anglo-Saxon slaves in the market, and he set off to convert these fair, blue-eyed islanders to the faith. But Pope Benedict recalled him and found an outlet for his great energy in secretarial duties at the Lateran.

Pelagius, who in 578 succeeded Benedict, sent Gregory to Constantinople, to ask imperial troops for Italy, and he remained there, caring for Papal interests, for about eight years. On its pretentious culture he looked with so much disdain that he never learned Greek,<sup>1</sup> while the general corruption of clerics and laymen, and the fierce dogmatic discussions, did not modify his belief in a coming dissolution. He maintained his monastic

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, ix., 69.

life in the Placidia Palace, and began the writing of that portentous commentary on the book of Job which is known as his *Magna Moralia*: a monumental illustration of his piety, his imagination, and his lack of culture, occupying about two thousand columns of Migne's quarto edition of his works. He returned to Rome about the year 586, without troops, but with the immeasurably greater treasure of an arm of St. Andrew and the head of St. Luke. Amid the plagues and famines of Italy, he returned to his terrible fasts and dark meditations, and awaited the blast of the archangel's trumpet. An anecdote, told by himself, depicts his attitude. One of his monks appropriated a few crowns, violating his vow of poverty. Gregory refused the dying man the sacraments, and buried him in a dunghill. He completed his commentary on Job, and collected endless stories of devils and angels, saints and sinners, visions and miracles; until one day, in 590, the Romans broke into the austere monastery with the news that Pelagius was dead and Gregory was to be his successor. He fled from Rome in horror, but he was the ablest man in Italy, and all united to make him Pope.

If these things do not suffice to show that Gregory was the first mediæval Pope, read his *Dialogues*, completed a few years later; no theologian in the world to-day would accept that phantasmagoria of devils and angels and miracles. It is a precious monument of Gregory's world: the early mediæval world. There is the same morbid, brooding imagination in his commentary on the prophecies of Ezekiel, which he found congenial; and in many passages of the forty sermons in which, disdaining flowers of rhetoric and rules of grammar, he tells his people the deep-felt, awful truths of his creed.

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Characteristic also is the incident which occurred during his temporary guidance of the Church—while he awaited an answer to the letter in which he had begged the Emperor to release him. A fearful epidemic raged at Rome. Without a glance at the marshes beyond, from which it came, Gregory ordered processions of all the faithful, storming the heavens with hymns and litanies. The figure over the old tomb of Hadrian (or the Castle of Sant' Angelo) at Rome tells all time how an angel appeared in the skies on that occasion, and the pestilence ceased. But the writers who are nearest to the time tell us that eighty of the processionists fell dead on the streets in an hour, and the pestilence went its slow course.

Yet when we turn from these other-worldly meditations and other-worldly plans to the eight hundred and fifty letters of the great Pope, we seem to find an entirely different man. We seem to go back some centuries, along that precarious line of the Anicii, and confront one of the abler of the old patricians. Instead of credulity, we find a business capacity which, in spite of the appalling means of communication, organizes and controls, down to minute details, an estate which is worth millions sterling and is scattered over half a continent. Instead of self-effacement, we find a man who talks to archbishops and governors of provinces as if they were acolytes of his Church, and, at least on one occasion, tells the Eastern autocrat, before whom courtiers shade their eyes, that he will not obey him. Instead of holy simplicity, we find a diplomacy which treats with hostile kings in defiance of the civil government, showers pretty compliments on the fiery Brunichildis or the brutal Phocas, and spends years in combating the pretensions of Constantinople. Instead

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of angelic meekness, we find a warm resentment of vilification, an occasional flash of temper which cows his opponent, a sense of dignity which rebukes his steward for sending him "a sorry nag" or a "good ass" to ride on. We have, in short, a man whose shrewd light-brown eyes miss no opportunity for intervention in that disorderly world, from Angle-land to Jerusalem; who has in every part of it spies and informers in the service of virtue and religion, and who for fourteen years does the work of three men. And all the time he is Gregory the monk, ruining his body by disdainful treatment, writing commentaries on Ezekiel: a medium-sized, swarthy man, with large bald head and straggling tawny beard, with thick red lips and Roman nose and chin, racked by indigestion and then by gout—but a prodigious worker.

To compress his work into a chapter is impossible; one can only give imperfect summaries and a few significant details. He had secretaries, of course, and we are apt to forget that the art of shorthand writing, which was perfectly developed by the Romans, had not yet been lost in the night of the Middle Ages. Yet every letter has the stamp of Gregory's personality, and we recognize a mind of wonderful range and power.

His episcopal work in Rome alone might have contented another man. Soon after his election he wrote a long letter on the duties and qualifications of a bishop, which, in the shape of a treatise entitled *The Book of Pastoral Rule*, inspired for centuries the better bishops of Europe. His palace was monastic in its severity. He discharged from his service, in Rome and abroad, the hosts of laymen his predecessors had employed, and replaced them with monks and clerics: incidentally turning into monks and clerics many men who did not

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adorn the holy state. He said mass daily, and used at times to go on horseback to some appointed chapel in the city, where the people gathered to hear his sermons on the gospels or on Ezekiel. Every shade of simony, every pretext for ordination, except religious zeal, he sternly suppressed. When he found that men were made deacons for their fine voices, he forbade deacons to sing any part of the mass except the Gospel, and he made other changes in the liturgy and encouraged the improvement of the chant. Modern criticism does not admit the *Sacramentary* and the *Antiphonary* which later ages ascribed to him, but he seems to have given such impulse to reform that the perfected liturgy and chant of a later date were attributed to him.<sup>1</sup>

His motive in these reforms was purely religious; those who would persuade us that Gregory I. had some regard for profane culture, at least as ancillary to religious, forget his belief is an approaching dissolution, and overlook the nature of profane culture. It was indissolubly connected with paganism, and Gregory would willingly have seen every Latin classic submerged in the Tiber; while his disdain of Greek confirmed the already prevalent ignorance which shut the Greek classics out of Europe, to its grave disadvantage, for many centuries. Happily, many monks and bishops were in this respect less unworldly than Gregory, and the greater Roman writers were copied and preserved. Gregory's attitude toward these men is well known. He hears that Bishop Desiderius of Vienne, a very worthy prelate, is lecturing on "grammar" (Latin literature), and he writes to tell Desiderius that he is filled with "mourning and sorrow" that a bishop should be occupied with so "horrible" (*nefandum*) a pursuit.<sup>2</sup> It has

<sup>1</sup> See Dudden's *Gregory the Great*, i., 264-276.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, vi., 54.

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been frivolously suggested that perhaps Desiderius had been lecturing on the classics in church, but Gregory is quite plain: the reading of the pagan writers is an unfit occupation even for "a religious layman."<sup>1</sup> In the preface to his *Magna Moralia* he scorns "the rules of Donatus"; and so sore a memory of his attitude remained among the friends of Latin letters that Christian tradition charged him with having burned the libraries of the Capitol and of the Palatine and with having mutilated the statues and monuments of older Rome.<sup>2</sup>

The work of Gregory in Rome, however, was not confined to liturgy and discipline. The tradition of parasitism at Rome was not dead, and, as there was now no *Præfectus Annonæ* to distribute corn to the citizens, it fell to the Church to feed them; and the Romans were now augmented by destitute refugees from all parts. Gregory had to find food and clothing for masses of people, to make constant grants to their churches and to the monasteries, to meet a periodical famine, and to render what miserable aid the ignorance of the time afforded during the periodical pestilence. Occasionally he had even to control the movements of troops and the dispatch of supplies; at least, in his impatience of the apparent helplessness of the imperial government and his determination to hold Catholic

<sup>1</sup> Dr. H. A. Mann (*The Lives of the Popes in the Early Middle Ages*, 1902, etc.) would show that Gregory had a regard for culture by quoting much praise of secular learning from the *Commentary on the First Book of Kings*. This is not a work of Gregory at all. Even the Benedictine editors of the Migne edition claim only that it was written by an admirer who took notes of Gregory's homilies, and they admit that it frequently departs from Gregory's ideas.

<sup>2</sup> See John of Salisbury, *Polycraticus*, ii., 26. It is difficult to conceive that so unflattering a tradition was entirely an invention.

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towns against the Lombards, he undertook these and other secular functions.

The control of the vast Papal income and expenditure might alone have sufficed to employ a vigorous man. In Sicily, there were immense estates belonging to the Papacy, and other "patrimonies," as they were called, were scattered over Italy and the islands, or lay as far away as Gaul, Dalmatia, Africa, and the East. Clerical agents usually managed these estates, but we find Gregory talking about their mules and mares and cornfields, and the wages and grievances of their slaves and serfs, as familiarly as if he had visited each of them. It has been estimated, rather precariously, that the Papacy already owned from 1400 to 1800 square miles of land, and drew from it an annual income of from £300,000 to £400,000. Not a domestic squabble seems to have happened in this enormous field but Gregory intervened, and his rigid sense of justice and general shrewdness of decision command respect. Then, there was the equally heavy task of distributing the income, for the episcopal establishment cost little, and nothing was hoarded. In sums of ten, twenty, or fifty gold pieces, in bales of clothing and galleys of corn, in altars, vessels and the ransom of captives, the stream percolated yearly throughout the Christian world, as far as the villages of Syria. Monks and nuns were especially favoured.

Within a few years, there spread over the world so great a repute of Gregory's charity and equity that petitions rained upon Rome. Here a guild of soap-boilers asks his intervention in some dispute: there a woman who, in a fit of temper at the supposed infidelity of her husband, has rushed to a nunnery and now wants to return home, asks his indulgence, and

receives it. From all sides are cries of oppression, simony, or other scandal, and Gregory is aroused. Jews appeal to him frequently against the injustice of their Christian neighbours, and they invariably get such justice as the law allows. The Zealots who have seized their synagogues (if of long standing—they were forbidden by law to build new ones) must restore them, or pay for them<sup>1</sup>; impatient priests who would coerce them into “believing” are rebuked. There is only one weakness—a not unamiable weakness—in his treatment of the Jews. Those who abandon their creed are to have their rents reduced: to encourage the others, he says cheerfully.<sup>2</sup> For the pagans, however, he has no mercy, as we shall see. He sanctions compulsion and persecution with mediæval frankness. It should  
<sup>4</sup> be noted, too, that, while he approved the manumission of slaves, he never condemned the institution as such. Vast regiments of slaves worked the Papal estates, though the ease, if not advantage, of converting them into serfs must have been apparent. Still no slave could enter the clergy—lest, as Leo the Great had declared, his “vileness” should “pollute” the sacred order—and a special probation was imposed on slaves if they wished to enter monasteries: a wise regulation this, for many thought it an easy way to freedom. Still no slave could contract marriage with a free Christian, as Gregory expressly reaffirms.<sup>3</sup>

These details of his work will, however, be more apparent if we pass from Rome to the provinces which he controlled, and observe the success or failure of his intervention. It will at once be understood that his intervention almost invariably means that there is an abuse to correct, and, therefore, the world which we

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, ix., 6, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, ii., 32.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, vii., 1.



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find reflected in Gregory's letters is fearfully corrupt. The restless movements and destructive ways of the barbarians had almost obliterated the older culture, and no new system either of education or polity had yet been devised. The influence of the East had been just as pernicious. The venality and corruption of its officers had infected the higher clergy, and simony prevailed from Gaul to Palestine. Over and over again Gregory writes, in just the same words, to prelates of widely separated countries: "I hear that no one can obtain orders in your province without paying for them." The clergy was thus tainted at its source. Ambitious laymen passed, almost at a bound, to bishoprics, and then maintained a luxurious or vicious life by extorting illegal fees. The people, who had been generally literate under the Romans, were now wholly illiterate and helpless. But Gregory has his informants (generally the agents in charge of the patrimonies) everywhere, and the better clergy and the oppressed and the disappointed appeal to him; and a sad procession of vice and crime passes before our eyes when we read his letters. This anarchic world needed a supreme court more than ever: the Papacy throve on its very disorders.

Italy was demoralized by the settlement of the Arian Lombards over the greater part of the country, and by their murderous raids in all directions. Parts which remained Catholic were often so isolated from Rome that a spirit of defiance was encouraged, and Gregory had grave trouble. Milan, for instance, was in the hands of the Lombards, but the Catholic clergy had fled to Genoa with their archbishop, and they retained something of the independence of the Church of St. Ambrose. We see that they must now have their selec-

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tion of a bishop approved by Gregory, and that the Pope often quietly reproves the prelate for his indiscretions; but we find also that when, on a more serious occasion, Gregory proposes to have Archbishop Constantius tried at Rome, the latter acridly refuses.

Ravenna, the seat of the Eastern Exarch, who is generally hostile to Gregory, occasions some of his least saintly letters. He hears that Archbishop John wears his pallium on forbidden occasions, and he reproves John with an air of unquestioned authority.<sup>1</sup> John partly disputes the facts, and partly pleads special privileges of Ravenna, but Gregory finds no trace of such privileges and orders him to conform.<sup>2</sup> Then he hears that John and the fine folk of the court are poking fun at him, and his honest anger overflows<sup>3</sup>: "Thank God the Lombards are between me and the city of Ravenna, or I might have had to show how strict I can be." John dies, and we see that the clergy of Ravenna must submit the names of two candidates to Gregory. He rejects the Exarch's man, and chooses an old fellow-monk and friend, Marinianus. But the new Archbishop is forced to maintain the defence of the supposed privileges of Ravenna, and the dispute seems to reach no conclusion during the life of Gregory.

In the isolated peninsula of Istria, the spirit of independence has gone the length of flat defiance, or schism, because the Papacy has acquiesced in the endorsement by the Eastern bishops of the Three Chapters: three chapters of a certain decree of Justinian. The schism is of long standing, and when Gregory is made bishop he sends a troop of soldiers to the patriarch of Aquileia, commanding that prelate and his chief supporters to appear at Rome forthwith,

<sup>1</sup> III., 56.

<sup>2</sup> V., 11.

<sup>3</sup> V., 15.

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“according to the orders of the most Christian and most Serene lord of all.” The use of the Emperor’s name seems to have been, to put it politely, not strictly accurate, for when Bishop Severus appealed to Maurice, the Emperor curtly ordered Gregory to desist. We have another indication of the mediæval aspect of Gregory’s ideas when, in the following year, he refused to contribute to the relief-fund for the victims of a great fire at Aquileia. His monies were “not for the enemies of the Church,” he said. He went on to weaken the schism by other means, partly by bribes, and when Maurice died in 602 and a friendly Exarch was appointed, he at once urged physical force.<sup>1</sup> “The defence of the soul is more precious in the sight of God than the defence of the body,” he enacted. He was legislating for the Middle Ages.

His relations with the Lombards and the civil power reveal another side of his character. Small Catholic towns, and even Rome, were constantly threatened by the Lombards, yet Constantinople was unable to send troops, and the Exarch remained inactive behind the marshes and walls of Ravenna. Gregory indignantly turned soldier and diplomatist. He appointed a military governor of Nepi, and later of Naples; and many of his letters are to military men, stirring them to action and telling of the dispatch of troops or supplies. In 592, the Lombards appeared before Rome, and Gregory fell ill with work and anxiety. He then purchased a separate peace from the Lombards<sup>2</sup> and there was great anger at Ravenna and Constantinople. Gregory’s sentiment was hardly one of patriotism, which would not be consistent with his philosophy; he was concerned for religion, as he was bound to be since the

<sup>1</sup> XIII., 33.

<sup>2</sup> II., 46; v., 36.

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Lombards were Arians. On the other hand, he acknowledges that if he makes a separate peace with the Lombards, it will be disastrous for other parts of the Empire<sup>1</sup>; and it is clear from the sequel that the Exarch had a policy and was not idly drifting.

A later legend, which some modern writers strangely regard as credible,<sup>2</sup> makes Gregory meet the Lombard king outside Rome, and strike a bargain. A bargain was certainly struck, but the angry Exarch issued from Ravenna with his troops and cut his way to Rome, where his conversation with the Pope cannot have been amiable. The Lombards were back in 593, but were either bribed, or found Rome too strong to be taken. They returned again in 595. Gregory now wrote to a friend in Ravenna<sup>3</sup> that he proposed again to purchase peace, and the Emperor Maurice seems to have written him a scolding letter. From Gregory's indignant reply<sup>4</sup> we gather that Maurice called him "a fool," and hinted that he was a liar and traitor. The government idea evidently was that Gregory was a simple-minded victim of the cunning Lombards, as is very probable; but we must take account of his sincere concern for religion and his longing for peace. His policy of bribes would have been disastrous. At Ravenna, some person posted on the walls a sarcastic "libel" about his statesmanship, and another fiery letter appears in Gregory's register.

In other parts of Italy, he had grave ecclesiastical abuses to correct, and some strange bishops are immortalized in his letters. In 599, he had to issue a circular letter,<sup>5</sup> forbidding bishops to have women in their

<sup>1</sup> V., 36.

<sup>2</sup> It is first found in the unreliable Continuer of Prosper's *Chronicle*, and seems to be founded on the meeting of Leo and Attila. Neither Gregory nor Paul, the Deacon speaks of a meeting with the Lombard king.

<sup>3</sup> V., 36.

<sup>4</sup> V., 40.

<sup>5</sup> IX., ii.

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houses, and ordering priests, deacons, and subdeacons to separate from their wives. Sicily, controlled by his agents, gave him little trouble, but his informers reported that in Sardinia and Corsica the clergy and monks were very corrupt, and the pagans, who were numerous, bribed the officials to overlook the practice of their cult. The metropolitan at Cagliari was an intemperate and avaricious man, and Gregory, after repeated warnings, summoned him to Rome; but there is a curious mixture of indulgence and sternness in the Pope's letters, and Januarius did not go to Rome or alter his wicked ways. As to the pagans, Gregory, at first, merely urged the Archbishop to raise the rents and taxes of those who would not abandon the gods.<sup>1</sup> When this proved insufficient, he ordered physical persecution. If they were slaves, they were to be punished with "blows and tortures"; if they were free tenants, they were to be imprisoned. "In order," he says, in entirely mediæval language, "that they who disdain to hear the saving words of health may at least be brought to the desired sanity of mind by torture of the body."<sup>2</sup>

With other provinces of the old Empire, his correspondence is mainly directed to the correction of grave abuses. His letters to Spain show that Papal authority was fully recognized there, and it is of interest to find a Spanish bishop bemoaning, when Gregory urges that only literate men shall be promoted to the priesthood, that they are too few in number. Africa virtually defied his efforts to reform the Church. The province had recovered a little under Byzantine rule, but its bishops and civic officials took bribes from the Donatists.<sup>3</sup> They refused to persecute the schismatics, when Gregory ordered them to do so, and they defeated

<sup>1</sup> IV., 26.

<sup>2</sup> IX., 65.

<sup>3</sup> I., 84.

his attempt to break up their system of local primacies.<sup>1</sup> He was compelled to leave them in their perverse ways. The same condition of simony and clerical laxity prevailed generally throughout the Roman-Teutonic world, and Gregory could do little more than press for the election of good men to vacant bishoprics.

The diplomatic side of his character appears in his relations with Gaul, where the fiery and wilful Brunichildis was his chief correspondent.<sup>2</sup> It is true that her graver crimes were committed after Gregory's death, but he was particularly well informed, and one cannot admire his references to her "devout mind" or appreciate his belief that she was "filled with the piety of heavenly grace." When, in 599, she asked the pallium for her obsequious Bishop Syagrius of Autun, Gregory granted it: on condition that Syagrius convoked a synod for the correction of abuses and that Brunichildis attacked paganism more vigorously. When, on the other hand, the learned and devout Bishop Desiderius of Vienne, who was hated by Brunichildis for his courage in rebuking her, asked the pallium, Gregory found that there was no precedent and refused. It is true that Brunichildis was generous to the clergy and, in her way, pious; but Gregory must have known the real character of the woman whose influence he sought to win. His sacrifice, moreover, was futile. A few synods were held, but there is no trace of any diminution of simony, drunkenness, and vice among the Frankish priests and monks.

His interest in the neighbouring island of Angleland is well known. He began, early in his Pontificate, to buy Anglo-Saxon youths and train them for missionary work, but, in 596, he found a speedier way to

<sup>1</sup> I., 74.

<sup>2</sup> See *Ep.*, vii., 5, 50, 59 etc.

convert the islanders. The all-powerful Ethelbert was married to the Christian Bertha, and Gregory's friendly relations with Gaul opened the way to his court. He sent the historic mission of monks under Augustine, and, in a few years, had the converted King transforming the pagan temples into churches and driving his people into them. It was Gregory who planned the first English hierarchy.

The monks, who ought to have been Gregory's firmest allies in the reform of Christendom, had already become an ignorant and sensual body, sustaining the ideal of Benedict only in a few isolated communities, and Gregory's efforts to improve them were not wholly judicious. He insisted that they should not undertake priestly or parochial work, and he forbade the bishops to interfere with their temporal concerns. There can be little doubt that this tendency to free them from episcopal control made for greater degeneration. Here again, also, we find a curious illustration of his diplomatic liberality. As a rule he was very severe with apostate monks, yet we find him maintaining through life a friendly correspondence with a renegade monk of Syracuse. Venantius had returned to his position of wealthy noble in the world, and had married a noble dame. Gregory, it is true, urged him to return to his monastery, but the amiability of his language is only explained by the position and influence of the man. The last phase of this part of Gregory's correspondence is singular. Venantius died, and left his daughters to the guardianship of the Pope; and we find Gregory assuring these children of sin that he will discharge "the debt we owe to the goodness of your parents."<sup>1</sup>

We have already seen that Gregory's relations with

<sup>1</sup> XI., 35.

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the eastern Emperor were painful, and another episode must be related before we approach Eastern affairs more closely. The Archbishop of Salona, who was one of the typical lax prelates of the age and who had smiled at Gregory's admonitions and threats, was removed by death, and the Pope endeavoured to secure the election of the archdeacon, a rigorous priest who had been the Pope's chief informer. Neither clergy nor laity, however, desired a change in the morals of the episcopal palace, and they secured from Constantinople an imperial order for the election of their own favourite. Gregory alleged bribery and excommunicated the new archbishop. When the Emperor ordered him to desist, he flatly refused, and a compromise had to be admitted. In another town of the same frontier province, Prima Justiniana, the Emperor proposed to replace an invalid bishop with a more vigorous man, and Gregory refused to consent.<sup>1</sup>

A graver conflict had arisen in the East. Constantinople, with its million citizens and its superb imperial palace, naturally regarded its archbishop as too elevated to submit to Rome, and its ruling prelate, John the Faster,—a priest who rivalled Gregory in virtue and austerity,—assumed the title of "Ecumenical Bishop." Gregory protested, but the Emperor Maurice, with his customary bluntness, ordered the Pope to be silent. A few years later, however, some aggrieved Eastern priests appealed to Rome, and Gregory wrote, in entirely Papal language, to ask John for a report on their case. When John lightly, or disdainfully, answered that he knew nothing about it, the Pope lost his temper. He told his ascetic brother that it would be a much less evil to eat meat than to tell lies: that he had better get

<sup>1</sup> XI., 47.



rid of that licentious young secretary of his and attend to business: that he must at once take back the aggrieved priests: and that, although he seeks no quarrel, he will not flinch if it is forced on him.<sup>1</sup> John made a malicious retort, by inducing the Empress Constantina to make a request for relics which Gregory was bound to refuse.

The priests were eventually tried at Rome. Whether Gregory's sentence was ever carried out in the East, we do not know, but John took the revenge of styling himself "Ecumenical Bishop" in his correspondence with Gregory, and the Pope then tried to form a league with the patriarchs of the apostolic Sees of Antioch and Alexandria against the ambitious John. In his eagerness to defeat John, he went very near to sharing the Papacy with his allies. Peter, he said, had been at Antioch before Rome, and Mark was a disciple of Peter; therefore the three were in a sense "one See."<sup>2</sup> He added that Rome was so far from aspiring to the odious title that, although it had actually been offered to the Popes by the Council of Chalcedon, neither Leo nor any of his successors had used it.<sup>3</sup>

To John himself Gregory sent a withering rebuke of his pride. To the Emperor Maurice he described John as "a wolf in sheep's clothing," a man who claimed a "blasphemous title" which "ought to be far from the hearts of all Christians"! John may "stiffen his neck against the Almighty," he says, but "he will not bend

<sup>1</sup> III., 53.

<sup>2</sup> V., 43.

<sup>3</sup> It is not true that the Council offered the title to Leo I. It occurs only in petitions which two Eastern priests directed to the Pope and the Council (Mansi, vi., 1006 and 1012), and the Council, as we saw, decreed precisely the opposite. The only other place in which we find it in some form is the spurious Latin version of the sentence on Dioscorus to which I referred on p. 50.

mine even with swords."<sup>1</sup> He assured the Empress Constantina that John's ambition was a sure sign of the coming of Anti-Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Gregory's peculiar diplomacy only excited the disdain of the subtler Greeks. His position is, in fact, so false—repudiating as "blasphemous" a title which, the whole world knew, he himself claimed in substance—that it has been suggested that he thought the term "Ecumenical Bishop" meant "sole bishop." Such a suggestion implies extraordinary ignorance at Rome, but there is no need to entertain it. To his friends Anastasius of Antioch and Eulogius of Alexandria, Gregory complained that the phrase was an affront, not to *all* bishops, but merely to the leading patriarchs, and the whole correspondence shows that there was no misunderstanding. Gregory lacked self-control. Anastasius of Antioch, though very friendly, ignored his letters; Eulogius advised him to be quiet, and hinted that people might suggest envy; the Emperor treated him with silent disdain. John died, but his successor Cyriacus actually used the offensive title in telling Gregory of his appointment. There was another outburst, and Maurice impatiently begged the Pope not to make so much fuss about "an idle name." Eulogius of Alexandria, who had some sense of humour, addressed Gregory as "Universal Pope," saying gravely that he would obey his "commands" and not again call any man "Universal Bishop." Possibly Eulogius knew that Gregory had, a few years before, written to John of Syracuse: "As to the Church of Constantinople, who doubts that it is subject to the Apostolic See?"<sup>3</sup> Gregory protested in vain until the close of his life. The Greeks retained their "blasphemous" title: the

<sup>1</sup> V., 20.

<sup>2</sup> V., 21.

<sup>3</sup> IX., 12.

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Latins continued to assert their authority even over the Greek bishops.

Toward the close of the year 602, the Emperor Maurice, now a stricken old man of sixty-three, was driven from his throne by the brutal Phocas; his five boys were murdered before his eyes and he was himself executed. Phocas sent messengers to apprise Gregory of his accession. We may assume that these messengers would give a discreet account of what had happened and, possibly, bring an assurance of the new Emperor's orthodoxy; and we do not know whether Gregory's assiduous servants at Constantinople sent him any independent account. Yet, when we have made every possible allowance, Gregory's letters to Phocas are painful. The first letter<sup>1</sup> begins, "Glory be to God on high," and sings a chant of victory culminating in, "Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad." The bloody and unscrupulous adventurer must have been himself surprised. Two months later, Gregory wrote again, hailing the dawn of "the day of liberty" after the night of tyranny.<sup>2</sup> In another letter he<sup>3</sup> saluted Leontia, the new Empress,—a fit consort of Phocas,—as "a second Pulcheria"; and he commended the Church of St. Peter's to her generosity. These two letters were written seven months after the murders, and it is impossible to suppose that no independent report had reached Gregory by that time. Nor do we find that, though he lived for a year afterwards, he ever undid those lamentable letters. It is the most ominous presage of the Middle Ages.

Gregory died on March 12, 604. The racking pains of gout had been added to his maladies, and plague and famine and Lombards continued to enfeeble Italy.

<sup>1</sup> XIII., 31.

<sup>2</sup> XIII., 38.

<sup>3</sup> XIII., 39.

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He had striven heroically to secure respect for ideals—for religion, justice, and honour—in that dark world on which his last thoughts lingered. He had planted many a good man in the bishoprics of Europe. He had immensely strengthened the Papacy, and a strong central power might do vast service in that anarchic Europe. Yet the historian must recognize that the world was too strong even for his personality; simony and corruption still spread from Gaul to Africa, and the ideas which Gregory most surely contributed to the mind of Europe were those more lamentable or more casuistic deductions from his creed which we have noticed. Within a year or so—to make the best we can of a rumour which has got into the chronicles—the Romans themselves grumbled that his prodigal charity had lessened *their* share of the patrimonies, and we saw that more bitter complaints against him were current in the Middle Ages. Yet he was a great Pope: not great in intellect, not perfect in character, but, in an age of confusion, corruption, and cowardice, a mighty protagonist of high ideals.

## CHAPTER V

### HADRIAN I. AND THE TEMPORAL POWER

**T**WO centuries after the death of Gregory the Great we still find an occasional prelate of rare piety, such as Alcuin, scanning the horizon for signs of the approaching dissolution. Vice and violence had so far triumphed that it seemed as if God must soon lower the curtain on the human tragedy. But the successors of Gregory in the chair of Peter were far from entertaining such feelings. From the heart of the threatening north, another Constantine had come to espouse their cause, to confound their enemies, and to invest the Papacy with a power that it had never known before. The story of the Popes as temporal sovereigns had begun.

Once more we must say that the development was an almost inevitable issue of the circumstances. The Byzantine rule in Italy had never been strong enough to restrain the Lombards, and the rise of the Mohammedans in the farther East now made Constantinople less competent than ever to administer and to defend its trans-Adriatic province. First the city, then the duchy, of Rome fell under the care of the Popes, from sheer lack of other administrators and defenders. We saw this in the Pontificate of Gregory. Beyond the Roman duchy were the scattered patrimonies, the

estates given or bequeathed to the Papacy, and these were often towns, or included towns. Here again the lack of secular authority put all government in the hands of the Pope's agents. Then the Eastern court successively adopted two heresies, Monothelitism and Iconoclasm, and the dwindling respect of Rome for the Greeks passed into bitter hostility. Imperial troops sacked the Lateran, dragged a Pope (Martin I.) ignominiously to the East, and induced another Pope (Honorius I.) to "subvert the immaculate faith" or, at least, to "allow the immaculate to be stained."<sup>1</sup> On the whole, however, the Pontiffs who succeeded Gregory were firm and worthy men. Rome began to shudder between the fierce Lombard and the heretical Greek, and there slowly grew in the Lateran Palace the design of winning independence of the erratic counsels of kings.

At this juncture, the name of Charles Martel blazed through the Christian world, and Gregory III. and the people of Rome implored him to take them under his protection. The Lombards were, however, auxiliaries of Charles, and, as Duchesne suggests, Charles probably resented Gregory's interference in secular affairs; the Pope had recently encouraged the Lombard dukes who were in rebellion against their king, and Liutprand had, in revenge, seized four frontier towns of the Roman duchy. Gregory failed, but his amiable and diplomatic successor, Pope Zachary, changed the Roman policy and made progress. He lent Liutprand the use of the little Papal army to aid in suppressing his dukes, and received the four towns and other "patrimones." A little later, the Exarch and the Archbishop of Ravenna

<sup>1</sup> So the successor of Honorius, Leo II., wrote to the Emperor. *Ep.*, iii.

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asked Zachary to intercede for them, and the genial Pope again saw and disarmed the Lombard. The language of the *Liber Pontificalis* is, at this important stage, so barbarous—a sad reflection of Roman culture, for it must have been written in the Lateran—that one often despairs of catching its exact meaning, but it seems to me clear that it represents Liutprand as giving the district of Cesena to the Papacy, and restoring the exarchate of Ravenna to the city of Ravenna. Presently, however, we shall find the Popes claiming the exarchate.

The next step was the famous intervention of Rome in the affairs of the Franks. Pippin, Mayor of the Palace, aspired to the throne of Childeric III., and consulted the Papacy as to the moral aspect of his design. The astute Pontiff went far beyond the terms of the request, and “ordered” the Franks to make Pippin their monarch: an act which founded the lucrative claim of Rome that she had conferred the kingdom on the father of Charlemagne. Zachary’s successor, Stephen II.,<sup>1</sup> completed the work. He was hard pressed by the Lombard King Aistulph, and, after a fruitless appeal to Constantinople, he went to France in 753 and implored Pippin to “take up the cause of the Blessed Peter and the Republic of the Romans.” This broke the last link with the East, and Stephen secured the gratitude of Pippin and his dynasty by anointing the King and his sons and pronouncing a dire anathema—which he had assuredly no right to pronounce—on any who should ever dare to displace the family of Pippin from the throne. And so Pippin swore a mighty oath that he would take up the cause of the Blessed

<sup>1</sup> Stephen I., who was chosen at the death of Zachary, died before consecration, and some historians decline to insert him in the series.

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Peter, but what he precisely engaged to do is one of the great controversies of history.

It is clear that Pippin was made "Patrician" of Rome. This had long been the official title of the Byzantine Exarch in Italy, and it has no definite meaning when it is transferred to Pippin and Charlemagne. Probably this vagueness was part of the Roman plan. The Pope wanted Pippin's army without his suzerainty. Moreover, in conferring on Pippin the title which had belonged to the Exarch, it was probably implied that the exarchate became part of "the cause of the Blessed Peter." In point of fact, the *Liber Pontificalis* goes on to say that Pippin swore to win for Rome "the exarchate of Ravenna" as well as other "rights and territories of the Republic." Later, in recording the life of Hadrian I., the *Liber Pontificalis* says that Stephen asked for "divers cities and territories of the province of Italy, and the grant of them to the Blessed Peter and his Vicars for ever." This part of the work is, it is true, under grave suspicion of interpolation, but the sentence I have quoted may pass. Pippin swore to secure for the Popes, not only the Roman duchy, and "divers cities and territories" which they claimed as "patrimonies," but also the exarchate of Ravenna, to which they had no right whatever. As Hadrian I. repeatedly refers, in his letters to Charlemagne, to this "Donation of Pippin," and in one letter (xcviii.) says that it was put into writing, it is idle to contest it.<sup>1</sup>

Pippin crossed the Alps and forced Aistulph to yield,

<sup>1</sup> Pippin repeated his oath at Quiercey, and the bargain is sometimes described as the "Quiercey Donation." The "Fantuzzian Fragment," an ancient document which professes to give the precise extent of the donation, is full of errors and anachronisms, and is not now trusted by any serious historian.



but as soon as the Franks returned to their country the Lombard refused to fulfil his obligations and again devastated Italy. No answer to the Pope's desperate appeals for aid came from France and, in 756, when Rome was gravely threatened, Stephen sent a very curious letter to Pippin.<sup>1</sup> It is written in the name of St. Peter, and historians are divided in opinion as to whether or no the Pope wished to impose on the superstition of the French monarch and to induce him to think that it was a miraculous appeal from the apostle himself. There is grave reason to think that this was Stephen's design. The letter does not identify the Pope with Peter, as apologists suggest; it speaks of Stephen as a personality distinct from the apostolic writer, insists that it is the disembodied spirit of Peter in heaven that addresses the King, and threatens him with eternal damnation unless he comes to Rome and saves "my body" and "my church" and "its bishop." As Pippin, who had ignored the Pope's appeals so long, at once hurried to Italy on receiving this letter, we may assume that he regarded it as miraculous. However that may be, he crushed Aistulph and forced him to sign a deed abandoning twenty-three cities—the exarchate, the adjacent Pentapolis, Comacchio, and Narni—to the Roman See.<sup>2</sup> The representatives of the Eastern court had hurried to Italy and had claimed this territory, but Pippin bluntly told them that he had taken the trouble to crush Aistulph only "on behalf of the

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

<sup>2</sup> This is sometimes called the "Donation of Aistulph," but is really the completed Donation of Pippin. On this point the *Liber Pontificalis* is confirmed by the *Annals* of Eginhard, in which we read that Pippin gave the Roman See "Ravenna and the Pentapolis and the whole exarchate belonging to Ravenna" (year 756), and by the later letters of Hadrian I.

Blessed Peter." Byzantine rule in Italy was henceforth confined to Calabria in the south and Venetia and Istria in the north. The Pope succeeded the Eastern Emperor by right of gift from Pippin; and Pippin would, no doubt, claim that the provinces were his to give by right of the sword. In point of fact, however, the Papacy had claimed the exarchate on some previous title, and that title is unsound.

We may now pass speedily to the Pontificate of Hadrian. Aistulph died in 756; Stephen III. in 757. The ten years' Pontificate of Paul I. was absorbed in a tiresome effort to wring the new rights of Rome from the new Lombard King, Didier, and the struggle led to the severance of the Romans into Frank and Lombard factions: one of the gravest and most enduring results of the secular policy of the Papacy. When Paul died, the Lombard faction, under two high Papal officials named Christopher and Sergius, led Lombard troops upon the opposing faction (who had elected a Pope), crushed them in a brutal and bloody struggle, and elected Stephen IV. Stephen was, however, not the Lombard King's candidate, and Didier intrigued at Rome against the power of Christopher and Sergius. He bribed the Papal chamberlain, Paul Afiarta, and it is enough to say that before long Christopher and Sergius were put in prison and deprived of their eyes. This was done at the Pope's command; it was the price of the restoration by Didier of the cities he still withheld.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Writers who say merely that Stephen was "suspected of complicity" must have overlooked the testimony of Hadrian himself in the *Liber Pontificalis*. He tells the Lombard envoys that Stephen assured him that, on Didier promising to return the cities, the Pope "caused the eyes of Christopher and Sergius to be put out." Stephen's character is further illustrated by his letter to the sons of Pippin (*Ep.*, iv.), when it was proposed that one of them should marry Didier's daughter Hermin-

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Rome was still under the shadow of this brutal quarrel when, in the year 772, Hadrian became Pope. He came of a noble Roman family, and, having been left an orphan in tender years, he had been reared by a pious uncle. Culture at Rome in the eighth century had sunk to its lowest depth, and the letters of Hadrian, like all documents of the time, are full of the grossest grammatical errors. In the school of virtue and asceticism, however, he was a willing pupil. His fasts and his hair-shirt attracted attention in his youth, and he was so favourably known to all at the time of Stephen's death that he was at once and unanimously elected.

Didier pressed for the new Pope's friendship. Charlemagne had already tired of his daughter, or no longer needed her dowry (the Lombard alliance), and had ignominiously restored her to her father's court and ventured upon a third matrimonial experiment. We do not find Hadrian rebuking the Frank King, but he sent his chamberlain Afiarta to the Lombard court, to arrange for the restoration of the cities ceded to Rome and, presumably, form an alliance with Didier. While Afiarta was away, however, two things occurred which caused him to change his policy. Carlomann died in France, and his share of the kingdom was annexed by Charlemagne. Carlomann's widow then fled to the Lombard court, and Didier pressed Hadrian to anoint her sons in defiance of Charlemagne. When Hadrian hesitated, Didier invaded the Papal territory and took several towns; while Afiarta, the Pope heard,

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gard. They were both married, but the Pope says very little about the sin of divorce; it is the infamy of alliance with the Lombards which he chiefly denounces. In point of fact, Charlemagne divorced his wife and married Hermingard, and not a word further was heard from Rome about this or any other of his peculiar domestic arrangements.

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was boasting that he would bring Hadrian to Pavia with a rope round his neck. Meantime, however, Afiarta's rivals at Rome informed the Pope that Afiarta had had the blind prisoner Sergius murdered, and Hadrian was shocked. He ordered the arrest of his chamberlain, and, in defiance of his more lenient instructions, Afiarta was delivered to the secular authorities at Ravenna and executed.

Didier now set his forces in motion. Hadrian, hurriedly gathering his troops for the defence of the duchy, appealed to Charlemagne and threatened Didier with excommunication. It seems also that he made efforts to secure other parts of Italy for the Papacy. Some professed representatives of Spoleto, which was subject to Didier, came to Rome to ask that their duchy might be incorporated in the Papal territory, and their long Lombard hair was solemnly cropped in Roman fashion. We shall find grave reason to doubt whether these men had an authentic right to represent Spoleto, but from that moment the Popes claimed it as part of their temporal dominion. Didier seems to have underrated the power of the young French monarch. Both Hadrian and Charlemagne (who offered Didier 14,000 gold *solidi* if he would yield the disputed cities) endeavoured to negotiate peacefully with him, but he refused all overtures, and the Franks crossed the Alps and besieged him in Pavia.

Charlemagne remained before Pavia throughout the winter of 773-774, and, when Holy Week came round, he went to Rome for the celebration of Easter. Hadrian hurriedly arranged to meet his guest with honour, though the account of his ceremonies makes us smile when we recall how imperial Rome would have received such a monarch. Thirty miles from Rome the civic

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and military officials, with the standards of the Roman militia, met the conqueror; a mile from the city the various "schools" of the militia, and groups of children with branches of palm and olive, streamed out to meet the Franks, and accompanied them to St. Peter's. The awe with which Charlemagne approached the old capital of the world, and the feeling of the Romans when they gazed on the gigantic young Frank, in his short silver-bordered tunic and blue cloak, with a shower of golden curls falling over his broad shoulders, are left to our imagination by the chronicler.<sup>1</sup> His one aim is to show how the famous donation of temporal power was the natural culmination of the piety of the Frankish monarch. He tells us how Charlemagne walked on foot the last mile to St. Peter's: how, when he reached the great church on Holy Saturday, he went on his knees and kissed each step before he embraced the delighted Pope: how Frank bishops and warriors mingled with the Romans, and how the vast crowd was thrilled by the emotions of that historic occasion. He describes how Charlemagne humbly asked permission to enter Rome, and spent three days in paying reverence at its many shrines; and how, on the Wednesday, Pope and King met in the presence of the body of Peter to discuss the question of the Papal territory.

In a famous passage, which has inspired a small library of controversial writing, this writer of the life of Hadrian in the *Liber Pontificalis* affirms that Charlemagne assigned to St. Peter and his successors for ever the greater part of Italy: in modern terms, the whole of Italy except Lombardy in the north, which was left to the Lombards, and Naples and Calabria in

<sup>1</sup> The visit is described very fully in the *Liber Pontificalis*.

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the south, where the Greeks still lingered. The duchies of Beneventum and Spoleto, the provinces of Venetia and Istria, and the island of Corsica, which were not at the disposal of Charlemagne, are expressly included; and it is said that one copy of the deed, signed by Charlemagne and his nobles and bishops, was put into the tomb of St. Peter, and another copy was taken to France. This is the basis of the claim of later Popes to the greater part of Italy.

But the suspicions of historians are naturally awakened when they learn that both copies of this priceless document have disappeared: that the only description of its terms is this passage of the *Liber Pontificalis*, which was presumably written in the Papal chancellery: and that the art of forging documents was extensively cultivated in the eighth century. The famous "Donation of Constantine," a document which makes the first Christian Emperor, when he leaves Rome, entrust the whole Western Empire to Pope Silvester, is a flagrant forgery of the time; indeed, most historians now conclude that it was fabricated at Rome during the Pontificate of Hadrian. Certainly the Pope seems to refer to it when, in 777, he writes to Charlemagne: "Just as in the time of the Blessed Silvester, Bishop of Rome, the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church was elevated and exalted by the most pious Emperor Constantine the Great, of holy memory, and *he deigned to bestow on it power in these western regions.*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, lx. Some writers hold that this is merely an allusion to the *Acta S. Silvestri*, another forgery of the time, but the words which I have italicized point more clearly to the "Donation of Constantine." For the literature of the controversy see Dr. A. Solmi's *Stato e Chiesa* (1901), pp. 12-13. It is now the general belief that the "Donation" was fabricated at Rome, and probably in the Lateran, between 750 and

The equally mendacious *Acta S. Silvestri* was certainly known to Hadrian, and we do not trace it earlier; and it is probable enough that one or both of these documents were shown to Charlemagne. Some historians believe that the "Fantuzzian Fragment" (a similarly false account of the Donation of Pippin) belongs to the same inventive period, and this is not unlikely.

It cannot be questioned that Charlemagne renewed and enlarged his father's donation, since Hadrian's letters to him repeatedly affirm this. Immediately after his return to France, Hadrian reminds him that he has confirmed Pippin's gift of the exarchate,<sup>1</sup> and, a little later, he recalls that, when he was in Rome, he granted the duchy of Spoleto to the Blessed Peter.<sup>2</sup> Spoleto did not, in point of fact, pass under Papal rule, but we must conclude from the Pope's words that Charlemagne in some way approved the action of Hadrian in annexing the duchy, and in this sense enlarged the donation made by his father. Beyond this single instance of Spoleto, however, the letters of Hadrian do not confirm the writer of his life in the *Liber Pontificalis* in his description of the extent of Charlemagne's gift,<sup>3</sup> and their silence supports the criti-

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781. Dr. Hodgkin (*Italy and her Invaders*, vi.) has charitably suggested that perhaps the document was playfully composed by some Papal clerk in his leisure hours and taken seriously by a later generation, but apologists do not seem to grasp at this straw.

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, lvii.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Mann (vol. i., part ii., p. 423) finds some confirmation in "a passage of Hadrian's letter to Constantine and Irene, read in the second session of the Seventh General Council." This part of Hadrian's letter was not read in the Council. It is not included in the letter in the Migne edition (vol. xcvi.), and in Mansi (xii., 1072) it is explained that the latter part of Hadrian's letter, in which the passage occurs, was not read to the Greeks. In any case, the passage merely affirms that Charlemagne gave the Roman See "provinces and cities and other

cal view. While he complains of outrages in Istria and Venetia, while he occupies himself in a long series of letters with the affairs of Beneventum, he makes no claim that these provinces were given to him by Charlemagne. The whole story of the Papacy during the life of Charlemagne is inconsistent with any but the more modest estimate of the donation: that it was a vague sanction of the Spoletan proceeding, in addition to confirming the Donation of Pippin.

The learned editor of the *Liber Pontificalis*, Duchesne, is convinced that the first part of the life of Hadrian, which culminates in this donation, was written by a contemporary cleric and must be regarded as genuine. He suggests that, when Hadrian perceived the impracticability of Charlemagne winning two thirds of Italy for the Roman See, he released the monarch from his oath. This is inconsistent alike with the character of Hadrian and the terms of his correspondence, and recent historians generally regard the range ascribed to Charlemagne's donation in the *Liber Pontificalis* as either fictitious or enlarged by later interpolations. The first part of Duchesne's study—the proof that the early chapters of the life of Hadrian were written by a contemporary—is convincing: the second part—that the Pope sacrificed five or six great provinces because it was difficult at the time to get them—has not even the most feeble documentary basis and is unlikely in the last degree, to judge by the known facts. Either some later writer during the Pontificate of Leo III.

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territories," and this is quite consistent with the more modest estimate of his donation. A letter written by Leo III. to Charlemagne thirty years afterwards (when the Papal description of the donation certainly existed), speaking of his gift of the island of Corsica, is not conclusive.



(or later) rounded the narrative of the early years of Hadrian with this grandiose forgery, or the passage which specifies the extent of the donation was interpolated in the narrative. For either supposition we have ample analogy in the life of the eighth century: for a Papal surrender of whole provinces we have no analogy whatever, and there is not the faintest allusion to it in Hadrian's forty-five extant letters to Charlemagne.<sup>1</sup>

The life of Hadrian in the *Liber Pontificalis* consists, as will already have been realized, of two very distinct parts. The first is a consecutive and circumstantial narrative of events up to the departure of Charlemagne from Rome in the spring of 774. This seems to have been written by an eye-witness, possibly a clerk in the Papal service; and it seems equally probable that this contemporary narrative was rounded by a later hand with a fictitious account of Charlemagne's conduct on the Wednesday. Immediately afterwards, Charlemagne returned to Pavia, conquered Didier, and carried him off to a French monastery. This occurred in the second year of Hadrian's Pontificate, yet in the *Liber Pontificalis*, the remaining twenty years are crushed into a few chaotic paragraphs, and these are chiefly

<sup>1</sup> See the dissertation appended to vol. vi. of Dr. Hodgkin's *Italy and her Invaders*, where the author contends that a late writer used the contemporary account of Hadrian's early years to lead up to this fictitious donation. The hypothesis of interpolation in a genuine narrative is urged by Dr. W. Martens in his *Die Römische Frage* (1881) and *Beleuchtung der neuesten Controversen über die R. Frage* (1898). Professor Th. Lindner (*Die sogenannten Schenkungen Pippins, Karls des Grossen, und Otto's I. an die Päpste*, 1896) suggests that Charlemagne intended only to secure the patrimonies in the provinces named in the donation, but this is not consistent with the language of the *Liber Pontificalis*, though it may very well represent the actual intention of Charlemagne.

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concerned with his lavish decoration of the Roman churches. We turn to his letters, and from these we can construct a satisfactory narrative and can obtain a good idea of the writer's personality.

Of the fifty-five extant letters of Hadrian no less than forty-five are addressed to Charlemagne, and they are overwhelmingly concerned with his temporal possessions. He is rather a King-Pope than a Pope-King. For twenty years he assails Charlemagne with querulous, petulant, or violent petitions to protect the rights of the Blessed Peter, and it is not illiberally suspected that the lost replies of Charlemagne contained expressions of impatience. The Pope's letters, with their unceasing references to the Blessed Peter and all that he has done for Charlemagne, are not pleasant reading, and the Frank King, whose Italian policy seems to baffle his biographers, must have realized that his position as suzerain of the Blessed Peter was delicate and difficult. Hadrian on the other hand, found that the temporal rights of his See left comparatively little time for spiritual duties and laid a strain on his piety. Once in a few years he smites a heretic or arraigns some delinquent prelate, but the almost unvarying theme of his letters is a complaint that the Blessed Peter is defrauded of his rights, and he is at times drawn into political intrigues which do not adorn his character. We may recognize that his ambition was as impersonal as that of Gregory the Great, yet the spectacle of his complaints and manoeuvres is not one on which we can dwell with admiration.

Charlemagne had scarcely returned to France when he received from Hadrian a bitter complaint that Leo, Archbishop of Ravenna, had seized the cities of the exarchate and was endeavouring to win those of the

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Pentapolis.<sup>1</sup> Charlemagne did not respond; indeed Leo went in person to the Frank court, and it is significant that after his return he was, Hadrian says, more insolent and ambitious than ever. He cast out the officials sent from Rome and, by the aid of his troops, took over the rule of the exarchate. Charlemagne was busy with his Saxon war, and he paid no attention to the Pope's piteous appeals.<sup>2</sup> Leo died in 777, however, and his successor seems to have submitted to Rome. Charlemagne had meantime visited Italy and may have intervened.

The business which brought Charlemagne to Italy in 776 was more serious. Arichis, Duke of Beneventum, one of the ablest and most cultivated of the Lombards, who was married to a daughter of Didier, was an independent sovereign. Hildebrand, Duke of Spoleto, who had—in spite of the supposed annexation of Spoleto—chosen to regard Charlemagne rather than Hadrian as his suzerain, was on good terms with Arichis, and the Pope looked on their friendship with gloomy suspicion. He reported to Charlemagne that they were conspiring against his authority. Charlemagne's envoys were due at Rome, and Hadrian bitterly complained to him that they had gone first to Spoleto and had "greatly increased the insolence of the Spoletans," and had then, in spite of all the Pope's protests, proceeded to Beneventum.<sup>3</sup> It is clear that there was in Italy a strong feeling against the Papal expansion, and that the occasional appeals for incorporation in the Roman territory came from clerics. Spoleto remained independent, in spite of Hadrian's claim that it had been promised to him; in fact, it was clearly the policy of Charlemagne to leave these matters to local option,

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, liii., liv., lv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, lvii.

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and he can scarcely have made a definite promise to include Spoleto in his "donation."

In the following year, Hadrian sent more alarming news. Adelchis, a son of Didier, had fled to the Greeks and was pressing them to assist in overthrowing the Frank-Roman system. Hadrian said that Arichis and Hildeprand, as well as Hrodgaud of Friuli and Reginald of Clusium, had conspired with the Greeks, and he implored the King "by the living God" to come at once. Charlemagne came, and chastised Hrodgaud, but he does not seem to have found serious ground for the charges against the Dukes of Spoleto and Beneventum. Presently, however, Hadrian was able to announce more definitely a conspiracy against his rule; the Beneventans and Greeks had captured some of his Campanian towns, and Tassilo, Duke of Bavaria (son-in-law of Didier), had joined them. It is true that Charlemagne was, at the time, busy in Saxony, but it is equally clear that he was angry with the Pope and resented his efforts to secure the two duchies. In 777, Hadrian wrote that he rejoiced to hear that Charlemagne was at length coming; he sent him a long list, from the Roman archives, of all the territories to which Rome laid claim, and invited the Frank to be a second Constantine.<sup>1</sup> But Charlemagne came not, and in his next letter Hadrian has to lament that the Frank has committed the "unprecedented act" of arresting the Papal Legate for insolence, and the Lombards are openly exulting in his humiliation.<sup>2</sup>

There seems then to have been a long period without correspondence between the two courts, or else it has not been thought judicious to preserve the letters. In 781, however, Charlemagne came to Rome. Tassilo

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, lxii.

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was disarmed, and, as Charlemagne's daughter was betrothed to the son of the Eastern Empress Irene, the Greeks must have been pacified. The six years of peace which followed were, no doubt, used by Hadrian in that princely decoration of the Roman churches of which I will speak later and in some attention to ecclesiastical affairs. We find him writing, in 785, to the bishops of Spain; though he seems to have had little influence on the Spanish heresy which he denounced, and it was left to the more vigorous attacks of Charlemagne.<sup>1</sup> In 786 he extended his pastoral care to England, which had not seen a Roman envoy since the days of Gregory. His Legates were received with honour, but they reported that the English Church was in a deplorable condition.<sup>2</sup> King Offa made a princely gift for the maintenance of lamps in St. Peter's (a euphemism of the Roman court) and for the poor, and it is curious to read that Hadrian consented, at the King's request, to make Lichfield a metropolitan see.

The peace was broken in 787 by an active alliance of Arichis, Tassilo, and the Greeks, and Charlemagne again set out for Italy. Arichis was forced to pay the Franks a heavy annual tribute and give his sons as hostages. The elder son and Arichis himself died soon afterwards, and Hadrian again made lamentable efforts to secure the duchy. The accomplished widow of Arichis, Adelperga, besought Charlemagne to bestow it on her younger son, Romwald, and Hadrian begged him not to comply. He trusted Charlemagne would not suspect him of coveting the duchy himself<sup>3</sup>; but he re-

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

<sup>2</sup> See the interesting letter of Bishop George, one of Hadrian's Legates, in Jaffe's *Bibliotheca Rerum Germanicarum*, vi., 155, and compare *The Saxon Chronicle*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xc.

frained from suggesting an alternative to the son of Arichis, and at length he boldly warned Charlemagne not to "prefer Romwald to the Blessed Peter."<sup>1</sup> Other indications of the building of the temporal power are not more edifying. We read that representative inhabitants of Capua and other Beneventan cities have sought incorporation in the Roman "republic"; and then we read that the cities have been handed over to the Papacy without inhabitants—a clear sign of the wishes of the majority—and that Romwald is assuring his subjects, on the authority of Charlemagne, that they need not pass under the authority of Rome unless they will.

Charlemagne again ignored the Pope's efforts, and soon had the Spoletan and Beneventan troops co-operating with his own against the Greeks. Hadrian obtained no control over Spoleto and Beneventum, and the fact that he does not charge Charlemagne with failing to keep faith with the Blessed Peter casts further discredit on the supposed donation. In Venetia and Istria he had no influence whatever, and his agents were barbarously treated.<sup>2</sup> Corsica never enters his correspondence. His power was confined to the Roman duchy, the exarchate, and the Pentapolis; and even there it was much assailed. It is true that in an hour of resolution he forbade Charlemagne to interfere in an ecclesiastical election at Ravenna, and it was as master of Ravenna that he gave Charlemagne the marbles and mosaics of the old palace. But he complained bitterly that Charlemagne listened to his critics in Ravenna,<sup>3</sup> and he had repeatedly to appeal to Frank authority to enforce his sentences. To the end his letters to Charlemagne were querulous and exacting.

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, lxxxii.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xcvi.

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A few years before his death he heard that Offa of England was proposing to Charlemagne to depose him, and he protested, with more petulance than dignity, that he had been elected, not by men, but by Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

This demoralizing concern for his temporal rights seems to have warped Hadrian's religious temperament and to have left him little time for purely spiritual duties. A single lengthy letter to Spain and a legation to England are all that we have as yet related, and there is little to add. His third exercise of jurisdiction was unfortunate. Irene had restored the worship of images in the East and was eager for a reconciliation with Western Christendom. She invited Hadrian to preside at an Ecumenical Council. His reply was admirable in doctrinal respects, but he annoyed the Greeks by at once claiming all his patrimonies in the East and protesting against the title used by Archbishop Tarasius. They retorted by suppressing part of his letter to the Council of Nicæa (787), at which his Legates presided, and ignored both his requests.

This, however, was only the beginning of fresh and grave trouble with Charlemagne. The Greeks had annoyed him by cancelling the betrothal of Constantine with his daughter Rotrud, and there is reason to suspect that he already contemplated assuming the title of Emperor. There was, at all events, a sore feeling in France, and when the findings of the Council of Nicæa reached that country, they were treated with disdain and insult. Hadrian had, in his annoyance with the Greeks, refused to give a formal sanction to their findings, but he had so far accepted them as to issue from the Papal chancellery a Latin translation of the *acta*

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

of the Council. We can readily believe that the translation would be crude and inaccurate, but the quarrel was not based on these fine shades of meaning. The French conception of the use of images differed not only from that of the Greeks, but from that of Hadrian. The northern prelates held that images were to be regarded only as ornaments and as reminders of the saints they represented. In this sense Charlemagne issued, in his own name (though we justly suspect the authorship of Alcuin), the large work which is commonly known as *The Caroline Books*. It scathingly attacked the Greek canons which had been accepted by the Pope; it took no notice of Hadrian's doctrinal letter to the Council; and, in defiance of the familiar Roman custom, it denounced as sinful the practice of burning lights before statues or paying them any kind or degree of worship. It contained assurances of its loyalty to the Apostolic See, but Hadrian must have felt, when at length some version or other of the work was sent to him (three or four years after its publication), that it was an outrage on his spiritual authority. But the book bore the name of Charlemagne, and in his lengthy reply Hadrian prudently concealed his annoyance.<sup>1</sup> In the same year (794) the Frank bishops held a synod at Frankfort and resolutely maintained their position. Whether this synod followed or preceded Hadrian's letter we cannot say, but the Franks continued for years to reject the Roman doctrine.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Migne, vol. xcvi., col. 1247.

<sup>2</sup> Alcuin afterwards wrote a very abject letter to the Pope (*Ep.*, xviii.), and this is sometimes represented as an expression of regret, but he does not mention the image-question and plainly refers to his general unworthiness. The Franks were convinced that the Pope was wrong. See the *Acta* of the Frankfort Council in Mansi, xiii., 864.



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Hadrian's biographer discreetly ignores these failures of his attempts to assert his authority, and almost confines himself to the record of his work in Rome itself. He restored and extended the walls, and added no less than four hundred towers to their defences. He repaired four aqueducts, and rebuilt, on a grander scale, the colonnade which ran from the Tiber to St. Peter's. The interior of St. Peter's he decorated with a splendour that must have seemed to the degenerate Romans imperial. The choir was adorned with silver-plated doors, and, in part, a silver pavement; while a great silver chandelier, of 1345 lights, was suspended from its ceiling. Large statues of gold and silver were placed on the altars, and the walls were enriched with purple hangings and mosaics. Vestments of the finest silk, shining with gold and precious stones, were provided for the clergy. To other churches, also, Hadrian made liberal gifts of gold and silver statues, Tyrian curtains, gorgeous vestments, and mosaics. The long hostility to images and image-makers in the East had driven large numbers of Greek artists to Italy, and the vast sums which the new temporal dominions sent to Rome enabled Hadrian to employ them. After a long and profound degeneration "the fine arts began slowly to revive."<sup>1</sup> For literary culture, however, Hadrian did nothing; the attempt of some writers to associate him with Charlemagne's efforts to relieve the gross illiteracy of Europe is without foundation.

In charity, too, the Pope was distinguished. He founded new deaconries for the care of the poor, and

<sup>1</sup> R. Cattaneo, *Architecture in Italy from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century* (1896).

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at times of flood and fire he was one of the first to visit and relieve the sufferers. But both his artistic and his philanthropic work was almost restricted to Rome. He added a few farms to those which his predecessors had planted on the desolate Campagna, but the great and increasing resources of the Papacy were chiefly used in laying the foundations of the material splendour which would one day dazzle the eyes of Europe, and in paying soldiers to protect it against his political rivals. It must be added that he was one of the early founders of the Roman tradition of nepotism. He appointed his nephew Paschalis to one of the chief Papal offices, and the brutality of the man, which will appear presently, shows that the promotion was not made on the ground of merit.

His long Pontificate came to an end on December 25th (or 26th) in the year 795, and it is an indication of the new position of the Papacy that his successor at once sent to Charlemagne the keys of Rome and of the tomb of St. Peter. We have the assurance of Eginhard that the Frank monarch wept as one weeps who has lost a dear son or brother, and he afterwards sent to Rome a most honouring epitaph of Hadrian, cut in gold letters on black marble. The character of Charlemagne and his inmost attitude toward the new Papacy he had created do not seem to me to be sufficiently elucidated by any of his biographers, but with that we are not concerned. He had deep regard for Hadrian, in spite of the Pope's failings. The new royal state was too heavy a burden for Hadrian I. to bear with dignity. One cannot doubt the sincerity of his religion, his humanity, and his impersonal devotion to what he conceived to be his duty. But it is equally plain that in the first Pope-King the cares of earthly

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dominion enfeebled the sense of spiritual duty and at times warped his character. It needed a great man to pass without scathe through such a transformation. Hadrian I. was not a great man.

## CHAPTER VI

### NICHOLAS I. AND THE FALSE DECRETALS

THE coronation of Charlemagne by the Pope in the year 800 was also the crowning of the new Papal system. The ambition for temporal power had already disclosed the grave dangers which it brought. Soon after the death of Hadrian I. the horrible spectacle was witnessed at Rome of high Papal officials—one a nephew of the late Pope—attempting, on the floor of a church, to cut out the eyes of their Pontiff; and the record tells us that the Romans were so little moved by the charges brought against him that they left it to a provincial noble to rescue Leo III. Grave charges were also made against his successor, Stephen V., and Charlemagne came to Rome to judge him. He politely acquitted Stephen, and, on that historic Christmas morning of the year 800, he was surprised and disconcerted by the Pope suddenly producing an imperial crown and placing it on his head.

It is well known that Charlemagne regarded this coronation with distrust. The gifts of the Blessed Peter had a way of conferring more power on the giver than on the receiver. In point of fact, when the strong hand of the first Emperor was removed, and a brood of weaker men came to squabble over the imperial heritage, Rome gained considerably. The kingdoms of

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France, Germany, and Italy were carved out of the Empire, but the spiritual realm was not exposed to any hereditary division. It merely awaited the coming of another strong man to make clear its power, and this revelation was reserved for Nicholas I. Of the eight Popes who preceded him, only one, Leo IV., made a reputable mark on history, and that rather as a strong and honest than as a spiritual personality. Most of them were, like most of the Popes, men of mediocre but respectable character. There is, however, some degeneration in the Papal calendar—which is, until the end of the ninth century, a more edifying record than many imagine—since two out of the eight remain under suspicion of grave misconduct, and one was a gouty *gourmand*; while occasional outbreaks of a violence not far removed from barbarism betray that the new prosperity is not elevating the character of the Romans.

Nicholas, whose life in the *Liber Pontificalis* was probably written by his accomplished librarian Anastasius, was the son of a cultivated Roman notary, and was carefully trained in letters. These official panegyrics will not, however, impress the serious historian. The Pope's letters show that the extent of his profane culture was merely a stricter observance of the elementary rules of grammar than some of his predecessors had displayed. In 853, a few years before Nicholas began his Pontificate, Leo IV. had ordered the opening of schools in each of the twenty parishes of Rome, but he complained that teachers of the liberal arts were rare. The instruction given was mainly religious, and it seems that on the ecclesiastical side the Pope's culture was considerable. He had grown up in the devout service of the Church, and successive Popes had pro-

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moted and loved him; so that, when Benedict III. died, Nicholas was unanimously chosen to succeed him. In the presence of the Emperor, Louis II., Nicholas, who had to be dragged from a hiding-place in St. Peter's, was, on Sunday, April 24th, consecrated and conducted by joyous crowds along the laurel-crowned streets to the Lateran. Two days afterwards the Emperor entertained him at dinner, and they were very cordial. When Louis set out for France, Nicholas followed and had another festive dinner with him at his first camp. Then the Pope, after kissing and embracing the Emperor, returned to the Lateran and gravely mounted the Papal throne.

Within the next few years men learned that a new type of Pontiff ruled the Church, or the world. Nicholas I. conceived himself, in deepest sincerity, to be the representative of God on earth: fancied himself sitting on a throne so elevated that from its level all men—kings and beggars, patriarchs and monks—were of the same size. He believed that he was responsible to God for every immoral or irreligious movement in “every part of the world,” as he often said. He was convinced that his words were “divinely inspired,”<sup>1</sup> and that disobedience to him was disobedience to God. He was, by divine appointment, “prince over all the earth.”<sup>2</sup> Kings received their swords from him,<sup>3</sup> and were as humbly subject as their serfs were to his moral and religious authority. The most powerful prelates must obey his orders at once or be deposed.<sup>4</sup> Not a council must be held in Europe without his approval<sup>5</sup>: not a church must be built “without the commands of

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, lxxxiii., xcii., and cviii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, lxxix.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep.*, vi.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, lxxv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xii.

the Pope”<sup>1</sup>: not a book of any importance must be published without his authorization.<sup>2</sup> Nicholas was conscientious in small duties: he kept lists of the blind and ailing poor to whom food had to be sent. But his great feature was his treatment of the mighty. He lived on a cloud-wrapt height, sending out the thunders of excommunication, on gentle and simple, as no Pope had ever dared to do before. He left to Louis the petty position of “emperor of men’s bodies”: *he* occupied the position of Jupiter. Europe was cowed by the impersonal arrogance of his language. He was the greatest maker of the mediæval Papacy.<sup>3</sup>

Nicholas did a greater work than Hildebrand because the times permitted him. He had to deal with the degenerate descendants of Charlemagne, not with a powerful ruler. On the other hand, court-favour and prosperity had made the leading prelates a feudal aristocracy, often arrogant and avaricious; and the monks they threatened and the priests they oppressed turned eagerly from them to the Roman court of appeal. Princes chafed at the independence of their spiritual vassals, and would depose them: bishops chafed at the interference of their suzerains, and would assert the independence of the Church. A thousand voices appealed to Rome. The fact that the *Forged Decretals* were not made at Rome or in the interest of Rome, but by the provincial clergy in their own interest, gives us the measure of the age. And the fact that such forgeries were at once received reminds us of another favourable circumstance: the dense ignorance of the time. There

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cxv.

<sup>3</sup> An excellent analysis of his ideas is given in Dr. A. Greinacher’s *Die Anschauungen des Papstes Nikolaus I. über das Verhältniss von Staat und Kirche* (1909).

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was culture in places, as the contemporary work of Scotus Erigena reminds us, but to check these Papal claims one needed a knowledge of history, and the true story of the development of the Church and the Papacy, as we know it, was buried under a dense growth of legends and forgeries. Hence the dogmatic Papal conception, partly based on such documents as the *Donation of Constantine* and the *Forged Decretals*, sank almost unchallenged into the mind of Europe, and the Pope was now enabled to dispense with the swords of princes and rely on religious threats. The letters of Nicholas splutter anathemas from beginning to end.

His first extant letter gives the Archbishop of Sens and his colleagues a stern lesson on the prestige of the Papacy, as understood by Nicholas I. The sixth letter peremptorily orders the great Hincmar of Rheims and his colleagues, in language of the simplest arrogance, to excommunicate at once, as he had directed, the Countess Ingeltrude. But within a few years Nicholas was involved in such a mesh of correspondence with offending princes and prelates that we must consider the chief causes in succession.

The Eastern Empire was then ruled by Michael the Drunkard, his mistress Eudocia, and the Emperor's tutor in vice, his uncle Bardas. This pretty trio deposed the saintly Ignatius from the See of Constantinople, and put in his place the imperial secretary Photius, one of the most accomplished scholars and least scrupulous courtiers of the East. The better clergy protested, and the court sought the support of the Pope. A glittering captain of the guards presented himself at Rome with a set of jewelled altar-vessels and, no doubt, a diplomatic account of the situation. But Nicholas at once rebuked the Emperor for his "presumptuous



temerity" in deposing Ignatius without the assent of Rome, and sent legates to inquire into the matter; and he took prompt occasion to demand the restoration of Papal rights and patrimonies in the East.<sup>1</sup> The Eastern court must have gasped at this language. However, the Pope's legates were suborned, and a Council held at Constantinople (May, 861) confirmed the election of Photius. Nicholas was not satisfied,<sup>2</sup> and at length he heard the truth from Ignatius. He called a Council at Rome, ordered Michael to restore Ignatius,<sup>3</sup> and threatened Photius with all the anathemas in the Papal arsenal if he did not retire.

Photius kept his place, and in 865 Michael wrote an abusive and threatening letter to the Pope. We gather from the Pope's reply that it expressed the greatest contempt and threatened that Greek troops would come and make an end of them all. The lengthy reply of Nicholas has some fine passages, but it argues too much where silence would have been more dignified, and is at times petty and petulant in hurling back the Emperor's foolish insults.<sup>4</sup> It received no answer, and in November, 866, Nicholas wrote again. He was, he said, sending legates to judge the case at Constantinople and would remind Michael of the terrible things in store for those who disobeyed him; as to that abusive letter, he says, if Michael does not take it back, he will "commit it to eternal perdition, in a great fire, and so bring the Emperor into contempt with all nations." He also sent a very threatening letter to Photius. But the letters never reached Constantinople. The legates were turned back at the frontier, and Photius went on

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, iv.<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xlvi.<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xii. and xiii.<sup>4</sup> *Ep.*, xcvi.<sup>5</sup> *Ep.*, lxxxvi.

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to publish a virulent tirade on the errors and heresies of the Latins. This seems to have been beyond the resources of the Lateran, and the scholars of France were entrusted with the defence of the West. Ignatius was eventually restored, but Nicholas did not live to see the issue, and the Eastern Church again drifted far away from the Western.

The anathema had proved ineffectual in the East, but Nicholas had meantime begun to employ it with happier results in Europe. In spite of the Puritanism of Louis I., the loose tradition of Charlemagne's court lingered in France and Nicholas soon found it necessary to rebuke aristocratic sinners. I have mentioned that in 860 he threatened the Countess Ingeltrude with excommunication if she did not abandon her gay vagabondage and return to her husband, the Count of Burgundy. Her son Hucbert had claimed the attention of Benedict III., who tells us that this high-born young abbot went about France with a lively troop of actresses and courtesans, corrupted the most venerable nunneries, and filled monasteries with his hawks and dogs and licentious ladies.<sup>1</sup> Hucbert's sister, Theutberga, was wedded to Lothair of Lorraine, brother of the Emperor Louis, who accused her of incest with Hucbert before her marriage and proposed to divorce her and marry his fascinating mistress Waldrada. Whether she was guilty or not we cannot tell, as no proper trial was ever held. She claimed the hot-water ordeal, and her champion was unscathed. Then Lothair won the support of the chief prelates of his kingdom, and they obtained or extorted from her a confession of guilt. They committed her to a nunnery and, in 862, granted Lothair a divorce.

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

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Theutberga appealed to Rome, and Nicholas ordered that a general synod should meet at Metz. In his most lordly manner the Pope directed Charles the Bald and Louis of Germany (uncles of Lothair) to send bishops to this synod, but they left the field to their nephew and, as he bribed the Pope's legates, he secured a confirmation of the divorce (June, 863). Nicholas set his lips with more than their usual sternness when the archbishops of Cologne and Trèves arrived with this decision. Summoning his own bishops to a council, he bluntly described the Metz synod as "a brothel," annulled its decision, and excommunicated the two archbishops. In language more imperious than any that had yet issued from the Lateran, he declared that this was the decision of the Vicar of Christ, and any man—he seems to refer pointedly to the royal families—who ventured to dissent from this or any other Papal pronouncement would incur the direst anathemas.

Günther, the Archbishop of Cologne, fled in anger to the court of the Emperor, and before long Louis was marching on Rome at the head of his troops.<sup>1</sup> It was a critical moment for the Papal conception. Nicholas ordered fasts and processions, and one of these processions, headed by the large gold crucifix which was believed to contain a part of the true cross, went out to St. Peter's, near which the imperial troops were encamped. To the horror of the Romans, the soldiers fell on the procession with their swords, and flung the precious cross into the mud. Nicholas crossed the river secretly and remained in prayer in St. Peter's, for forty-eight hours, without food. This was the world's reply to his first tremendous assertion of author-

<sup>1</sup> The best account is in the *Annals of St. Bertin*, in the *Monumenta Germaniæ Historica*, vol. i.

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to publish a virulent tirade on the errors and heresies of the Latins. This seems to have been beyond the resources of the Lateran, and the scholars of France were entrusted with the defence of the West. Ignatius was eventually restored, but Nicholas did not live to see the issue, and the Eastern Church again drifted far away from the Western.

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

ity, and the history of Europe might have been altered if the imperial sword had on that occasion prevailed over his spiritual threats. But the Papacy was saved by one of those accidents which so deeply impressed the mediæval imagination. The man who had insulted the cross died suddenly, and Louis himself became seriously ill. The Empress hurried to the Pope, and in a short time the troops were marching northward. From that day anathema becomes a mighty weapon in the hands of the Popes.

Archbishop Günther was not so easily intimidated. He wrote a fierce diatribe against Nicholas—this new “emperor of the whole world,”—had a copy flung upon the tomb of the apostle, and departed for Lorraine. But Nicholas now knew his power. He scolded Charles and Louis like lackeys for not sending bishops to Metz; they held their swords from St. Peter, and they must listen to a Pope who speaks from direct divine revelation.<sup>1</sup> The two kings persuaded Lothair to disown Günther and submit, and the legate Arsenius was sent to France. This legate Arsenius, an arrogant and worldly Bishop, whose career ended in grave scandal, delivered the Pope’s orders at the courts of Charles, Louis, and Lothair with a haughtiness even greater and less respectable than that of Nicholas. He was obeyed at once, says Hincmar, who shudders at the facile scattering of anathemas.<sup>2</sup> He then conducted Theutberga to her husband and made the prince and his nobles swear on the most sacred relics to respect her; and, after a final shower of “unheard-of maledictions” (says Hincmar), he set out for Rome with the siren Waldrada.

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

<sup>2</sup> It is, at least, generally believed that Hincmar wrote this part of the *Bertinian Annals*.

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There is grave reason to believe that the arrogant Bishop was bribed, or otherwise corrupted, by Waldrada. She "escaped" in northern Italy and returned to Lorraine; and the unhappy Theutberga now appealed to Nicholas to release her and let Lothair marry Waldrada. To this noble appeal Nicholas could have but one answer; for the claims of the human heart he had no ear. She must remain in her husband's bed if it means martyrdom. Lothair shall never marry that "whore" even if Theutberga dies. There death compelled Nicholas to leave the romantic situation of Lothair; and one reads, almost with a smile, that his successor, Hadrian II., accepted Lothair's sworn declaration (supported by many presents) that he had had no relations with Waldrada since the prohibition, and admitted him and the Archbishop of Cologne to the holy table. One must respect the great Pope's insistence on what he believed to be a divine ordination, but the historians who represent him as the champion of the human rights of an injured woman forget the final martyrdom of Theutberga.

One seems at first to find a more human note in the Pope's indulgence toward Baldwin of Flanders. Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald, had been put under restraint by her father for misconduct, and in 860 she eloped with the young Count of Flanders. Baldwin asked the Pope's mediation, and he won from Charles forgiveness for the erring couple. If, however, one reads his letter (*xxii.*) carefully, one finds no ground for the claim that he was "tender toward the penitent." He plainly says that Baldwin had threatened to throw in his lot with the Norman pirates if Charles persists in his threat of vengeance. There is a nearer approach to sentiment in the Pope's effort to secure the property

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of the widowed Helletrude, which had been seized by Lothair; but we do not know the issue of his intervention in that case.

If the new language of the Papacy fell with uncertain effect upon the ears of kings and sinners, it did at least win a triumph among the great prelates of Europe and raised the Roman See immeasurably above them. The conflict with Hincmar of Rheims was the most notable and successful struggle in which Nicholas engaged. Hincmar was the most distinguished and one of the more worthy of the prelate-nobles who had risen to wealth and power with the settlement of Europe. He was a man of imperious temper and great ability, yet of sincere religious feeling and concern for the prestige of the Gallic Church. One of his suffragans, Rothrad of Soissons, incurred his dislike, and, when this Bishop suspended one of his priests, who had been caught in adultery and ignominiously mutilated by his parishioners, Hincmar reinstated the man. When Rothrad not unnaturally remonstrated, he was deposed by Hincmar and a jury of five bishops,<sup>1</sup> and he appealed to Rome. In order to frustrate this appeal, Hincmar took a weak and improper advantage of a letter written by Rothrad, saying that in this letter the Bishop abandoned his appeal, and induced the King to forbid him to go to Rome. Then, in a synod which met at Soissons, he had the deposition confirmed and Rothrad sentenced to live in a monastery.

Nicholas at once, in 863, wrote a severe letter to Hincmar, harshly rebuking him for his want of respect for the Roman See and claiming that the case ought to have been remitted to Rome whether Rothrad had appealed or no.<sup>2</sup> In a second letter written shortly

<sup>1</sup> *Bertinian Annals*, year 865.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xxxiii.

afterwards, he threatened to depose Hincmar if he did not obey, or come to justify his conduct at Rome, within thirty days.<sup>1</sup> He wrote in the same harshly autocratic language to the King and to the other French prelates; if his orders were not at once obeyed, he would punish everybody severely. The greatest prelate-noble in Europe and the King himself submitted almost without a struggle, and Rothrad went to Rome. Hincmar, it is true, disdained to send witnesses and attempted in his letter to defend his action, but the Pope went on his way as calmly and inexorably as if he were dealing with a few refractory monks. On Christmas Eve, 864, he preached a sermon on the case and announced that he had reinstated Rothrad. The legate Arsenius was then about to set out for France on the mission I have already described, and he took Rothrad with him to the court of Charles. He took also a letter to Hincmar which began: "If thou hadst any respect for the canons of the Fathers or the Apostolic See, thou wouldst not have attempted to depose Rothrad without our knowledge." I will consider later this covert reference to the *Forged Decretals*. Rothrad was reinstated; and the language in which the *Bertinian Annals* describe the Pope's procedure shows the bitter resentment it provoked in France.

An incident that occurred in the course of the dispute shows—if proof were necessary—that Nicholas acted on a sincere conviction of right. In 863 Lothair appointed Archbishop Günther's brother, Hildwin, to the See of Cambrai, and Hincmar rightly protested that the man was unworthy. He appealed to Nicholas, and, although his appeal reached the Pope at a time when he was threatening to depose Hincmar, and that

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



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prelate still evaded his orders, Nicholas at once discharged a shower of his menacing letters<sup>1</sup> in support of Hincmar and did not rest until Lothair abandoned Hildwin. Warped as it was, at times, by a too exalted conception of the authority of his See, Nicholas had, nevertheless, a rigid sentiment of justice, and it was his supreme aim to make that anarchic world bow to moral no less than ecclesiastical law.

He had not yet reached the end of his conflict with the great representative of the prelate-nobles. Hincmar's predecessor, Ebbo, had conferred orders after he had been deposed, and a council held at Soissons in 853 had suspended these clerics from the exercise of their functions. Benedict III. and Nicholas himself had expressed a qualified approval of this council, but the *Forged Decretals* were now circulating in France, and one of the suspended clerics, Wulfad,—possibly encouraged by the success of Rothrad,—appealed to Rome. Once more Nicholas curtly ordered Hincmar either to reinstate the clerics or to summon a new council, to which the Pope would send legates, at Soissons. The council was held, and the French bishops endeavoured by means of a compromise to save their own dignity yet avoid a quarrel: they decided to reinstate the clerics as an act of grace. This evasion drew from the Pope some of the sorriest letters in his register. Not only in a most harsh and offensive letter to the Archbishop,<sup>2</sup> but even in a letter to the bishops,<sup>3</sup> he accused Hincmar of fraud, insisted that the *acta* of the earlier Soissons council had been submitted in a dishonest form to his "divinely inspired" predecessor and himself, and, on the pretext that Hincmar was wearing his pallium on improper occasions, threatened to punish

<sup>1</sup> XLI., xlii., and xliii.

<sup>2</sup> CVIII.

<sup>3</sup> CVII.

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his "pride" and "vainglory" by a withdrawal of that distinction. He ordered them to hold a new council. Nicholas died before the report of this council reached Rome, and his indulgent successor exculpated Hincmar. But the meekness with which those terrible letters were received is a measure of the advance of the Papacy.

A story that is told at length in the *Liber Pontificalis* affords another instance of this assertion of spiritual autocracy and its encouragement by appeals from the provinces. The Pope was informed that John of Ravenna abused his power; bishops complained that he quartered himself and his expensive retinue on them for unreasonable periods and made other exacting demands. When John received letters of remonstrance and legates from Rome, he forbade his subjects to appeal to the Pope, and strengthened his authority by falsifying the documents in his archives: a crime at which the Roman Anastasius expresses the most naïve surprise and indignation. When Nicholas summoned him to appear before a Roman synod, John "boasted" that he was not subject to the Bishop of Rome, and, when the synod excommunicated him, he appealed to the Emperor. He then went, with the support of imperial legates, to beard Nicholas in the Lateran, but the Pope astutely detached the legates from him and he returned in concern to Ravenna. In this case the prelate was unpopular and unjust, so that Nicholas had a good local base for his authority. He went in person to Ravenna, and before long men pointed the finger of scorn or of horror at their proud Archbishop as he rode through the streets. The Emperor abandoned him, and in a few months we find John at Rome, humbly submitting to the rod, placing the written record of his penitence on the holy sandals of the Saviour.

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A remarkable extension of this authority is attempted in a letter which Nicholas addressed to King Charles in 867. The dispute about predestination which then agitated clerical Europe, and gave some fallacious promise of a revival of intellect, had been submitted to Nicholas in the early days of his Pontificate. Nicholas was, like all the great Popes, a statesman and canonist, not a theologian. He prudently remained silent, and let Franks and Germans belabour each other with theological epithets. When, however, he heard that Charles had invited the famous John Scotus Erigena, the subtlest thinker of the early Middle Ages, to translate a supposed work of Denis the Areopagite (*De Divinis Nominibus*), he reproved the King for issuing so important a book without having submitted it to Rome.<sup>1</sup> We do not find that Charles took any notice of his claim of censorship, or sent him a copy of the book. It is a good illustration of the attitude of Rome that a thinker like Scotus Erigena, in whose works we plainly recognize the most advanced heresy that arose in Europe before the eighteenth century, incurred so little censure. Nicholas merely complains that the learned Irishman is rumoured to be not entirely sound in theology.

Still bolder is the claim made in a letter in which Nicholas sought to control the conversion of the Danes. No new national Church must be founded without his authority, he says, since "according to the sacred decrees even a new *basilica* cannot be built without the command of the Pope."<sup>2</sup> In this he outran not only the genuine, but the forged, Decretals. He had in mind, no doubt, a decree of Gelasius on the subject of church-building, but this merely forbade the erection

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, cxxxv.

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of a church, without authority, in the Roman diocese itself. At the other extremity of Europe Nicholas made elaborate efforts to bring the Bulgarians under his authority. He sent legates to King Boris, and wrote a very long and curious reply to a large number of questions—ranging from the most exalted points of faith to the wearing of trousers by women—which the Bulgarians submitted to him. He did not live to see the relapse of the deceitful and ambitious Slavs.

These are the outstanding features of the voluminous correspondence of Nicholas the Great. They bring before us the portrait of a man who is raised above the disorder of his time, not so much by strength of personality as by the exaltation of his sacerdotal creed. In a more orderly Christendom Nicholas might have seemed an exemplary and not greatly distinguished bishop, but chaos has ever been the native element of such creative genius as he possessed. Since all men now bowed in theory to the Christian ideal, their very disorders lent authority to the Pope's anathemas. He hears that a set of young bishops are devoted to hunting and even to less reputable pastimes, and his scorn is irresistible.<sup>1</sup> He hears that the sons of Charles the Bald have quarrelled with their royal father, and, though they are now reconciled, "we direct that you present yourselves humbly at a synod to be held in a place appointed by us, to which we will send legates of the apostolic authority."<sup>2</sup> He has little time or inclination for the material decoration of Rome. He restores St. Peter's and the Trajan aqueduct; he organizes the distribution of charity; but his life-work is the consolidation of the spiritual supremacy of the

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xxxix.

Popes. He is, pre-eminently, the smiter of the powerful; and, in smiting them, he strengthens the Papal arm. Fortunately for him and the Papacy, he has to deal with a degenerate, ignorant, and superstitious generation: the night of the Dark Age is drawing in—a night which is not disproved by showing, as Maitland does, that there was a little lamp here and there. And when we contemplate that world of murder, incest, rape, spoliation, and monastic and priestly corruption which is reflected in the Pope's letters, we feel that it was well for Europe to have such a master.

On the other hand, we do assuredly find Nicholas, and each succeeding great Pope, yielding to that most natural temptation of the moralist and priest in face of grave disorder—acting on the unformulated principle that the end sanctifies the means. The question whether Nicholas relied on the *Forged Decretals* has now been so fully discussed that it is possible to give a precise answer; at least when we consider certain passages in his letters which have been overlooked. On the origin and spread of the Decretals I need only summarize accepted results.<sup>1</sup> The collection originated in France about the year 850, though it is still disputed whether it was composed in the diocese of Tours or (as seems more probable) that of Rheims. It follows from this origin that the forgery was perpetrated, not in the interest of the Papacy, but of the bishops and

<sup>1</sup> The famous collection which bears the name of Isidorus Mercator contains about sixty spurious Decretals in the first part, covering the first three centuries, and about thirty in the third part; the second part contains the canons of councils. The author makes an adroit use of older documents, and his work is largely a mosaic of genuine fragments (of Papal letters, chronicles, etc.) so pieced together and ante-dated as to father later developments of Papal authority on the earlier Popes. The best edition is that of P. Hinschius (1863), and the best survey of recent

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lower clergy, to whom it gave the right of appeal to a central authority against the (often unjust) sentences of higher prelates and the aggression of lay nobles. The book, however, is not merely concerned with questions of jurisdiction and appeal. It is further agreed that, though the successor of Nicholas, Hadrian II., certainly used the *Forged Decretals*, they were little used by the Popes before the middle of the eleventh century; but it is equally agreed that they were of immense service to the Papacy in spreading a conviction of the antiquity of its most advanced claims and in promoting the practice of appeal to it.

The chief point in dispute is whether Nicholas knew and employed the forgery, and with this I may deal more fully. The first letter in the Pope's Register is a reply to Wenilo, Archbishop of Sens, in regard to the deposition of a bishop. Servatus Lupus, the learned abbot of Ferrières, had written on behalf of Wenilo—the letter is fortunately preserved—to say that men were quoting a certain Decretal of Pope Melchiades which reserved to the Papacy the deposition of bishops.<sup>1</sup> This was evidently a quotation from the *Forged Decretals*, yet in his reply Nicholas completely ignores the supposed Decretal on which his opinion was expressly asked. Whether or no we may infer from this silence that Nicholas was ignorant of the source of the quotation, we may surely conclude that so industrious a study is the article "Pseudoisidor" in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie für Protestantische Theologie*. There is a useful chapter in *The Age of Charlemagne* (1898), by C. L. Wells. The ablest Catholic study of the relation of Nicholas to the collection is Jules Roy's *Saint Nicholas* (1901). See also *Les Fausses Décrétales* (1879), of Father Ch. de Smedt. On the general question of the Pope's use of spurious documents see the able Old Catholic work of J. Richterich, *Papst Nikolaus I.* (1903).

<sup>1</sup> See *Ep.*, cxxx., of Servatus Lupus.

canonist would make immediate inquiries about this remarkable document, if he were not already acquainted with it. Since, however, he made no reply to the question whether the deposition of a bishop *was* reserved to the Papacy, I infer that he was unaware of the existence of the Decretals; and this is strongly confirmed by a letter which he wrote in 862. He tells King Solomon of Brittany that a bishop may be deposed by twelve bishops, on the evidence of seventy-two witnesses, and he refers to Pope Silvester as the authority for this mythical ordinance.<sup>1</sup> In this he relies on a spurious document, but a document *not* contained in the Isidorean collection. The main point is that he allows the local deposition of bishops, and enjoins recourse to Rome only in case of dispute. He does not yet seem to know the *Decretals*, but, as Hincmar had used them in 857 (possibly in 853), we can hardly imagine such a Pope as Nicholas remaining long unaware of the existence in France of this strong foundation of his authority; especially when, as I said, his attention had been plainly drawn to it by Servatus Lupus.

Then came the case of Rothrad,<sup>2</sup> and Nicholas, as we saw, wrote to Hincmar that the case ought to have been remitted to Rome whether Rothrad had appealed or no<sup>3</sup>; but it is clear that he is speaking of a vague duty imposed by general respect for the Apostolic See,

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

<sup>2</sup> It is not easy to regard Rothrad as the author of the forgery, as he was not deposed until 862. A more probable source of origin is the group of clerics ordained by Ebbo and suspended by Hincmar in 853. Even this seems too late, however, as such a compilation was not the work of a day. But it is very probable that Rothrad took the book to Rome, if it were not already there.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xxxiii.

not of a duty enforced by canonical obligation. If, he says, Hincmar were "not disposed" to send the case to Rome (*si id agere noluisse*), he ought at least to have respected Rothrad's actual appeal. But when we come to 865, and the famous letter (lxxv.) which the Pope wrote to Hincmar and his colleagues, Nicholas is quite clear. "Even if," he says, "he [Rothrad] had not appealed to the Apostolic See, you had no right to run counter to so many and such important decretal statutes and depose a bishop without consulting us."<sup>1</sup> The French prelates had complained that such Decretals were not found in their collection: the Dionysian collection given to Charlemagne by Hadrian in 774. It does not matter, Nicholas replies, whether they have them or not; all Decretals approved at Rome are to be respected. And he makes it perfectly clear that he is referring, not to genuine Decretals which may not be in the Dionysian collection, but to the Isidorean. They make use of these Decretals themselves, he says, when it suits their purpose; we know that Hincmar had done so, and possibly Nicholas had learned this from Rothrad. But he makes it still plainer that he is not referring to Decretals in the Roman archives, but to the Isidorean forgeries, when he says that he is thinking of the Decretals of "ancient" (*prisci*) Pontiffs, not merely those of Gregory and Leo; and he leaves no room whatever for doubt when he includes letters written by the Popes in "the times of the pagan persecutions."

We must not, however, exaggerate the Pope's reliance on this imposture. M. Roy has made a careful

<sup>1</sup> The modern writers who have contended that these *tot et talia decretalia statuta* are not the Isidorean Decretals seem not to have read the whole letter.



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analysis of the letters of Nicholas, and he maintains that only four of his quotations are from spurious Decretals: that three of these are not in the Isidorean collection: and that the one which is common to Nicholas and pseudo-Isidore had already been in circulation before the imposture was published.<sup>1</sup>

Father de Smedt further points out that Nicholas made no use of Isidorean Decretals which would, especially in his conflict with Photius, have been useful to him, and that, when he does use documents which are in the Isidorean collection, he gives their genuine words or assigns them to their real authors. These are generally valid claims, but they do not conflict with my conclusion. Nicholas plainly endeavoured to use the *Forged Decretals*, but he had a learned and acute antagonist in Hincmar and he dare not quote them individually or in their crude Isidorean form. One is almost reminded of the smiles of Roman augurs when one considers these two great ecclesiastical statesmen, using a forged document or watching with complacency the use of it, yet checking each other when it affects their own interests. There is no answer to Milman's sober charge that Nicholas saw the spread of the work and did not protest. He knew well the contents of the Roman archives—he had a number of scribes studying them—and he must have known as well as we do that there were no genuine Decretals before the time of Gelasius.

The analysis made by M. Roy must be supplemented by that of J. Richterich,<sup>2</sup> from which it appears beyond

<sup>1</sup> *Saint Nicholas*, Appendix II. (followed by Dr. Mann, vol. iii.). See also F. Rocquain's *La Papauté au Moyen Âge* (1881). Hefele (bd. iv., p. 292) admits that Nicholas relied on the forgery.

<sup>2</sup> *Papst Nikolaus I.* (1903).

question that Nicholas made a very extensive use of spurious documents; as we have found Roman officials doing from the fourth century. Father de Smedt<sup>1</sup> "does not altogether deny" that, as Hinschius says, Nicholas sometimes, in quoting genuine Decretals, alters their meaning in accordance with the Isidorean. Roy himself has to admit that Nicholas goes far beyond the words and meaning of Gelasius in saying that no church may be built without the Pope's permission.<sup>2</sup> He goes equally beyond genuine precedent in claiming that no bishop can be deposed without his authority; hitherto there had been only the vague understanding that "grave cases" were reserved to the Pope. He advances equally beyond precedent in claiming that no council can be held without his sanction. Roy<sup>3</sup> calls this "a pseudo-Isidorean principle," and says that Nicholas nowhere asserted it. But Nicholas plainly asserts it in *Ep.*, xii., and is just as plainly straining a vague early claim of Pope Gelasius.<sup>4</sup>

We must conclude that, however beneficent may have been the spiritual centralization which Nicholas so ably elaborated, and however impersonal and religious his aim may have been, he proceeded at times on principles which no cause can sanctify: principles which it was dangerous to bequeath to less spiritual successors. He died in 867, after nine and a half years of heroic work for his ideal: a type of ecclesiastical statesman that it needs a peculiarly balanced judgment to appreciate. The pleasures and thrills of the world he despised, and it would be a deep injustice to conceive him as other than entirely indifferent to the personal prestige of his position. His personality was

<sup>1</sup> P. 116.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, lxxxii. and cxxxv.

<sup>3</sup> P. 131.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep.*, lxv.

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entirely merged in his office: he was, indeed, not a personality, but the vicar of a greater personality. The phrase which too often in Hadrian's letters is a mere artifice for obtaining wealth and power—"the Blessed Peter"—was to him the expression of a living and awful reality. If the Papacy did not tower above all the other thrones in Christendom, the intention of Christ was made void. Nicholas would have it realized. In that spirit he added strength to the frame of the Papal system. The historian must do justice to his aim and to the salutary tendency of his moral control of Europe; he must be no less candid in denouncing the sentiment that the end justifies the means.

## CHAPTER VII

### JOHN X. AND THE IRON CENTURY

THE next great stride in the development of the Papacy is taken by Gregory VII., the true successor of Nicholas I. and Gregory I. Europe seemed, indeed, entirely prepared for that last development of the Papal system which we connect with the name of Hildebrand, and a student of its essential growth may be tempted to pass at once from the ninth to the eleventh century. But to do so would be to omit one of the most singular phases of the story of the Papacy and leave in greater obscurity than ever one of its most interesting problems. How comes it that a Century of Iron, as Baronius has for ever branded the tenth century, falls between the work of Nicholas and the still greater work of Gregory? May we trust those modern writers who contend that the devout father of ecclesiastical history was gravely unjust to the Papacy, and that we may detect the play of a romantic or a malicious imagination in the familiar picture of Theodora and Marozia controlling the chair of Peter and investing their lovers or sons with the robes of the Vicar of Christ? Some consideration must be given to this phase, and it will be convenient to take John X. as its outstanding and characteristic figure.

I have already observed that few really unworthy

men sat in the chair of Peter until the close of the ninth century. Among the hundred Popes who preceded Nicholas I. there had been, it is true, few men of commanding personality, but there had been still less men of ignoble character. They had been, on the whole, men whose real mediocrity is not obscured by the fulsome praises of their official panegyrists, yet, for the most part, men of blameless life. In the ninth century we see a gradual deterioration. Hadrian II. tries, with equal sincerity though less personality, to play the great part of Nicholas, and it is from no fault of character that he fails to coerce princes and prelates. John VIII. plays a not ignoble human part during the calamitous decade of his Pontificate, though there is more soldierly ardour than religious idealism in his defence of the Papacy. After him, in quick succession, come five Popes of little-known character, and then we have that famous Stephen VI. who digs the half-putrid body of a predecessor, Formosus, from its grave and treats it with appalling outrage. In the gloom which now descends on Rome, we follow with difficulty the passionate movements of the rival parties, but we know that after Formosus there were nine Popes in eight years (896-904). With Sergius III. (904-911), the Century of Iron fitly opens, and his name and that of John X., who became Pope in 914, are chiefly associated with the names of Theodora and Marozia.

The general causes of this deterioration are easily assigned. In that age of violent character, uncontrolled by culture, a multiplication of small princedoms was sure to lead to bloody rivalries. To this the dissolution of the Empire of Charlemagne and the feebleness of his descendants had led, especially in Italy, where the weakness of a sacerdocracy—that is to say, its

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liability, if not obligation, to use temporal resources for religious rather than military and civic purposes—soon became apparent. The Papacy had the further weakness that, being nominally independent yet unable to defend itself, it was ever on the watch for another Pippin—a monarch who would protect it and not govern it—and it dangled its tawdry imperial crown before the eyes of the kings of Italy, France, and Germany, to say nothing of the smaller princes of Italy. Hence arose the factions which rent a degraded Rome. We must remember, too, that this was a fresh period of invasion and devastation: the waves of Saracen advance lapped the walls of Rome from the south and the fierce Hungarians reached it from the north.

These general causes of decay are substantial, yet we must not be too easily contented with them. Some day a subtler or more candid science will tell the whole story of the making of the Middle Ages. I need note only that the disorder existed in Rome, and often burst its bonds, long before the time of Stephen VI. Even under Hadrian I. we saw relatives and friends of the Pope promoted to high office, yet in the end betraying characters of revolting brutality. We remember also a certain legate of Nicholas I., Bishop Arsenius, who handled anathemas with such consummate ease. This man's nephew abducted the daughter of Pope Hadrian II., and, when he was pursued, murdered her and the Pope's wife. There was some taint in the blood—or the brain—of this new Roman aristocracy which gathered round the Lateran. Under John VIII., the strongest successor of Nicholas, they broke into appalling disorders. "Their swinish lust," says one of the most conservative and most reticent of recent writers on the Popes, speaking of the leading Papal

officials of the time, "was only second to their cruelty and avarice."<sup>1</sup> Hadrian II. had the widow of one of these officials whipped naked through the streets of Rome, and had another official blinded. Under Stephen VI. and Sergius III. these corrupt Roman families come into clearer light, and the domination of Theodora and Marozia is merely one episode in this lamentable development, which has been recorded more fully because of the piquancy of this feminine ascendancy in a nominal theocracy.

The period with which we are concerned really opens with Pope Formosus, a not unworthy man, who looked for support to Arnulph of Germany. The Italian faction, which looked to Guido of Spoleto and Adalbert of Tuscany, regarded this "treachery" with the bitterest rancour and imprisoned the Pope. One of the leaders of this section was the deacon (later Pope) Sergius. Arnulph came to Rome, and swept the Tuscan-Spoletan faction, including Sergius, out of the city. Formosus died in 896, his gouty successor followed him within a fortnight, and Stephen VI. was elected. As soon as Arnulph had left Rome, the Pope surrendered to the Italian faction, and the Lateran witnessed that ghastly outrage of the trial of the mouldering corpse of Formosus: on the nominal charge of having exercised his functions after being deposed and having passed from another bishopric to that of Rome. There seems to be some lack of sense of moral proportion in historians who, knowing these far graver things, make elaborate efforts to disprove the love-affairs of one or two Popes of the period. Three not unworthy Popes filled, and soon quitted, the Roman See after Stephen. The last of these, Leo V., was dethroned and imprisoned

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mann, iii., 285.

by the cardinal-priest Christopher, who seized the Papacy. Sergius and his friends in exile now entered into correspondence with the dissatisfied Romans, mastered the city with an army, and threw Christopher in turn into a dungeon. This was the rise to power of Sergius III.; the beginning of what has been called, with more vigour than accuracy, the Pornocracy.<sup>1</sup>

With the weakening of the Empire, the Roman nobles had wrested from the Popes the political control of the city, and we gather from the titles assigned to them that there was a debased restoration of the old republican forms. The head of one of the leading families, Theophylactus, is described as Master of the Papal Wardrobe, Master of the Troops, Consul, and Senator. His wife, Theodora, called herself the *Senatrix*: their elder and more famous daughter Marozia is named the *Patricia*. The family belonged, of course, to the Tuscan-Spoletan faction which triumphed with Sergius. Culture had now fallen so low at Rome that there is no writer of the time able or willing to leave us a portrait of these remarkable ladies; the nearest authority, the monk Benedict of Soracte, is so far from artistic feeling that it would be literally impossible to write a grosser and more barbarous Latin than he does. From some documents of the time it appears that there were ladies of this great family who could not write their names, and we may presume that this was their common condition. But it is uniformly stated that they were women of great beauty and ambition: it is certain that Marozia was the mother of John XI., and that she put him on the Papal throne: and it is claimed that Sergius was the father of John XI., and that John X. was the lover of Theodora.

<sup>1</sup> Inaccurate because, however many lovers Theodora and Marozia may have had, they were certainly not courtesans.



These stories of amorous relations would not in themselves deserve a severe historical inquiry, but they have been made a test of the accuracy or inaccuracy of our authorities. The older ecclesiastical historians admitted them without demur. In the pages of Baronius Theodora is "that most powerful, most noble, and most shameless whore" and Sergius is the lover of that "shameless whore" Theodora. Pagi and Mansi reproduce these words, and they are complacently prefixed to the collection of John's letters in the Migne edition.<sup>1</sup> More recent writers like Duchesne and Dr. W. Barry admit the charge against Sergius; but the learned Muratori boldly questioned the whole tradition, and various modern Italian writers have attempted to support his case.<sup>2</sup>

The claim that we have discovered, since the days of Baronius, new documents which materially alter the evidence, must at once be set aside. Of the Formosian writers of the time whose pamphlets have been recovered, the priest Auxilius throws no light on this subject and the grammarian Vulgarius is unreliable. We have letters and poems in which Vulgarius hails Pope Sergius as "the glory of the world" and "the pillar of all virtue," and professes a profound regard for the matchless virtue and the "immaculate bed" of Theodora.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Baronius, year 912, and Mansi, xviii., 314 and 316.

<sup>2</sup> Barry's *Papal Monarchy* (1902), pp. 146 and 150. For criticism of the tradition see F. Liverani's study of John X. in vol. ii. of his *Opere* (1858) and P. Fedele's "Ricerche per la Storia da Roma e del Papato nel Secolo X." in the *Archivi della R. Società Romana di Storia Patria* (vols. xxxiii. and following). Dr. Mann follows these critics in his chapters on Sergius and John (vol. iv.).

<sup>3</sup> Published by E. Dümmler in his *Auxilius und Vulgarius* (1866), pp. 139-146. Dr. Mann (iv., 139 and 141) thinks it incredible that if Theodora were a vicious woman any man should write thus; but two pages later he recollects that Vulgarius has accused Pope Sergius of

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The fact is that Vulgarius had previously indicted Sergius in lurid terms and had been significantly summoned to Rome by that vigorous Pontiff. His charges of murder and outrage then changed into the most fulsome flattery, to which we cannot pay the slightest regard. His earlier charges are more serious, as, writing only six years after the events, he appeals to the still fresh recollection in the minds of the Romans that Sergius had had his two predecessors murdered in prison.<sup>1</sup>

We have no serious reason to differ from Baronius. Liutprand, Bishop of Cremona, is the chief accuser. As servant of the court of Berengar II. and then of Otto I., he often visited Rome in the first half of the tenth century, and he knew the city well during the Pontificate of John XI., the son of Marozia. He says that Theodora, "a shameless whore," was all-powerful at Rome: that she was the mistress of John X., whom she promoted to the See of Ravenna and then to that of Rome: that her daughters Marozia and Theodora were more shameless than she: and that John XI. was the son of Sergius and Marozia.<sup>2</sup> Liutprand would hardly scruple to reproduce gossip, and he is often wrong, so that one reads him with caution. Yet his statement about Sergius is so far confirmed that so careful a writer on the Popes as Duchesne is compelled to accept it.<sup>3</sup>

Benedict of Soracte, a very meagre and confused chronicler, gives Marozia a dark character in his

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murdering his two predecessors, and he advises us to place no reliance on the word of such a "wretched sycophant."

<sup>1</sup> *De Causa Formosiana*, c. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Antapodosis*, ii., 48.

<sup>3</sup> In the notes to his edition of the *Liber Pontificalis*.

*Chronicle*.<sup>1</sup> Her son Alberic was, he says, born out of wedlock: presumably before she married the father, Alberic I. Flodoard, the most respectable chronicler of the time, tells us in his *Annals* (year 933) that John XI. was the son of Marozia and the brother of Alberic II.; but neither there nor elsewhere does he mention the father, and the omission is significant. Flodoard, a deeply religious monk, under personal obligations to the Papacy, was not the man to repeat scandalous Roman gossip; yet in his long poetic history of the Papacy he brands Marozia as an incestuous woman united to an adulterer, and he describes John XI., whom he disdains, as so puny a thing that we can scarcely conceive him as a son of the vigorous Alberic.<sup>2</sup> Lastly, the one-line notice of John XI. in the *Liber Pontificalis* says that he was "the son of Sergius III." We do not know when or by whom this was written, but recent attempts to represent it as an echo of Liutprand have failed. We must agree with Duchesne that it is a distinct testimony and "more authoritative" than that of Liutprand.

I have analyzed afresh the original evidence on this not very important point merely in order to show the futility of recent attempts to rehabilitate the age of John X. Pope Sergius, the chief ecclesiastic of the Italian faction to which John belonged, was a violent and unscrupulous man. He resigned a bishopric, and returned to the rank of deacon, in order that he might have a better chance of the Papacy. He was Anti-Pope to John IX. in 898, and was excommunicated and driven from Rome; and he forced his way back at the point of the sword. The charge that he was respon-

<sup>1</sup> C. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *De Christi Triumphis apud Italiams*, xii., 7.

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sible for the death of his two predecessors cannot be disregarded, and he certainly dealt violently with his opponents. The charge of loose conduct is not more serious than these things, and it rests on strong evidence.

To this party John X. belonged. His early career is not very plain, but he appears first as a deacon at Bologna. He was chosen to succeed Bishop Peter of that city, but, before he was consecrated, Archbishop Kailo of Ravenna died, and John passed to Ravenna and occupied its See. Nine years later, in 914, he was elected Bishop of Rome. It was scarcely thirty years since his party had foully treated the body of Formosus, partly on the charge of passing from another bishopric to that of Rome. One naturally suspects ambition in John and powerful influence in his favour at Rome. We know, in fact, that he was on excellent terms with Theophylactus and Theodora,<sup>1</sup> and no one now doubts that they secured his election. We are therefore not wholly surprised, considering the age, when Liutprand assures us that he was a charming man, and that Theodora, meeting him during one of his missions to Rome, conceived a passion for him.

It is neither possible nor profitable to linger over the subject, and the impartial student will probably neither assent to nor dissent from this unconfirmed statement of the Bishop of Cremona. Liverani ridicules it on the ground that Theodora must have been far from young, since her daughter Marozia married Albert of Camerino about the year 915. It is curious to find a native of Italy, where girls are often mature at twelve, and were in the old days often mothers at thirteen, raising such an objection. Theodora may quite well have been still in her thirties in 915. I would, however,

<sup>1</sup> See a letter from him at Ravenna to them in Liverani, *Opere*, iv., 7.

rather call attention to the moral condition of Europe at the time. The pious Bishop of Verona, Ratherius, gives us an extraordinary picture of the life of some of his episcopal colleagues.<sup>1</sup> They rush through their mass in the morning, don gorgeous dresses and gold belts, and ride out to hunt on horses with golden bridles: they return at night to rich banquets, with massive goblets of good wine, and dancing girls for company, and dice to follow: and they retire, too often with their companions, to beds that are inlaid with gold and silver and spread with covers and pillows of silk. Bishop Atto of Vercelli gives us a corresponding picture of the lives of the lower clergy and their wives and mistresses.<sup>2</sup> The proceedings of the Council of Troslé, in the year 909, confirm and enlarge this remarkable picture.<sup>3</sup> Assuredly no historian who knows the tenth century will find the charges against Sergius and John implausible.

Whatever may be their value, John was no idle voluptuary. He found the Saracens still devastating southern Italy and he helped, in 915, to form a great league against them. When the Duke of Capua led out his troops, and the Spoletans and Beneventans fell into line at last, and even the Greeks sent a fleet, the Roman militia was marshalled, and John rode at their head beside the fiery young Alberic of Camerino. He was not the first of the many fighting Popes: John VIII. had built a Papal navy and dealt the Saracens some shrewd blows. But John X. was the first Pope to take the field in person, and we lament that the wretched scribes of the time have left us no portrait of the consecrated warrior. We know from his letters

<sup>1</sup> *Præloquia*, v., 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, ix.

<sup>3</sup> *Mansi*, xviii., 263.

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that he exposed himself on the field, and from the chronicles that he fired the troops. The Saracens were at last pinned in their camp on a hill near the mouth of the Garigliano, and, after a long blockade, were annihilated.

John and the Marquis Alberic enjoyed a splendid ovation at Rome, and it was probably at this date that the hand of Marozia was bestowed on Alberic. But the victory had its price. John had to surrender some of his patrimonies to the Duke of Gaeta and to confer the imperial crown on King Berengar for his assistance. When Berengar came to Rome, and promised to maintain all the rights and properties of the Papacy as other Emperors had done, and received the crown from the hand of the Pope, it must have seemed that a brighter day had dawned at last on Italy. But the restless factions murmured, and in a few years Rudolph II. of Burgundy was invited to come and seize the crown. Berengar brought the half-civilized Hungarians to his aid, and a fresh trail of blood and fire marred the face of Italy. He lost, and was assassinated (924); but Rudolph, who won only the crown of Italy, was not left long in peaceful possession of it, and the next movement of Italian politics shows John in a singular situation at Rome.

An earlier chapter of this history was enlivened by the amours of Lothair of Lorraine and Waldrada. They left behind them an illegitimate daughter, Bertha, who had all the spirit and more than the ambition of her mother. There were many women of commanding personality (and, usually, little scruple) in the early Middle Ages, and the story of Theodora and Marozia must not be regarded as very exceptional. Bertha made vigorous efforts to win Italy for her favourite

son, Hugh of Provence, and, when she died in 925, his sister, Irmengard, a fascinating woman who maintained the domestic tradition, won the bishops and nobles of Lombardy for him by an unsparing use of her charms. He was presently invited to come and drive the Burgundians out of Italy. John X. joined in the invitation and went to Mantua to meet him.

It is recorded that the Pope made some obscure bargain with him at Mantua, and there can be little doubt that he asked Hugh's aid against Marozia. Theophylactus and Theodora were dead, and Marozia was at deadly feud with the Pope. Her first husband seems to have died about 925, and she had married Guido of Tuscany. Whether her quarrel with John began before her marriage we do not know, but Liutprand tells us that she and Guido wanted to depose the Pope. Both Liutprand and Benedict<sup>1</sup> make the cause of the quarrel clear. John had called his brother Peter to his side at Rome, and the power he gave to his brother, and therefore withdrew from the lay nobles, infuriated his earlier supporters. He turned, as so many Popes had done, to a distant prince, and his career soon came to a close.

The chronicle is crude and meagre, but it suggests elementary and unbridled passions. "The Marquis Peter," says Benedict, "so infuriated the Romans that he was compelled to leave the city." He fortified himself in Horta and summoned the dreaded Hungarians to his aid: than which there could hardly be a graver crime in an Italian of the time. They came in large numbers and trod the life out of the Roman province. When Peter concluded that his opponents were sufficiently weakened, he returned to Rome and gathered

<sup>1</sup> *Antapodosis*, iii., 43; *Chronicon*, c. 29.

troops about him. There must have been sombre days in the city in that year 928. One day, however, when it was observed that few of Peter's men had accompanied him to the Lateran, a band of Marozia's followers burst into the palace and laid him dead at the Pope's feet. John himself was taken from the palace and imprisoned, and he died in prison in the following year (929). Whether he was murdered or died a natural death is uncertain.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the not unnatural termination of one of the longest Pontificates in the history of Rome, and we have no reason to suppose that, if we had fuller narratives than those I have quoted, they would redeem the character of John X. His desertion of Bologna for Ravenna, and his transfer to Rome within twenty years of the time when his party had foully treated a dead man for just such an irregularity: his alliance with the unscrupulous house of Theophylactus: his quite superfluous appearance on the battlefield: his easy distribution of royal and imperial crowns: and, above all, the maintenance of his unprincipled brother in the teeth of deadly hostility, sufficiently indicate his character. He was an accomplished adventurer. He writes a very good Latin for the period, and may well have been a charming and handsome and brave man. It is recorded that he richly decorated the Lateran Palace. But he was a child of his age, and the historian finds it easier to respect the sad and sincere reflection of the older ecclesiastical writers—that Christ then slumbered in the tossing barque of Peter—than the

<sup>1</sup> Benedict merely records his death. Flodoard (*Annals*, year 929) says that "some attributed his death to violence, but the majority to grief." Liutprand (iii., 43) affirms that he was smothered with a pillow.



strained efforts of a few modern writers to convince us that the chosen Pope of an aristocracy which they depict in the darkest colours was merely the victim of calumny.

The little Pontifical work which John did during his fourteen years as Pope does not dispose us to alter this estimate. The score of his letters which survive generally relate to privileges of abbeys or prelates which he was asked to grant or confirm. He gave support to the monks of Fulda,<sup>1</sup> of St. Gall,<sup>2</sup> and of Cluny.<sup>3</sup> He sent legates on a vague mission to Spain and granted a pallium to the Bishop of Hamburg, who was converting the far north. He intervened in the religious troubles of Dalmatia, at the invitation of the local prelates, and wrote them many letters<sup>4</sup> for the regulation (or Romanization) of their Slav liturgy and discipline. Even to Constantinople, which had one of its rare moods of affection for Rome, he sent legates to assist the Greeks in obliterating the effects of their latest quarrel.

His work in Bulgaria is not wholly clear, or it might be interesting. King Simeon quarrelled with the Eastern Church and turned to Rome, and John naturally encouraged him. He sent legates to Bulgaria, and we learn from a letter of Innocent III., long afterwards, that they presented Simeon with a golden crown from John. It looks as if the Pope gave Simeon some kind of imperial rank, but he did not secure the adhesion to Rome of the Bulgarian Church.

A few letters to France and Germany are hardly more instructive. Heribert of Vermandois seized the person of Charles the Simple, and, when he was threatened with excommunication, hoodwinked the Pope. Heri-

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

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, iv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.*, xiv.

<sup>4</sup> Published by Liverani, iv., 76-79.

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bert then, in 925, conferred the rich See of Rheims on his five-year-old son, and John—either in order to secure the release of the King or dreading worse things—acquiesced.<sup>1</sup> In Germany John sent his brother to assist in the restoration of discipline at the Synod of Altheim (916). A few years later he summoned Herimann, Archbishop of Cologne, and Hilduin and Richer, rival bishops of Liège, to the bar of Rome. But in this apparent assertion of authority he was really acting under pressure of the Emperor Berengar, and the sequel is not flattering. There was a complicated quarrel about the bishopric of Liège, and, when the litigants refused to come to Rome, John laid down a principle which would have seemed to Nicholas I. or Gregory VII. an outrage. He rebuked Herimann on the ground of “an ancient custom that none save the King, to whom the sceptre is divinely committed, shall confer a bishopric on any cleric.”

These letters, a poor record of official work for so long a Pontificate and in so disordered a world, do not alter our impression of John. Rome shared the gloom which lay over Europe, and it is foolish to suppose that the degenerate nobles who ruled the Papacy would put on its throne a man who would rebuke their vices or resent their domination. Indeed, it will be useful to follow the lamentable story a little further, as an introduction to the revival which culminates in Gregory VII.

Marozia crowned her adventurous life in 932 by marrying the step-brother of her late husband—the licentious Hugh of Provence whom John had helped to put on the throne of Italy. In the preceding year she had put in the chair of Peter her son, John XI., a

<sup>1</sup> Flodoard, *Ecclesia Remensis Historia*, iv., 20.

mere shadow of a Pope. But the disgusted Romans flew to arms, imprisoned John and Marozia, and sent the brutal Hugh flying for his life. Alberic II. then controlled the city and the Papacy for twenty years, and a series of obscure, though apparently not unworthy, men were appointed to discharge the scanty spiritual duties which Popes could or would perform in that darkest of the dark ages. Alberic bequeathed his power to his illegitimate son Octavian, and compelled the nobles and clergy to swear to make him Pope at the next vacancy. John XII., as he called himself, proved the worst Pope yet recorded: more at home in the helmet than the tiara, and more expert in the cultivation than in the suppression of vice. When his own sword proved incapable of securing his rights, he summoned Otto I., with the customary bribe of the imperial crown. Otto at length deposed him, after six years of scandalous abuse of the Papacy, and he disappears from history in a singular legend; he died, it was said, of a blow on the temples given him by the devil—possibly in the person of the injured husband—during one of his amorous adventures.

Ten Popes and Anti-Popes, generally men of no distinction either in vice or virtue, succeeded each other in the next thirty years. The factions at Rome became more and more violent, and Europe sank deeper and deeper into the corruption from which Gregory VII. would endeavour to rouse it. The Iron Century closed, oddly enough, with the appearance on the Papal throne of one of the first scholars of Christian Europe, the famous Gerbert (Silvester II.), but his brief and premature Pontificate made no impression on that dark age. Under Sergius IV. the Roman faction was at length destroyed, but the counts of Tusculum now

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dragged the unhappy Papacy to a lower depth. Two sons of the first Count, Benedict VIII. and John XIII., successively purchased the votes of the electors, and, by their venality and violence, added fresh stains to the Papal chronicle. The third son of the Count then placed his own youthful offspring in the chair of Peter, and, under the name of Benedict IX., this youth degraded it with crimes and vices so well authenticated that even the most resolute apologist cannot challenge the indictment. Pope Victor III., a few years later, shudders to mention the "murders and robberies and nameless vices" of Benedict,<sup>1</sup> and his vague charges, supported by Raoul Glaber and other authorities, suggest that the Lateran Palace must have recalled to the mind of any sufficiently informed Roman some of the scenes which had been witnessed in Nero's Golden House in the lowest days of paganism. At length, after being twice expelled from Rome, he wearied of the Papacy—one authority says that he wished to marry—and sold it to his uncle John Gratian for one or two thousand pounds of gold. By this time there was a certain young Hildebrand studying in the Lateran School, and the story of his life will tell us the sequel of this extraordinary chapter of Papal history.

<sup>1</sup> *Dialogues*, bk. iii.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HILDEBRAND

THE historian might almost venture to say that the Papacy was not evolved, but created. It has assuredly, in its varying fortunes, reflected as faithfully as any other institution the changes of its human environment, yet for each new adaptation to favouring circumstances it has had to await the advent of a great Pope. Seven men, one might say, created the Papacy: Gelasius I., Leo I., Gregory I., Hadrian I., Nicholas I., Gregory VII., and Innocent III. Each one of these deepened the foundations and enlarged the fabric of the great religious principality. They have had illustrious successors, and, in some respects, the frame of the Papacy has been further strengthened; but, on the whole, the last five hundred years have been filled with a mighty and unavailing struggle against disintegration.

Of the seven men I have enumerated Gregory VII., or Hildebrand as historians still like to call him, was the most romantic and the most singularly creative. He was born about the year 1025, of humble parents, in a Tuscan village near Sovana. An uncle of his was abbot of a monastery on the Aventine at Rome, and young Hildebrand was at an early date sent to be educated under his direction. We recognize in this accident the chief clue to the personality and achievements

of Gregory VII. A century earlier a group of monks at Cluny had reformed their ways, and their stricter ideas had slowly spread from one isolated monastery to another. The monastery of St. Mary on the Aventine was one of these rare centres of sincere asceticism, and in it the boy would hear talk of the appalling degradation which had come over the Church of Christ. It seems, however, very doubtful whether he ever made the vows of a monk. He certainly wore the monk's habit, and no epithet is more common on the lips of his opponents than "vagabond monk"; while, on the other hand, his admirers accept the monastic title, and justify the "vagabondage," by various unreliable stories about his connexion with the Benedictines. But he never describes himself as a monk, and he is not so described in the most reliable documents. The point is of slight importance, since Hildebrand certainly adopted the sentiments of the monastic reformers, and I will not linger over the extensive and conflicting evidence.<sup>1</sup> Gregory's fiery and aggressive nature would not suffer him to contemplate the triumph of evil from the remote impotence of a monastery, but he learned

<sup>1</sup> The two ablest recent writers on Hildebrand, the Right Reverend Dr. A. H. Mathew (*The Life and Times of Hildebrand*, 1910) and Dr. W. Martens (*Was Gregor VII. Mönch?*, 1891, and *Gregor VII.*, 2 vols. 1894—an invaluable study), hold that he never took the vows. The chief biography of Hildebrand on the Catholic side is now the Abbé O. Delarc's *Grégoire VII. et la Réforme de l'Église au XI siècle* (3 vols., 1889). Slight but excellent sketches will be found in F. Roquain's *La Papauté au moyen âge* (1881) and *Hildebrand and His Times* (1888) by W. R. W. Stephens. Older writers like Voigt, Gfrörer, Villemain, and Bowden are now of little use. The original authorities are as numerous as they are unreliable. The partisans of Gregory (chiefly Bonitho and Donizo) are scarcely more scrupulous than the partisans of Henry (Benzo, Benno, Guido, etc.), or those of Rudolph (Lambert, Berthold, Bruno, etc.). Fortunately we have a large number of Gregory's letters, and, as usual, I rely chiefly on these.

his lesson from monks and would rely on them throughout life.

He went also to the Lateran School, where John Gratian, whom we described in the last chapter as buying the Papacy from his nephew Benedict IX., was a teacher. Gratian marked the ecclesiastical promise of the dark and ill-favoured little Tuscan, and, when he bought the title of Gregory VI., made him one of his *capellani*: at that time a body of lay officials. The work suited Hildebrand, who was even more of a soldier than a monk. The road to Rome was lamentably beset by brigands; the houses of many of the nobles in the city itself were, in fact, little better than the fortified dens of wealthy banditti, and the crowds of pilgrims might have their gifts torn from their hands at the very steps of Peter's altar. So Hildebrand organized a militia and made some impression on the robbers.

Gregory VI. was a more religious man than his purchase of the See would suggest. He was conspicuous for chastity at a time when, a caustic contemporary said, it was regarded at Rome as an angelic virtue. There is every reason to believe that he bought the Roman See with the best of intentions. Unhappily, Benedict IX. exhausted his treasury and returned to claim his dignity; while another faction of the Romans set up a pretender under the name of Silvester II. Gregory ruled his flock—there was very little Papal ruling of the *world* in those days—from Sta. Maria Maggiore: Silvester controlled St. Peter's and the Papal mansion on the Vatican: Benedict held the Lateran. This squalid spectacle must have sunk deep into the soul of the young reformer. But there were religious men in Rome, and the virtuous Henry III. was summoned from Germany. The remedy was almost as

humiliating as the disorder. Henry scattered the rivals and, observing that there was no member of the Roman clergy fit to occupy the See, he put into it one of his German bishops, with the title of Clement II.

Hildebrand went with his patron, in the King's train, to Germany, but the more rigorous climate soon made an end of John Gratian. It is said, but is by no means certain, that Hildebrand then went to Cluny for a time. It is at all events certain that in 1049, the Roman climate having killed two German Popes in two years, Hildebrand returned to Italy in the train of Bishop Bruno. Under the name of Leo IX. this handsome, stately, and deeply religious Pontiff spent the next six years in a devoted effort to reform the Church. The magnitude of his task may be measured by that appalling indictment of clerical and monastic vice, the *Book of Gomorrha*, which Peter Damiani wrote under Leo IX., and with his cordial approval. Leo visited the chief countries of Europe, but he could make little impression on that stubborn age and he died almost broken-hearted. Under him Hildebrand served his apprenticeship. He became a cardinal-subdeacon, a guardian of St. Peter's, and rector of the monastery of St. Paul: in which, to his fine disgust, he found women serving the monks. He went also as legate to France, where he dealt leniently with and learned to esteem the chief heretic of the age, Bérenger. Hildebrand had little insight into character and less into speculative theology. To the end of his life he befriended Bérenger.

Leo died in 1055, and Hildebrand was sent to ask Henry III. to choose a successor. Henry in turn died in 1056, and, as the Roman See was again vacant in the following year and the Romans were emboldened to choose their own Pope, Hildebrand was sent to concili-



ate the Empress Agnes. We must not exaggerate his influence at this time, but undoubtedly the new Pope, Stephen X., and his fanatical Cardinal, Peter Damiani—both monks of the reforming school,—regarded him as one of their most ardent lieutenants. Indeed from that time we trace the adoption at Rome of a policy which is clearly due to Hildebrand. The Papacy began to look to the Normans, who had conquered southern Italy, to save it from the overlordship of the German court, and to wage a stern war against simony and clerical incontinence. Hildebrand, who had a strange fascination for pious women, easily won the Empress Agnes, but she was surrounded or controlled by simoniacal prelates and nobles. Rome must once more change its suzerain, or its sword-bearer.

In the campaign for enforcing celibacy on the clergy the monastic reforming school provided fresh allies. There was in the city of Milan a young priest named Anselm of Baggio, who had studied under Lanfranc at Bec. This enthusiast for the new ideas began a notable campaign against clerical marriage, and, when his archbishop genially transferred him to the remote bishopric of Lucca, he left his gospel in charge of two other enthusiasts named Ariald and Landulph. It must be recollected that clerics did not at that time take any vow of chastity, and there were only a few disciplinary decrees of earlier Popes to curtail their liberty. Most of the priests of every country were legally married, though in some places the law of celibacy was enforced and they simply had mistresses. Against both wives and mistresses a furious campaign was now directed by the Patarenes.<sup>1</sup> The vilest names

<sup>1</sup> The reformers of Milan worked chiefly among the poor, especially in the "old-clothes quarter," or *Patavia*. Hence the name of the party.

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were showered on the unhappy wives and children: the priests, who said that they would rather desert their orders than their wives, were torn from the altars: the most lamentable excesses in the cause of virtue were committed in the churches. Hildebrand, and afterwards Damiani, were sent to enforce what is described as the "pacifying policy" of Rome, and we read that Milan approached the verge of civil war.

While Hildebrand was still inflaming the enthusiasts of the north, Stephen X. died, and the party opposed to the Puritans at Rome at once elected a Pope of their own school. The young subdeacon now plainly showed his character and masterfulness. He persuaded the virtuous archbishop of Florence to accept the title of Nicholas II., begged a small army from the Duke of Tuscany, entered Rome at the head of his soldiers, and swept "Benedict X." and his supporters out of the city. The cause of virtue was to be sustained, at whatever cost: the keynote of his life was sounded. We may also confidently see the action of Hildebrand in a very important decision of a Lateran synod held under Nicholas that year (1059). In future the choice of a Pope was to be confined to the cardinal-bishops, who would submit their decision to the cardinal-priests and deacons.<sup>1</sup> The rest of the clergy and the people were merely to signify their assent by acclamation, and the decree contains a vague expression of respect for "the rights of the Emperor." A sonorous anathema

<sup>1</sup> The word "cardinal" occurs occasionally in early ecclesiastical literature in its literal meaning of "important," and is applied to clerics of various orders. After the fifth century it is restricted at Rome to the first priests of each of the *tituli* (quasi-parishes) into which the city was divided. They numbered twenty-eight in the eleventh century. In the course of time the name was also given to the seventeen leading deacons of Rome and the seven suburbicarian bishops.

was laid on any who departed from this decree; and I may add at once that Hildebrand, who was probably its author, entirely ignored it in making the next Pope and in his own election. It was the first phase in the struggle with the Empire. The German court was distracted by the intrigues of rival prelates to secure the control of the Empress and her son, while the Papacy now had the support of the Norman Richard of Capua (whom Hildebrand induced to swear fealty to the Papacy), the troops of Tuscany, and the staves of the Patarnenes. The German court replied by refusing to acknowledge Nicholas II.

Hildebrand rose to the rank of deacon, then of archdeacon: the straightest path to the Papacy. Had he willed, he could have become Pope in 1061, when Nicholas died, but the time was not ripe for his colossal design. The anti-Puritans now sought alliance with the German court against him, but he summoned a band of Normans and, with the aid of their spears, put Anselm of Lucca on the Papal throne: completely ignoring the decree of 1059. The anti-Puritans of Rome and Lombardy now united with the Imperialists, and Bishop Cadalus of Parma was made Anti-Pope. The war of words which followed was disdainfully left by Hildebrand to Damiani, who, in a page of almost indescribable invective, assures us that Cadalus was "the stench of the globe, the filth of the age, the shame of the universe," and that his episcopal supporters were better judges of pretty faces than of Papal candidates. The Imperialist Bishop Benzo of Albi, a genial Epicure who united an equal power of invective with a more polished culture, retorted heavily on the "vagabond monks" (Damiani and Hildebrand). At last it came to blows, and Hildebrand acted. Cadalus de-

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scended on Rome with German and Lombard troops: Hildebrand summoned the Normans, and a fierce battle was waged for the tiara under the very shadow of St. Peter's. Then Godfrey of Tuscany appeared on the scene with his army, and the decision was remitted to a synod at Augsburg. Hildebrand was content, for a revolution had occurred at the German court, and Damiani was sent to win the verdict at Augsburg by the ingenious expedient of being himself counsel for both sides.

The way was now rapidly prepared for the Pontificate of Hildebrand. Godfrey of Tuscany died, and his pious widow Beatrice and still more impressionable daughter Mathilda were prepared to put their last soldier at his disposal. The Patarenes were reinforced by the knight Herlembald (whose lady-love had been seduced by a priest), and were dragging the married priests from their churches and destroying their homes in many parts of north Italy. At Florence the monks of Vallombrosa lent their fiery aid, even against the troops, and one of their number passed unscathed through the ordeal of fire before an immense concourse of people. In the south Robert Guiscard was expelling the last remnants of the Saracens and founding a powerful Norman kingdom. All these forces marched under banners blessed and presented by the Pope. One banner advanced by the side of the ferocious Herlembald: one shone at the head of the Norman troops in Calabria: one was seen in the ranks of William of Normandy when he made his successful raid upon England.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this last case we have the assurance of Hildebrand himself that he dictated the Papal policy. Years afterwards he wrote to William (*Ep.*, vii., 23) that, when the Norman envoys came to ask Papal approval of his design, it was generally censured as an unjustifiable raid,

Alexander closed his short and earnest Pontificate on April 21, 1073. Hildebrand, in his capacity of archdeacon, took stringent measures for the preservation of order, or the coercion of the Imperialist faction; yet, when the voice of the people demanded that *he* should be Pope, his troops made no effort to secure an election according to the decree of 1059. He was conducting the funeral service over the remains of Alexander, on April 22d, when the cry, "Hildebrand bishop," was raised. He protested, but Cardinal Hugh Candidus, one of the most versatile clerical politicians of the time and afterwards the Pope's deadly enemy, stood forth and insisted that the cry was just. Hildebrand was seized and conducted, almost carried, to the church of St. Peter in Chains, where he was enthroned, as he afterwards wrote to Abbot Didier,<sup>1</sup> by "popular tumult." It is not certain, but is entirely probable, that he sought the imperial ratification. We may conclude that he did this, since, when he was consecrated on June 30th, the Empress Agnes and the imperial representative in Italy were present.

In the letters which Gregory issued to his friends throughout Europe immediately after his election he observes that the strain and anxiety have made him ill. We can well believe that when the hour arrived for him to mount the throne of Peter, instead of standing behind it, he felt a grave foreboding. No man had ever yet ascended that throne with so portentous an

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and Hildebrand alone induced Pope Alexander to send the Normans a banner: on condition, he adds, that William secured the payment of Peter's Pence by the reluctant English and in other ways promoted the interests of Rome. But even William did not dream that his acceptance of the banner made England, in Hildebrand's opinion, a fief of the Roman See!

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

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idea of its prestige and responsibility, and no Pope had ever confronted a more disordered Christendom. There had been good men at the Lateran for thirty years, yet in the eyes of Hildebrand they must have seemed idle, timid, and ineffective. A Pope must wear out his body and lay down his life in the struggle with triumphant evil: must smite king or prelate or peasant without a moment's hesitation: must use every weapon that the times afforded—excommunication or imprecation, the spear of the Norman or the sword of the Dane, the staff of the ignorant fanatic or the tender devotion of woman. "The Blessed Peter on earth," as Hildebrand called himself, had a right to implicit obedience from every man on earth, on temporal no less than on spiritual matters. Kings were of less consequence than the meanest priests. If kings and dukes resisted his grand plan of making the whole of Christendom "pure and obedient," why not make their kingdoms and duchies fiefs of the Holy See, to be bestowed on virtuous men? Why not make Europe the United States of the Church, governed despotically by the one man on earth who was "inspired by God"? If anathemas failed, there were swords enough in Europe to carry out his plan. That, literally, was the vision which filled the feverish imagination of Gregory VII. when he looked down from his throne over the world.

It was the dream of a soldier-monk, unchecked by understanding of men or accurate knowledge of history. Such reformers as Cardinal Damiani and Abbot Didier resented Gregory's aims and procedure: they were most appreciated by women like the Countess Mathilda. Hildebrand is said to have been a learned man, but we have cause to take with reserve mediæval compliments of this kind. He knew the Bible well, and was steeped

in the congenial atmosphere of the Old Testament. He knew Church-history and law well: as they were told at the Lateran. Döllinger has shown that his principal lieutenants in the work of reform—Bishop Anselm of Lucca (a second Anselm), Bishop Bonitho, and Cardinal Deusdedit—were unscrupulous in their use of historical and canonical documents, and that Gregory relied on these as well as on the older forgeries.<sup>1</sup> I am, however, chiefly concerned with the limitations of his knowledge, and will observe only that his letters, written in robust and inelegant Latin, give no indication of culture beyond this close acquaintance with very dubious history and law. The Arab civilization had by this time enkindled some intellectual life in Europe: men were not far from the age of Abélard. But in this new speculative life Gregory had no share. If we find him, with apparent liberality, acquitting Bérenger in 1049 and 1079, we must ascribe it rather to incapacity and disinclination for speculative matters.

This restriction and inaccuracy of culture strengthened Gregory in his peculiar ideal, and it was much the same with his poor judgment of character, which brought many a disaster on him. Probably men like Hildebrand and Damiani enjoyed a physical debility in regard to sex-life, and sincerely failed to realize that

<sup>1</sup> *Das Papstthum* (1892), ch. ii., § 2. See also F. Roquain's *La Papauté au moyen âge*. Roquain observes, leniently, that Gregory was "not entirely exempt from reproach in the use of means to attain his ends" (p. 127) and fell into "excesses unworthy of his great soul" (p. 131). In his famous letter to the Bishop of Metz (viii., 21) Gregory omits an essential part of a passage which he quotes from Gelasius and materially alters its meaning. When we further find him writing (ix., 2) that "even a lie that is told for a good purpose in the cause of peace is not *wholly* free from blame," we fear that he was not far from the maxim that the end justifies the means.

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the abolition of clerical marriage would inevitably lead to worse evils. The ideal they worked for—the establishment of a spiritual army dead to every human affection, and therefore incorruptible—was magnificent but impossible. Similarly, in the campaign against simony, Gregory never realized the roots of the evil. Bishops were politicians, the supporters or thwarters of the counsels of princes; intellectual culture was, in fact, almost confined to bishops and abbots, and their advice was (apart from their wealth, their troops, and their feudal duties) needed as much as that of unlettered soldiers. Hence princes had a real and deep interest in their appointment. The intrigue for political power at that very time of the great prelates of Germany was notorious. If Gregory had at least confined his strictures to simony in the strict sense, he might have had some prospect of success, for his cause was obviously just. But by his attack on “investiture”<sup>1</sup> he would take away from princes the control of some of their most powerful, and often most mischievous, vassals.

Yet, instead of seeking to deprive bishops and abbots of wealth and troops and political influence, Hildebrand wanted them to have more. He encouraged Anselm of Lucca to lead the Tuscan troops; he proposed in person to lead the Christian armies against the Turks. Throughout life he called for more men and more money, and he never hesitated an instant to set swords flying if he could gain his religious aim by that means.

<sup>1</sup> The secular ruler had long been accustomed to bestow the crozier and ring on his nominee for a bishopric, and this was known as “investiture.” The practice undoubtedly led to much simony and to the appointment of unworthy men, but, as the event proved, a compromise was possible.



He was as warlike as a full-blooded Norman. Bishop Mathew calls him "truculent," and reminds us how, before he became Pope, Abbot Didier wanted to punish an abbot, who had gouged out the eyes of some of his monks for their sins, but Hildebrand protected the man and afterwards made him a bishop. Didier and Damiani were equally shocked at his political activity. He scorned the distinction between spiritual and temporal things—except when he was endeavouring to keep laymen in their proper place—and argued repeatedly that, if a Pope had supreme power in matters of religion, he very clearly had it in the less important concerns of earth: if a Pope could open and close the gates of heaven, he could most assuredly open and close the gates of earthly kingdoms. He went so far as to say that "all worldly things, be they honours, empires, kingdoms, principalities, or duchies," he could bestow on whomsoever he wished.<sup>1</sup> On this ground he, as we shall see, grasped the flimsiest pretexts for claiming a kingdom as a fief of the Roman See, relying often on forged or perverted texts, and he quite clearly aimed at bringing all the countries in Christendom under the feudal lordship of the Papacy, to be bestowed for "obedience" and withdrawn for "disobedience" at the will of the Pope. I do not admit that he was ambitious, even ambitious for his See. He believed that this sacerdocracy was willed by God and was the only means of maintaining religion and morality in Europe. But there were human aspects of these questions which Gregory ignored, and his bitter and numerous opponents retorted that he was a fool or a fanatic.

This ideal did not merely grow in Gregory's mind in

<sup>1</sup> Speech to the Roman synod of the year 1080 (Migne, vol. cxlviii., col. 816). Compare *Ep.*, viii., 21.

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the heat of his combats. It is seen in his earliest letters. Before he was consecrated he wrote to remind "the Princes of Spain" that that country belonged to the Roman See: that the Popes had never abandoned their right to it, even when it was held by the Moors: and that the kings who were now wresting it from the Moors held their kingdoms "on behalf of St. Peter" (*ex parte S. Petri*) and on condition that they rendered feudal military service when summoned to do so.<sup>1</sup> A few weeks later he wrote to Duke Godfrey, referring to Henry IV.: "If he returns hatred for love, and shows contempt for Almighty God for the honour conferred on him, the imprecation which runs, 'Cursed is he that refraineth his sword from blood,' will not, with God's help, fall on us."<sup>2</sup> In June he told Beatrice and Mathilda that he would resist the King, if necessary, "to the shedding of blood."<sup>3</sup> In the same month he compelled Landulph of Benevento and Richard of Capua to swear fealty to the Roman See. In November he told Lanfranc, the greatest prelate of England, that he was astounded at his "audacity" (*frons*) in neglecting Papal orders.<sup>4</sup> In December he wrote to a French bishop that if King Philip did not amend his ways he would smite the French people with "the sword of a general anathema" and they would "refuse to obey him further."<sup>5</sup> A remarkable record for the first nine months of his Pontificate.

I shall not in the least misrepresent his work if I dismiss other matters briefly and enlarge on his attempts to realize his sacerdotal ideal: especially his struggle with Henry IV. His campaign against simony and clerical incontinence fills the whole period of his Pontificate, but cannot be described in detail. Year by

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, i., 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, i., 9.

<sup>3</sup> *L.*, 11.

<sup>4</sup> *L.*, 31.

<sup>5</sup> *L.*, 35.

year his handful of Italian bishops—remoter bishops generally ignored his drastic orders to come to Rome—met in Lenten synods at Rome, held their lighted candles while he read the ever-lengthening list of the excommunicated, and shuddered at his vigorous imprecations. Then his legates went out over Europe, but few prelates were willing or able to promulgate the decrees they brought, and the campaign succeeded only where it could rely on the staves of the Patarenes or the swords of the Pope's allies. Other episcopal functions, such as settlements of jurisdiction, occupy a relatively small part of his correspondence. It is enough to say that his eye ranged from Lincoln to Constantinople, from Stockholm to Carthage.

In Italy, his chief concern was to concentrate the southern States under his lead and form a military bulwark against the northerners. The Roman militia was strengthened: the petty princes of Benevento and Capua were persuaded that their shrunken territories were safer from the aggressions of Robert Guiscard if they paid allegiance to St. Peter: Mathilda of Tuscany did not even need to be persuaded to hold her troops at his disposal. It would be safe to say that Italy alone would have wrecked Gregory's policy but for the lucky accident of Tuscany passing to the pious Mathilda. She clung to Gregory so tenaciously that his opponents affected to see a scandal in the association.

The chief thorn in his side was Robert Guiscard, who had founded a kingdom in southern Italy and refused to do homage. He laid waste the territory of the Pope's allies, and smiled at the anathema put on him. Gregory, as usual, turned to the sword. The Eastern Emperor had asked aid against the Turks, and Gregory summoned all Christian princes to contribute troops.

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He would lead the army in person, he said: supported by the aged Beatrice and the tender Mathilda. The northern princes smiled, and the plan of a crusade came to naught. But it was not merely concern for Constantinople which made Gregory dangerously ill when his plan miscarried. Historians generally overlook his letter to William of Burgundy,<sup>1</sup> in which he plainly states that he wants the troops for the purpose of intimidating—if not conquering—Robert: “perhaps,” he says, they may afterwards proceed to the East. He was still more irritated when Robert himself entered into an alliance with Constantinople. Gregory angrily wrote to ask the King of Denmark to send his son with an army and wrest the south of Italy from the “vile heretics” who held it.<sup>2</sup>

He was similarly thwarted in nearly every country in Europe, and his anathemas were terrible to hear. I have already referred to his haughty language to Lanfranc, yet the English bishops continued, year after year, to ignore the imperious summons to attend his Roman synods. In 1079 Gregory wrote to Lanfranc that he understood that the King prevented them from coming, and was surprised that the “superstitious love” or fear of any man should come between him and his duty.<sup>3</sup> Lanfranc still evaded, almost fooled, him, and, when Gregory threatened to suspend him, affected to be engaged in examining the claims of an Anti-Pope whom Henry IV. had set up. With William himself Gregory was bitterly disappointed. When, in 1080, he ordered the King to collect the arrears of Peter’s Pence and acknowledge his feudal obligations to Rome, William somewhat contemptuously replied that he would forward the money, but would pay allegiance to

<sup>1</sup> I., 46.

<sup>2</sup> II., 51.

<sup>3</sup> VI., 30.

no man. Gregory was so angry that he told his legates that the money was no use without the "honour."<sup>1</sup>

The bishops of France were equally deaf to his annual summons to his Lenten synods and his orders that they should punish their King. He threatened, not only to pronounce an interdict, but that he would "endeavour *in every way* to take the kingdom of France from him."<sup>2</sup> A similar threat of military action was sent to Spain. King Alphonso of Leon married a relative, and Gregory wrote to the abbot of Cluny that if the King did not obey his orders and dismiss her he would "not think it too great a trouble to go ourselves to Spain and concert severe and painful action [evidently military action] against him."<sup>3</sup> This policy of promoting or blessing invasions and usurpations was carried out in the case of smaller kingdoms. King Solomon was ejected from Hungary and appealed to Rome. Gregory blessed the usurper (who craftily promised to be a good son of the Church) and told Solomon that he had deserved the calamity by receiving his kingdom, which had been given to St. Peter by the earlier King Stephen, at the hand of Henry IV.<sup>4</sup> Then Ladislaus of Hungary seized Dalmatia and sought to strengthen his position by paying fealty to the Pope for it; so that, when the Dalmatians attempted to recover their independence, Gregory denounced them as "rebels against the Blessed Peter."<sup>5</sup> Lastly, when the Russian king was displaced by his brothers, and promised to acknowledge the feudal supremacy of

<sup>1</sup> VII., 1.

<sup>2</sup> II., 5 and 32.

<sup>3</sup> VIII., 2.

<sup>4</sup> In both statements of fact Gregory was wrong. Stephen had merely accepted a consecrated banner from the Anti-Pope Silvester II.; and Solomon had voluntarily chosen Henry as his suzerain.

<sup>5</sup> VIII., 4

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Rome if he were restored, Gregory induced Boleslaus of Poland to restore him.

If this kind of procedure incurred the censure of Gregory's great friend and successor, Abbot Didier, we can easily understand the violent language of his opponents. These are usually writers of the Lombard-German faction, and we must now endeavour to disentangle from the contradictory narratives of the partisan writers the truth about his relations with Henry IV. The facts I have hitherto given are taken from the authentic letters of Gregory.

Henry IV. was a boy at the time of his father's death, and it is beyond dispute that the prelates and nobles who quarrelled for power shamefully neglected, or consciously misdirected, his education. When he came to the throne he was a wilful, loose-living, and imperious young man, forced into marriage with a woman whom he disliked. Exhortations to abandon simony and avoid evil companions fell lightly on such ears, and, as we saw, Gregory's early letters threatened war. Five of Henry's favourites were under sentence of excommunication, yet the young King would not part with them. Gregory turned to the bishops, but they flatly refused to allow his legates to call a synod in Germany, and his excommunication of the Archbishop of Hamburg only embittered them. Suddenly, however, before the end of 1073, Gregory was delighted to receive a most humble and submissive letter from Henry, and legates were sent to absolve him.

The cause of this action of the imperious young King gives us at once a most important clue to what is called the later triumph of Gregory at Canossa. The popular impression that that famous scene represented a triumph of spiritual power over the passions of man is

wholly wrong. It was an episode in a political struggle. Henry's kingdom embraced Saxony and Swabia; and the Saxons cherished a sombre memory of their recent incorporation, while Rudolph of Swabia had a mind to make profit by the troubles of his suzerain and astutely courted the favour of the Pope. Gregory could not fail to grasp the situation, and his struggle against Henry is a series of attempts by the Pope to foment and take advantage of Henry's difficulties with his vassals, ending in the complete triumph of the King.

Henry's submission in 1074 meant that there was a dangerous rebellion in Saxony. The King did not, in fact, part entirely with his excommunicated favourites, and the anathema on them was renewed at the synod of 1075, which also laid a heavy censure on "any emperor, duke, marquis, count, or any temporal lord, or any secular person whatsoever," who claimed the right of investiture. Henry remained friendly: the Saxon war dragged on. In October Henry was sending legates to Rome to confer with the Pope, who had hinted at compromise on the subject of investitures. But the Saxon rebellion suddenly came to an end, and three legates were now sent with a less pleasant message: probably a peremptory claim of the imperial crown. Henry had not only a united Germany, but a strong party in Lombardy. Herlembald was killed, and the Patarenes held in check. Moreover, the recalcitrant bishops were now joined by the Archbishop of Ravenna (who had been hastily excommunicated by Gregory for not attending the Lenten synod) and Cardinal Hugh Candidus. Elated with this support, the young King acted wilfully. He sent one of his excommunicated nobles to Lombardy,

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crushed the Patarenes, and set up a third Archbishop of Milan, Tedald.<sup>1</sup>

Gregory was alarmed at this combination and at first temporized. He invited Tedald to come to Rome for a polite discussion of his claims; he sent Henry a "doubtful blessing" and would compromise on investitures and consider his further demands, if he abandoned the excommunicated nobles.<sup>2</sup> But he gave Henry's envoys, to whom he handed the letter, a verbal message of a more drastic nature. He threatened to depose Henry for his "horrible crimes," and there is good reason to suppose that these "crimes" were, in part at least, the slanderous fictions of Henry's enemies.<sup>3</sup> Both were men of fiery and indiscreet impulses, and this impolitic act of Gregory kindled the conflagration.

Meantime a remarkable experience befell Gregory at Rome, and it is not unlikely that he held Henry responsible for it; though it is practically certain that Henry was wholly innocent. The increasing difficulties of the Pope encouraged the anti-Puritans at Rome, and one of them, Cenci, a notorious bandit, burst into the church of Sta. Maria on the Esquiline while Gregory was saying midnight mass there on Christmas day (1075). His men scattered the attendants, and one of them struck the Pope with a sword, causing a wound on the forehead. Gregory was stripped of his sacerdotal robes, thrust on a horse behind one of the

<sup>1</sup> There was a Gregorian archbishop in exile. The actual prelate may not have been zealous enough for Henry.

<sup>2</sup> Iii., 10.

<sup>3</sup> A good deal of controversy has been expended on the question whether Gregory did or did not threaten at this stage to depose Henry. Gregory's letter xxvi. (not in his Register, but of undoubted authenticity) to "the German People" expressly admits, or boasts, that he did. For further evidence see Dr. Martens, *Gregor VII.*, i., 86-91.



soldiers, and hurried to Cenci's fortified tower. Some noble matron was taken with him—one of the strangest circumstances of the whole mysterious episode—and she bound his wounds as he lay in the tower, while Cenci threatened to kill him unless he handed over the keys of the Papal treasury. It is fairly clear that the motive was robbery. Meantime the bells and trumpets had spread the alarm through Rome, and the militia beset the tower and relieved the Pope. This remarkable picture of a winter's night in the capital of Christendom ends with Gregory, who cannot have been severely wounded, calmly returning to the altar and finishing his mass.

Henry's envoys had left Rome before Christmas, and it is therefore a mistake to suppose that the message they brought from Gregory had any reference to the violence of Cenci. They reached the court at Goslar on January 1, 1076, and we can easily believe that they would not moderate the offensiveness of the oral message. Gregory had a deliberate policy of preferring oral to written messages. There may at times have been an advantage in this, but in the present instance it was gravely imprudent. Henry's friends urged him to avenge the insult, and three weeks later a synod of twenty-six German bishops, with a large number of abbots, met at Worms and declared Gregory deposed. The irregularity of his election, the despotism of his conduct, and what was described as his scandalous association with women, were the chief reasons assigned for this action. The decree was sent to the insurgent bishops of north Italy, who met in council and endorsed it, and a priest of the church of Parma volunteered to serve the sentence on Gregory. He reached Rome at a moment when Gregory was presiding at a

large synod in the Lateran Palace, and boldly read the sentence to the assembled bishops. Lay nobles drew their swords upon the audacious priest, but Gregory restrained them and bade them hear the words of Henry. His intemperate and insulting letter—so intemperate that the Pope could easily remain calm and dignified—could receive only one reply. The King and all his supporters were excommunicated, and Gregory issued a not unworthy letter “To All Christians”<sup>1</sup> informing them that the subjects of King Henry of Germany were released from their allegiance.

There can be no doubt that Henry IV. had merited a sentence of excommunication, and it is a nice point whether a King could continue to rule his territory when he was thus cut off from communication with his subjects. We may, at all events, gravely question whether the Pope was either politic or just in going on formally to depose the King, and, as the news of this unprecedented action spread through Christendom, even religious prelates shook their heads. Throughout the rest of his life Gregory had repeatedly to defend his conduct, not against the partisans of Henry, but against some of his own supporters. His chief apology is contained in a letter to the Bishop of Metz<sup>2</sup> and is invalid and illogical. He relies on a forged letter of St. Peter, and he appeals to the excommunication of Theodosius by St. Ambrose and the “deposition” of Childeric by Pope Zachary in 753; the former was in no sense a precedent, and in the latter case the Pope merely confirmed the design of Pippin and the Franks. There was no precedent whatever for deposition, and Gregory is severely censured even by modern writers

<sup>1</sup> Iii., 6.

<sup>2</sup> Viii., 21.

for not observing the canonical forms in his excommunication of Henry.<sup>1</sup>

Gregory at once prepared for war. The Duchess Beatrice died in April, and the devoted Mathilda, who was so pointedly insulted, though not named, in her royal cousin's manifesto, put the troops of Tuscany at the Pope's disposal. Gregory also tried to reconcile the Normans with each other and weld them into a common army for the defence of Rome. But his chief reliance was on the Germans themselves. He knew well, when he excommunicated Henry, that the embittered Saxons would leap with joy at the fresh pretext of rebellion, and the intriguing Swabians would secretly welcome the censure. Henry found himself very soon on the road to Canossa. He summoned two councils in rapid succession, but their defiance of the Pope brought him little pleasure when he noted the small number of his supporters. Saxony threw off his yoke at once, and prelates and nobles began to fall away from his cause. Gregory pressed his advantage with fiery energy, showering letters upon the German clergy and people, and in the middle of October a large body of the nobles and prelates (chiefly Saxon and Swabian) met at Tribur, near Darmstadt, to consider the position of the kingdom. Two Papal legates and Rudolph of Swabia presided, and Henry watched the proceedings from the other side of the river.

From this stage onward we are compelled to consult the contemporary chroniclers, and it is almost impossible to disentangle the truth from their contradictory and mendacious statements. It is clear that for seven

<sup>1</sup> See C. Mirbt's special study of the conflict, *Die Absetzung Heinrichs IV.* (1888), p. 103.

days the Diet held long debate on the situation. Undoubtedly they wished to depose Henry, but, apparently, they were unwilling to recognize in the Pope this dangerous power of deposing kings, and the Diet seems to have ended with an injunction to Henry to make peace with the Pope. According to the monk Lambert of Hersfeld, who seems to have gathered into his *Chronicle* all the wild cloister-gossip of the time, the Diet decided that, according to the "Laws of the Palace,"—there were no such laws at that time,—Henry forfeited his crown if he remained excommunicated a year and a day, and commanded him to retire into private life at Spire until Gregory should come to Germany and decide the case. The Gregorian writer, Bishop Bonitho,<sup>1</sup> contrives in this instance to improve on Lambert; he tells us that, if Henry submitted, the nobles would accompany him to Rome, where he would receive the imperial crown, and they would then sweep the Normans out of south Italy. One suspects that in this the Bishop of Sutri is betraying a design of Gregory which was certainly not endorsed by the Diet.

The most authentic evidence is the *Promissio* (or Letter of Apology) which, at the dictation of the Diet, Henry submitted to the Pope.<sup>2</sup> He expressed regret for any affront he may have put on the dignity of the Pope, promised obedience on spiritual matters, and declared that on certain other grave matters he would vindicate his innocence. When this short and dry letter was eventually handed to the Pope by one of the chief prelates of Germany, Gregory was outraged to find that its concluding sentence ran: "But it befitteh

<sup>1</sup> *Liber ad Amicum*, l. viii.

<sup>2</sup> A translation may be read in Delarc, iii., 252.

thy Holiness not to ignore the things repeated about thee which bring scandal on the Church, but to remove this scruple from the public conscience and provide in thy wisdom for the tranquillity of the Church and the kingdom." Gregorian writers insist that this was added by Henry to the draft approved by the Diet, but this is by no means certain. Henry was not a broken man. He had a considerable force with him, and Rudolph of Swabia evidently found that it would be no easy task to displace him. The edict which Henry published at the same time, declaring that he had been misled when he obtained a censure of the Pope, gives one the same impression. He had still a powerful following, and it was agreed to avert civil war by reconciliation and by inviting Gregory to preside at a Diet at Augsburg.

Gregory, in spite of the advice of his friends (except Mathilda, who spurred him on), at once set out for the north. His impetuous journey was, however, arrested in the north of Italy by the news that the German nobles had failed to send an escort for him, and that Henry himself was crossing the Alps with a large army. Mathilda persuaded him to retire to her impregnable fortress of Canossa, and there, about the end of January, Henry enacted his historic part of penitent.

Here the chroniclers are hopelessly discordant, and the full picturesque narrative of Lambert of Hersfeld, on which some historians still implicitly rely, has been riddled by modern critics.<sup>1</sup> It is clear that Henry wished to keep the Pope out of Germany, and he there-

<sup>1</sup> One recent student, Dr. Albert Dammann (*Der Sieg Heinrichs IV. in Kanossa*, 1907 and 1909), goes to the other extreme, and concludes that Henry blockaded Canossa with a large army and compelled the Pope to withdraw his censure, without a single act of penance.

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fore hastily crossed the Alps in the depth of winter. It is clear that a "vast army" (in the words of Lambert himself) gathered about him in rebellious Lombardy, but he pushed on with a few followers (incidentally admitted by Lambert) to Canossa. It is clear that Gregory, on the other hand, was desperately bent on presiding over a council in Germany, and shocked his friends by his obstinacy in refusing to be reconciled<sup>1</sup>; he had condemned Henry without trial, but he would not absolve him without trial. And, obviously inaccurate as the narrative of Lambert is,<sup>2</sup> it seems to me certain that Henry went through the form of penance on the icy platform before the gate of Canossa. In the letter written immediately afterwards to the nobles and prelates of Germany,<sup>3</sup> Gregory describes Henry as doing penance for three days, in bare feet and woollen robe, before the gates. However impolitic and irritating it was for Gregory to write such a letter, Dr. Dammann seems to me to fail to impeach its genuineness. Indeed in his great speech to the Roman synod of 1080, when he excommunicated Henry a second time, Gregory says that in 1076 Henry came to him "in confusion and humiliation" at Canossa to ask absolution.

Thus the scene which has ever since impressed the imagination of Europe is in substance authentic; though we are by no means compelled to think that Henry literally stood in the snow for three whole days. But the common interpretation of the scene is quite

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, iv., 12.

<sup>2</sup> For instance he describes a dramatic scene in which Henry shrinks from receiving the sacred host, whereas Gregory says (*Ep.*, iv., 12) that he admitted Henry to communion. His story is full of contradictions.

<sup>3</sup> *Iv.*, 12.

false. It was not a spiritual triumph, but a political pseudo-triumph. In reality, it was Henry who triumphed; and one can imagine him jesting merrily afterwards about his bare feet and coarse robe of penitence. He promised to amend his ways, and then proceeded to make a tour of Italy in light-hearted confidence and with all his old wilfulness. He refused to interfere when a Papal Legate was thrown into prison at Piacenza; and he refused to provide Gregory with an escort when the Germans invited the Pope to come and preside at their new Diet.<sup>1</sup> Gregory soon realized that the war had merely passed into a new and more difficult phase, and we must follow it swiftly to its tragic end in the utter defeat of the Pope.

Gregory sent two Legates to the Diet of Forchheim on March 13th, where, with their consent, Rudolph of Swabia was declared King of Germany. The Papal Legates exacted that he should not claim the succession for his family—apparently Germany was to be the next fief of the Roman See—and should abandon investiture. When Henry pressed the Pope to excommunicate Rudolph, he replied that he had not yet heard Rudolph's case—an “unworthy subterfuge,” Bishop Mathew justly remarks—and Henry set out for Germany. In the three-years struggle which followed, the Pope adopted a policy which few historians hesitate to condemn. He sent Legates repeatedly, claiming that he alone was the judge: that “if the See of the Blessed

<sup>1</sup> Gregorian writers said afterwards that Henry's royal dignity was not restored at Canossa. In point of fact he actually signed his promise of reform as “king” and he refused to take an oath on the express ground that the word of a king of Germany sufficed. Gregory made no complaint on this score until years afterwards, though Henry resumed his royal character the moment he left Canossa.

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Peter decides and judges heavenly and spiritual things, how much the more shall it judge things earthly and secular."<sup>1</sup> He even promised the crown to whichever of the combatants should respect his Legates: a remarkable test of the justice he promised to administer. He evidently hoped that Rudolph would win, but feared that the victory *might* fall to Henry; and, above all, he desired to judge the princes of the earth. At last the Saxons in turn began to abuse him. His Legates, they said, were offering his verdict to the highest bidder—assuredly without his knowledge—and his policy was unintelligible. Bishops were saying that the Papacy had become "the tail of the Church."

At the Lenten synod of the year 1080 representatives of both princes came before Gregory and his bishops, and the great decision was taken. Henry was found guilty of "disobedience," and, after a long and eloquent speech, Gregory excommunicated him once more and confirmed Rudolph in the kingdom of Germany. Bishop Bonitho<sup>2</sup> tells us that Henry had sent an ultimatum: if Gregory did not at once condemn Rudolph he would appoint another Pope. This is, apparently, the real inspiration of the synod and of Gregory's fiery speech.<sup>3</sup> Henry's partisans retorted by excommunicating Gregory and consecrating Guibert of Ravenna as Anti-Pope, and, as Rudolph fell in battle in October, the Gregorian cause was in a lamentable plight. Gregory had, in his extremity, overlooked all the crimes of Robert Guiscard—"for the present" he quaintly

<sup>1</sup> Iv., 24.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. ix.

<sup>3</sup> It may be read in Migne, vol. cxlviii., col. 816. It includes the imprecation on Henry, "May he gain no victory as long as he lives," and again asserts that all honours and powers are at the disposal of the Pope.



said in the treaty—and made an alliance with him, but Robert was still engaged in the East, and Henry's troops made great havoc in Mathilda's dominions. Yet Gregory repeated his excommunication of the King, and wrote letters all over Europe to defend his action and obtain money and troops.

Several years passed in this indecisive warfare, Henry wearing down the Tuscan troops and cutting off supplies from Rome. At length, toward the end of March, 1084, the Romans, weary of the long siege, opened their gates to Henry, and Gregory shut himself in the impregnable fortress of Sant' Angelo. From the windows, for two dreary months, Gregory had to watch the progress of the victorious Imperialists and the triumph of the Anti-Pope, Clement III. In May he was elated by the message that Henry had fled and Robert Guiscard was marching to Rome with a large force. But his joy was brief. A brawl with the Romans let loose the half-barbaric Normans, and the city was visited with one of the most pitiless raids in its eventful history. Thousands of the Romans were sold into slavery: sacred virgins and matrons were savagely raped: large districts of the city were burned to the ground. For this the infuriated Romans cast the whole blame on the Pope, and he was forced to retire with Robert. In penury and impotence he rode into the abbey of Monte Cassino, where Abbot Didier would hardly fail to remind him that they who appeal to the sword are apt to perish by the sword, and then on to Salerno. Surrounded by the shrunken remains of his supporters he made a last appeal to the Christian world to espouse his cause, and he feebly cast forth his last anathemas. But the fight was lost, and he wearily drew his last breath on May 25, 1085. "I

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have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile," he said. It was not wholly true. He was exiled by the people of Rome, whose devastated homes made them heap curses on his iron policy. History honours the purity of his ultimate aim, the heroism with which he pursued it, the greatness, with all its defects, of his character; it sternly condemns the means he employed, the tortuous and dangerous character of his reasoning, the appalling claim that kingdoms were toys in his hand. He failed; but he had, in reality, so strengthened the frame of the Papacy that it would take an earthquake to shake it.

## CHAPTER IX

### INNOCENT III.: THE PAPAL ZENITH

THAT Papal policy or ideal of which we have traced the development in the minds of the greater Popes attains its fullest expansion during the Pontificate of Innocent III. Historians usually assign the year 1300 as the date of the culmination of the Papal system, but it had in reality attained its full stature under Innocent III. It did indeed make its last impressive display of world-power under Boniface VIII., but there had been no material contribution to its frame since the death of Innocent, and the thirteenth century had fostered the growth of the influences which were destined to undo it. In the fourteenth century came the demoralizing residence in Avignon and the Great Schism: in the fifteenth century the renaissance of culture and development of civic life, which enfeebled the Popes and strengthened their subjects, were completed: in the sixteenth century Luther and Calvin smote the colossus. Innocent III. is the last great maker of the Papacy.

The work of the eighteen Popes who occupied the throne between the death of Gregory VII. and the election of Innocent might not ineptly be described in a line: they sought, and failed, to wield the heavy weapons of Hildebrand. In virtue of the falsified

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letters, canons, charters, and chronicles which were now accepted throughout Europe, they proclaimed that they had the disposal of earthly kingdoms no less than of seats in heaven, and they thus brought on themselves a century of strife in which only the stronger men could find much time for strictly Pontifical duties. They were men of sober life and, generally, high character, yet the very nature of their ideal involved such struggles that the Papacy had to await a fortunate conjunction of circumstances before the ideal could be realized. The conflict with Henry IV. continued until, his two sons having been persuaded to rebel against him and his second wife encouraged to besmirch his reputation, before the assembled prelates of Christendom, with charges as foul as they were feeble in evidence, he, in 1097, quitted Italy for ever. Then Urban II., who was responsible for this gross travesty of spiritual justice, cleared Rome by means of Norman swords and rallied Christendom about him by a declaration of the First Crusade. But so tainted a legacy of peace could not last. Henry V. proved more exacting than his father, and another prolonged struggle absorbed the energy of the Popes until the fifty years' war over investiture was settled by a compromise at Worms in 1122.<sup>1</sup>

Bernard of Clairvaux, rather than the successive Popes, was the spiritual master of Europe in the comparative peace after Worms. During nearly the whole of the second half of the twelfth century the Papacy

<sup>1</sup> The clergy were to be free to elect their bishop, though in Germany the election had to take place in the presence of the Emperor or his representatives; this was a virtual retention of the imperial veto. Investiture with ring and crozier was replaced by a touch with the royal sceptre.

was distracted by the incessant revolts of the Romans. The streets, even the churches, of Rome were stained with blood, year after year, and the Popes repeatedly fled. The rise of Frederic Barbarossa complicated the struggle, and the Popes had little opportunity to exercise the powers they had won, without thinking of any extension of their claims. At last, in 1198, the Papacy once more fell to a man of commanding personality and was lifted to the zenith of its power.

Lothario de'Conti di Segni was born about the year 1160. His father was Count Trasimondo of Segni: his mother belonged to the noble Roman family of the Scotti, which included several cardinals of the anti-Imperialist school. After receiving an elementary education at Rome, he was sent to Paris for theology, and to Bologna for law. The scholastic movement was now stimulating Europe and creating great schools; indeed Pope Alexander III. had, though not from cultural motives, fostered the movement by favouring the activity of free teachers. Profane letters were, however, still little cultivated. Lothario took a degree in the liberal arts, but he was soon wholly absorbed in theology and canon law; the correct and virile Latin of his letters is very far from the classical models. Under the Pontificate of his maternal uncle, Clement III., he returned to Rome a young man of the most ascetic character and most finished ecclesiastical culture. He was made a canon of St. Peter's, and, in his twenty-ninth year, a cardinal of the Roman Church.

The Pontificate of Clement ended, apparently, the long struggle of the Popes and the Romans. The Roman nobles were as turbulent as ever, but one finds a more respectable element of dissension in the city at this time. The democratic ideas of that brilliant

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and too little appreciated thinker, Arnold of Brescia, had taken root in Rome, and a Republic, with a Senate of fifty-six members, had been established in the Capitol. Hadrian IV. had blighted this premature experiment by an interdict in 1155, but the struggle continued and the Popes lived little in the capital until the year 1188. Clement, a courtly and diplomatic Roman, made peace with his countrymen, and damped the democratic ardour by a shower of gold and of ecclesiastical favours. The Papacy resumed the government of the city, and the nominal power of the Senate was allowed to pass into the hands of one man, "the Senator." Clement died in 1190, and, as his successor, Celestine III., was a member of the Orsini family, which was bitterly hostile to the Scotti, there was no room in the Lateran for Lothario Conti. Nepotism was now so far accepted in the Papal palace that we shall find Innocent himself following the tradition. The leisure was fortunate in one respect, as Lothario used it for the purpose of writing a book, *On Contempt of the World*, which gives us a most interesting revelation of his innermost thoughts at the time when he became Pope. The book is a distillation of the extreme monastic views of the time; it is full of fables, and it depicts man as the very vilest thing in a world which was made solely for the disdain of the ascetic. It was from this morbidly tinted sanctuary that Lothario Conti surveyed the life of his time, which he was soon summoned to rule. In September, 1197, Henry VI., who had duly incurred the imperial legacy of excommunication, died and left his kingdom to his baby-boy Frederic: and on January 8, 1198, Lothario Conti, in the prime of life and the most sombre stage of his meditations, became Innocent III.

Although he occupied the Papal throne only eighteen years, we have more than five thousand letters, or parts of letters, dispatched by him to all parts of Christendom: more than five hundred of them were written in the first year of his Pontificate. Their range stretches from Ireland and Scandinavia to Cairo and Armenia. In that vast territory nothing of importance happened in which he did not intervene; and there was hardly a prince or baron whom he did not excommunicate, or any leading country which he did not place under interdict. His ideal was that of Gregory VII.: the Papal States of Europe—he wanted to add nearer Asia—trembling under the Roman rod. Writing to the Emperor of Constantinople he elaborated his famous conception of earthly empire as the moon, shining faintly by light borrowed from the spiritual power. The Papal theory had reached its culmination, and we may proceed at once to attempt to compress the portentous activity of Innocent III. into a few compartments.<sup>1</sup>

One naturally inquires first how this spiritual autocrat confronted the democratic faction at Rome. At the outset he showed a little of the accommodating temper which he always held in reserve behind his profession of rigour. His attendants flung showers of coin on the greedy people when he first passed between them, and, reluctantly, and on the lowest known scale, he distributed the backsheesh with which each incoming

<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, his work is little complicated by dispute, since his letters are so abundant. There is a contemporary life or panegyric (*Gesta Innocentii Tertii*), but it must be read with caution. Of modern biographies the great work of Achille Luchaire (6 vols., 1904-8) has superseded all others; though, as it scarcely ever indicates its authorities, the less discriminating work of Hurter is still useful. In English there is a good, but rather affected, sketch by C. H. C. Pirie-Gordon, *Innocent the Great* (1907). Milman is particularly good on Innocent III.

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Pope had to win the smiles of every official in the Palace and the city. There were murmurs, and they increased when he proceeded to compel the Prefect (who was understood to represent the Empire) and the Senator (who represented the Romans) to take oaths of allegiance to himself. By this stroke he expelled the last bit of reality out of the "free commune" of Rome, and cast off the last trace of an imperial yoke. He abolished the Noble Guard and the lay officials of the Palace: he deposed the judges appointed by the Senator and appointed less corrupt men: he drove the money-changers and merchants out of the Lateran courtyard, stamped on the parasites who fed on foreign pilgrims, and drew up a strict tariff of fees for the Papal services. He was by no means indifferent to money, as his fighting policy demanded enormous sums. No Pope could be keener on Peter's Pence, and no abbot or bishop dare approach him with a gift not proportionate to his wealth. But it is almost superfluous to say that he was a man of the most rigorous sentiment of justice, and, as long as he lived, the more selfish kind of rapacity at Rome was repressed.

The nobles who led the democratic party, chiefly Giovanni Pierleone and Giovanni Capocci, looked with concern on his tendency and, when he put a Papal governor over the Maremma and the Sabina, instead of the one appointed by the Senate, they pressed the Romans to see that their privileges were being stolen. In 1200 Innocent extricated himself from a difficult situation. Vitorchiano was threatened by Viterbo and declared itself a Papal fief. As Viterbo also was part of the patrimony, and the Romans hated it, Innocent was perplexed. The Romans took the field in spite of him, and won; but, as he happened to be saying



mass at the time of the victory, it was ingeniously ascribed to his prayers. In the following year, however, there was more serious trouble. Two small provincial nobles took possession of some estates on the Campagna, and, when Innocent ordered them to restore, they said that they held them of the democratic leaders, Pierleone and Capocci. There was an outcry, but Innocent sent his troops to lay waste the properties of the two nobles in the grimmest mediæval manner, and, in an eloquent speech at Rome, completely vanquished his critics. Then in 1202, during his customary summer absence, the feud of the Scotti and the Orsini broke out with frightful violence, and in the following year the antagonism to the Pope reached its height.

Innocent had, for his own protection, greatly enriched his brother Ricardo, and Ricardo had purchased the mortgages on the estates of one of the democrats, Oddo Poli. As far as we can see, Ricardo acted with legal correctness, but Rome was soon aroused by the sight of Poli and his friends coming naked to church, as a symbol of the "spoliation," and democratic rhetoric rose to white heat. There was a popular rising; Ricardo's towering mansion was burned, and Innocent himself had to fly to Ferentino (May, 1203). The Romans restored their Senate, and swore to have no more of this Papal nepotism and despotism, but from his retreat Innocent fostered the intestine quarrels of the victorious people, and before long the city was in a state of murderous anarchy. The two hundred mansions of its wealthier citizens were, and had been for ages, real fortresses, and during the whole summer of 1203 their castellated walls were lined with archers, and bands issued forth, with all the engines of war, to assault and burn the fortress of some neighbour. It

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still remains for some historian of the Papacy to explain this chronic violence and vice in the centre of Christendom during so many centuries. The trouble ended in the Pope resuming the government of the city, and his rule was further disturbed only by one of these popular revolts, in 1208.

We do not fully appreciate the strength of Innocent unless we realize how, while his eyes wandered over the globe, Rome itself demanded so much attention. But he was not merely concerned with its misconduct. He organized the work of charity in the city and did something to promote its commerce. He built a foundling hospital, trusting to reduce the infanticide which he found so common at Rome, and was very generous to the churches and the clergy. From his time the Popes began to use more and more the Palace beside St. Peter's, which he enlarged and fortified, and he spent large sums in adorning other churches and enhancing the splendour of the worship. But these and the other Roman reforms I have mentioned are the mere incidents of his domestic life, so to say. His work was the ruling of the world, and assuredly we must recognize a mind of high quality and prodigious energy when we read the volumes of letters that poured from the Lateran during those eighteen years, and imagine the vast crowds that came from every part of the world to do homage, to ask counsel, and to report the minutest circumstances of their abbeys or bishoprics or principalities.

Italy alone might have absorbed a weaker man during his earlier years. Papal rule was acknowledged—in the manner we have seen—only in the immediate neighbourhood of the city. Over the south and Sicily the widow of Henry VI. ruled in the name of her child:

in the north were the leagues of free cities, and the isolated free cities, which had won independence: and the whole country apart from these was falling into the hands of the German generals whom Henry VI. had left there at his death. Innocent, like all the Popes after Hadrian, believed in the Donation of Constantine, to say nothing of the Donations of Pippin and Charlemagne and Otto and Mathilda. Italy belonged almost entirely to the Papacy, and must be recovered. Some historians hail Innocent as a great apostle of the "Italia Una" ideal, and he sometimes presses on particular towns "the interests of the whole of Italy." It is, however, absurd to associate his feeling with the later ideal of Italian unity. He cared for the unity of Italy only in the sense that the Pope was to be its unique ruler. Those Germans—he scorns them—must be driven out. Those free cities, always at war with each other, must be persuaded that the Papal seal will be their best protection. Even that kingdom of Naples and Sicily must somehow pass under Rome; in spite of the fact that Innocent had solemnly accepted the guardianship of the young king.

It is commonly said that the German generals in Italy, like Markwald of Anweiler, were ferocious adventurers eager only to carve little principalities for themselves out of the helpless country. This is the partisan version left us by Innocent's anonymous biographer. They were, with German troops, guarding the Empire for the successor of Henry VI.; they acknowledged Philip of Swabia; and Innocent was at a later date "warned" by an influential group of German prelates and nobles not to interfere with them. But Innocent had several advantages. Henry VI. had treated Italy with barbarity, and numbers of cities threw off the

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German yoke when he died; on the other hand, Markwald and his colleagues were under standing sentence of excommunication for occupying Papal fiefs like Tuscany. Innocent began by sending men and money to the revolted cities, and inviting them to put themselves under Rome's sacred banner. He travelled through central Italy in 1198, and received the allegiance of many towns. Markwald, the chief enemy, was driven to the south, and Innocent pressed the southerners to rise against him.

Here the Pope had the familiar advantage of Papal policy—a woman on the throne—and he made a use of it that cannot very well be defended. Henry's Norman widow, Constance, was not unwilling to break her connection with Germany, and she seems to have had little appreciation of the political meaning of making Sicily a fief of the Roman See. She was very ill and distracted, and no doubt felt that she was consulting the interest of her son in putting him and the kingdom (of Sicily and Naples) under Papal charge. She did indeed hesitate when Innocent told her the price of his protection. Sicily was to sacrifice all the privileges which William I. had wrung from the Papacy, to pay an annual tribute to Rome, and to render feudal service whenever required.<sup>1</sup> But Constance was forced to yield, and she died soon afterwards (November 27, 1198), appointing Innocent the guardian of her son and allotting him an annual fee of thirty thousand gold pieces.

Innocent accepted the guardianship of Frederic, and historians comment severely on his next step. In spite of all his fiery letters to the southern clergy and people—even to the Saracens<sup>2</sup>—inciting them to resist

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, i., 410.

<sup>2</sup> *Ii.*, 226.

the Germans, Markwald made considerable progress. Then there came to Rome a certain French adventurer named Walter de Brienne, who had married a daughter of Tancred of Sicily. Tancred had, on resigning Sicily, retained Lecce and Tarentum, and Walter claimed these as his wife's inheritance. Whether or no Innocent had actually promoted the marriage and invited Walter to Italy<sup>1</sup> we cannot confidently say, but it was assuredly dangerous to let such a man get a footing in southern Italy; it was probable enough that he would eventually claim the whole kingdom taken from Tancred. However Innocent blessed and financed his enterprise, on the formal condition that he would respect the rights of Frederic, and soon had a French troop waging more effective war upon the Germans. The struggle ceased with the death of Markwald in 1202, and of Walter in 1205, and Innocent then pressed a design of marrying the young Frederic to Constanza of Aragon. For the time Frederic's rights were respected, but there can be no doubt that these early years spent amidst intrigue and treachery contributed to the development of his anti-clerical spirit.

There was, in fact, a good deal of anti-clericalism growing in Italy. The development of civic and communal life and the comparative enlightenment which was spreading turned many critical eyes on the Roman system. Heresy descended the Alps and found favour in the free cities; even, at times, in Papal cities. I have described how Viterbo was crushed by the Roman troops. Innocent intervened in its favour, after its defeat, and he was then outraged to learn that Viterbo was, like many other cities, appointing heretics (the

<sup>1</sup> This is affirmed in the contemporary *Chronique d'Ernoult et de Bernard le Trésorier*, ch. xxx.

Cathari) to high places. He spent the summer of 1207 in Viterbo, and enforced very stringent rules for the repression of heresy. These laws were extended to all the Papal dominions, but we shall see the Pope's attitude more clearly when we deal with the crusade against the Albigensians. Innocent was not less emphatic in denouncing the incessant wars of the rival cities, and his correspondence is largely occupied with his endeavours to secure their feudal allegiance to Rome.

A graver problem, in the solution of which his character is often obscured, was presented by the struggle of Ghibellines (or followers of Philip of Swabia) and Guelphs (supporters of Otto of Brunswick) for the imperial crown. Frederic, the son and heir of Henry, being still a boy of tender years, his uncle Duke Philip of Swabia desired to keep the crown securely in the Hohenstauffen family by wearing it himself. Otto of Brunswick also made a fantastic claim to it, got himself proclaimed Emperor at Cologne in 1198, and sought the support of the Pope. Innocent undoubtedly favoured from the start the baseless claim of Otto. The Papacy had come to regard the Hohenstauffens almost as hereditary foes, and Philip actually lay under sentence of excommunication for holding the territory bequeathed by Mathilda to the Papacy; while Otto flattered the Pope by professions of loyalty and docility. But Philip had the better prospect, if there was an appeal to the sword, and Innocent refused for some years to commit himself. He summoned Philip to surrender the Italian prisoners and the Papal provinces taken by Henry, and sent the Bishop of Sutri to absolve him if he complied. To his extreme annoyance the not very clear-headed Bishop gave Philip an uncondi-

tional absolution—for which Innocent promptly imprisoned the Bishop for life in a monastery—and thus surrendered the Pope's chance of profiting by the situation.

The rivals appealed to the sword, and Innocent bitterly complained that Philip did not ask his arbitration.<sup>1</sup> He alone, he declared to the princes and prelates of Germany, was the judge of such high causes: to which the princes and prelates replied, in very firm and dignified language, that they would have no Papal interference in the secular concerns of Germany.<sup>2</sup> As the war proceeded, Innocent made it clear that he favoured Otto. He warned the German prelates not to choose an Emperor on whom he could not bestow the crown, and in a letter to the Eastern Emperor he afterwards boasted that he alone kept Philip from the throne. But the war went in favour of Philip, and even when, in 1200, both men sent representatives to Rome, Innocent would not commit himself to more than an eloquent proof that priests were exalted above kings.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of the following year, however, he declared openly for Otto. He sent Cardinal Pierleone to Germany with the Bull *Interest Apostolicæ Sedis*, in which he drew up a violent and unjust indictment of Philip and awarded the crown to the loyal and virtuous Otto. The Bull is painfully casuistic, and would have been better if it had stopped at the bold declaration that the Papacy had created the Empire and could bestow it according to its pleasure. While, for instance, it charges Philip with treachery to the interests of his young nephew, it exonerates all others from the oath of fidelity to Henry's son on the ground that an oath

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, ii., in the Register, "On the Affairs of the Empire": Migne, col. ccxvi.      <sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, xiv.      <sup>3</sup> xviii.

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to an unbaptized infant was invalid.<sup>1</sup> The imperial crown was, in plain terms, allotted in the interests of the Church, in defiance of the wishes of the majority of the German nation. Otto hastened to swear that he would defend the Papal possessions (including Sicily), and was proclaimed by a Papal Legate in Cologne cathedral on July 3, 1201.

Innocent now sent out a flood of letters on behalf of his candidate, but the result was irritating. Philip of France roughly refused to recognize Otto; and a letter signed by two German archbishops, ten bishops, and other clerics and nobles, sternly rebuked the Pope for his "audacity" in meddling with things which did not concern him.<sup>1</sup> Innocent's Legates vainly scattered threats of excommunication in Germany. Hardly a single prelate recognized Otto, and, after seven years of the most brutal civil warfare, he was driven out of the country. We are not impressed by the Pope's feverish protests that he was not responsible for this desolation. In 1208, however, Philip, who had been reconciled with Rome in the previous year, was assassinated, and Otto, with Innocent's approval, mounted the throne. To the intense indignation of the Pope, the new Emperor at once cast his oaths of fidelity to the wind and told Innocent to confine himself to spiritual matters. He annexed Tuscany and Spoleto, in spite of all the Pope's entreaties and threats, and was about to march against Naples and Apulia when Innocent launched against him a sentence of excommunication and deposition. Otto was, for the time, an excellent ruler: he had been educated in the English ideas of

<sup>1</sup> The *Deliberatio*, or essential part of the Bull, is given in Migne's "Register of Imperial Concerns," no. xxix. See also the decretal *Venerabilem Fratrem*, no. lxii.

<sup>1</sup> Lxi.



government. But he had refused to be subservient to the clergy, and the German prelates now summoned Frederic from Sicily. Innocent approved the election of Frederic as easily as he had approved that of Philip and of Otto, but he did not live to see how that Emperor in turn defied the Papacy and scorned its political pretensions.<sup>1</sup>

Next in interest and importance were Innocent's relations with England. With Richard the Lion-Heart the Pope maintained a friendly correspondence, nor did he annoy the English prelates by any inconvenient censure of the condition of the English Church. In 1199 John Lackland succeeded his brother, and Innocent was even more indulgent to that barbarous and unscrupulous monarch. Into the death of Prince Arthur he made no indiscreet inquiry; he confirmed the dissolution of John's marriage, and, for his shameful theft of the love of the betrothed of the Count de la Marche, imposed on him only the light and useful penance of a general confession and the equipment of a hundred knights for Palestinian service. During the war which followed he made earnest efforts to mediate, though even these were at times marred by his temporizing policy and his determination not to alienate the kings. When the bishops of Normandy, after the capture of that province by Philip, asked him how they were to adjust their allegiance, he weakly replied that Philip seemed to rely on some claim which he could not understand and they must judge for themselves.<sup>2</sup> At length a famous quarrel about the archbishopric of Canterbury

<sup>1</sup> See R. Schwemer, *Innocenz III. und die Deutsche Kirche während des Thronstreites von 1198-1208* (1882), and E. Englemann, *Phillip von Schwaben und Innocenz III.* (1896).

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.*, viii., 7.

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drew him into a stern and triumphant conflict with John.

The Archbishop, a worldly-minded courtier of the familiar type, died in 1205, and the Canterbury monks, who claimed the right of nomination, met hastily, by night, without awaiting the royal license to proceed to an election, and nominated their sub-prior Reginald. They sent Reginald at once to Rome, enjoining on him the strictest secrecy until he was consecrated, but the monk made a parade of his high condition as soon as he reached the continent and there was great indignation in England. The Chapter, which disputed the arrogant claim of the monks, elected the Bishop of Norwich, and many of the monks, alarmed at their action or disgusted with their sub-prior, joined in the election. Sixteen monks accompanied the second deputation to Rome, and they supported the declaration of the Court and the Church that Reginald's election was invalid. As, however, the Bishop of Norwich was one of the indulgent prelates, Innocent casuistically annulled both elections and imposed Stephen Langton on the English. John furiously protested that the Pope had insulted his state and threatened to withdraw the English Church from his jurisdiction; shrewdly reminding the Pope that he received more money from England than from any other country.

John seems to have misunderstood the earlier complaisance of the Pope. Innocent was not the man to yield to a threat of financial loss, and he at once consecrated Langton and laid England under an interdict. For some years the affrighted people saw the doors of their churches closed against them and imagined the jaws of a mediæval hell gaping wide for their souls. There was no Christian marriage for their sons and

daughters, no Christian burial for their aged; and only to dying persons could the consoling sacrament be administered. In his fury John drove priests and prelates out of his kingdom, but his cruel and extortionate government had lost him the compensating strength of the affection of his people. In 1211 he was forced to seek terms, and a Papal Legate reached England. Between the arrogance of Legate Pandolpho and the passion of the King the negotiation failed, and John was deposed by the Pope. England, Rome repeated, had been a fief of the Apostolic See since William the Conqueror; it was now open to any Christian monarch to invade and possess it. This was a direct invitation to Philip of France to renew those horrors of warfare which Innocent had so eloquently denounced,<sup>1</sup> and, to the intense mortification of the French King, John abjectly submitted (1213). He even handed to the proud Legate a solemn declaration that England and Ireland were fiefs of the Apostolic See, and that he would pay a thousand marks a year for vassalage. The clergy were recalled and compensated, the interdict was raised, and Legate Pandolpho stalked the land with the insufferable air of a conqueror.

If, however, this conflict gives an honourable prominence to the sterner qualities of Innocent, its sequel no less illustrates the weakness which seemed inseparable from the Papal policy, even when it was embodied in a lofty character. Pandolpho behaved so wantonly in resettling the clergy that he presently fell foul of the high-minded Langton: John behaved with a ferocity which drove nobles and commoners to the step of rebellion. Yet Innocent maintained his mischievous Legate against Langton, and laid a Papal malediction

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.*, vi., 163.

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on the just aspirations of the people. He rebuked the barons for their "nefarious presumption" in taking arms against a vassal of the Roman See; he denounced Magna Charta as a devil-inspired document, and forbade "his vassal" to accede to its unjust demands. He excommunicated the barons when they refused to lay down their arms, and suspended Langton when that prelate refused, on the ground that it was dictated by false representations, to promulgate his sentence. When the barons offered the crown to Louis, son of Philip of France, he issued an anathema against Louis; and in 1216 he issued a sentence of excommunication against Philip himself for encouraging his son. He died before his sombre use of his spiritual weapons, in a carnal cause, was completed. He had, within ten years, raised Papal power in England to its supreme height and then dealt it a blow from which it would never recover. It is futile to plead that he was ill informed on the situation. He knew John, and he knew Langton; he ought to have known Pandolpho. In point of fact, there is no reason to think that he was radically misinformed. His whole action is plainly inspired by the interest, as he conceived it, of the Papacy.<sup>1</sup>

I must dismiss very briefly his relations with other Christian countries. Philip of France had, like John of England, discarded his wife and married a woman he loved. But the Papal microscope refused, in his case, to discover the remote affinity which, Philip said, made his first marriage void, and an interdict was laid on his kingdom. The terrified priests and people tore Philip from the arms of Agnes de Meran, the mother of three of his children, and forced him to submit.

<sup>1</sup> See E. Gütschow, *Innocenz III. und England* (1904).

Only under the later pressure of his conflicts with Otto and John did Innocent discover that there was sufficient *prima facie* evidence to spend several years in negotiation about a divorce, and, by an extraordinary use of his high powers, he declared the children of Agnes legitimate.

In Spain and Portugal, Innocent found irregular marriages almost as numerous as regular, and his interventions show the same unedifying mixture of priestly rigour and political compromise. Sacerdotal legislation had by this time surrounded marriage with a portentous series of obstacles—forbidden degrees of spiritual and carnal affinity—which sacerdotal power alone could remove, yet the isolated princes of the Peninsula were compelled to marry constantly into each other's families and did not always ask the costly blessing of the Papacy. That this legislation did not improve the sex-morals of Europe, which were at least no better than they had been in pagan times, is well known. Spain was particularly lax, having contracted the gaiety of neighbouring Provence, and her kings may have felt that where unwedded love was so genially tolerated, these academic restraints on wedded love might be disregarded.

Innocent placed the kingdoms of Leon and Castile under an interdict because the King of Leon had married his cousin, Berengaria of Castile, and, when the court of Leon ignored his censures, he predicted that there would be a horrible issue of the unhallowed union. Its first fruit was St. Ferdinand; but Berengaria nervously retired after a few years and left the King to bear his excommunication with Spanish dignity. The King of Castile soon obtained the removal of the interdict, on the ground that it favoured the growth of heresy, but

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he was then threatened with excommunication because he permitted the Jews to become rich while the Church was poor. Pedro of Aragon was more fortunate. In the course of a journey to Rome he married the wife of the Count de Comminges, and the Pope at once accepted her assurance that the Count had two wives living when he married her, and blessed the union. Pedro, it should be added, swore fealty and an annual subsidy of two hundred gold pieces to the Pope. The King of Navarre incurred an interdict for allying himself with the Moors. All that one can seriously put to the credit of Innocent is that he greatly aided the unification of Spain by spurring its kings to a common crusade against the Moors; if we may assume that the crusade favoured the progress of civilization in the country. Sancho of Portugal also felt, and disdained, the touch of the Papal whip. When Innocent complained of his oppression of the clergy, he threatened—in a letter which Innocent describes as the most insolent ever written to a Pope—to strip his corrupt priests of all their wealth. Innocent at once temporized, but a dangerous illness and fit of repentance soon put Sancho and the kingdom of Portugal at his feet. At his death Sancho left the kingdom wholly subject to Rome and the clergy, though it was not many years before the quarrels of his children again drew upon it the spiritual blight of an interdict.

It would be tedious to describe in detail all the similar interventions of the Pope in other countries. He refused to let Marie of Brabant marry the Emperor Otto, and refused to dissolve the marriage of the King of Bohemia; indeed, he sternly rebuked the King of Bohemia for receiving his crown at the hands of Philip of Swabia. In Hungary he scolded Prince Endre for

rebelling against his brother, and he raised Bulgaria to the rank of a kingdom, on condition that it recognized Roman supremacy. He claimed, in a word, to be the king of kings, the temporal as well as religious master of Europe. But we shall more clearly appreciate the qualities of his character and shades of his standard of action if we examine more fully his connection with the Fourth Crusade and the crusade against heresy.

Tripoli, Antioch, and a few small Palestinian towns were all that remained of the European conquests from the Saracen, and Innocent's constant correspondence with the Christian prelates who lingered in the East made him eager, from the beginning of his Pontificate, to inspire Europe to make one more grand attempt to rescue the holy places. For several years he sought, by letters and Legates, to fire the Christian princes, to divert the swords of France and England to the breast of the Mohammedan, and to melt the cold calculations of Venice. But the memory of the last colossal failure—of all the blood and treasure that had been expended on the stubborn task—was too fresh in Europe. In vain he promised, to all who took the cross, a sure entry into Paradise, and hinted not obscurely at the damnation which awaited those who refused. Thin bands of zealots responded to the call, and a larger multitude were induced to take the cross by Innocent's princely declaration that the earthly debts of all who joined the Crusade would be cancelled, and the Jews would be forced to forswear their legitimate interest. The knights of Europe, to his fiery indignation, still wasted their spears on each other, or continued the more pleasant pastimes of the chase and the tournament. Innocent, in a flood of eloquent letters, taxed

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the clergy, confiscated the funds of erratic monks, and forbade the lay nobles to wear costly furs or eat costly dinners or indulge in tournaments. There were murmurs that the Christians of the East needed no aid, since they were on excellent terms with the Saracens, as the Pope was painfully aware; and that the only sure effect of Crusades was to increase the power and the wealth of the Papacy which organized them. Even the clergy and the monks refused the subsidies he demanded, and he was compelled to sanction a practice which would in time prove the most terrible and destructive abuse of the mediæval Papacy: the penance imposed on confessing sinners was to take the form of a money-contribution. To this day the indulgences which are sold in Spain trace their origin to the Crusades, as the printed *bula* declares.

At length, in the year 1200, Baldwin of Flanders and a few bishops and nobles formed the nucleus of a Crusade, and the astute Venetians were invited to provide for the transport of an army. In the spring of 1202 the streams of soldiers and priests converged upon Venice, and an army of 23,000 assembled for the fourth assault on the Saracens. But the Pope's joy was soon overcast, and the Crusade proved to be the second most lamentable occurrence of his Pontificate.

When the army assembled near Venice, it was discovered that neither the soldiers nor the Pope had money enough to pay their passage to the East. Venice had by that time fully developed its hard commercial spirit, and its famous blind Doge proposed to remit the debt if the Crusaders would, on their way, retake Zara (in Dalmatia) from the Hungarians for the Venetians. Innocent made the most violent opposition, but the Venetians, disdaining his threats, compelled the im-



poverished soldiers to consent, and on October 8th they set sail, under threat of excommunication, to begin their Crusade by the shedding of Christian blood. They took Zara, and incurred excommunication; but Innocent could not reconcile himself to the complete failure of his grand plan. He withdrew the censures they had so flagrantly defied, and admitted, or stated, that they had acted under "a sort of necessity." They were to make some vague "satisfaction" for their misdeed, and push on, with clean souls, to the East. The Venetians alone were not relieved of the censure, but, though knights of a more tender conscience were painfully perplexed to find themselves in the same galleys with excommunicated men, the Venetians showed no concern. They had another check in reserve for the Pope.

Before they left Italy, Alexis Comnenus had arrived from Constantinople to ask their aid in restoring his father to the throne he had just lost, and they were disposed to assist him. One could not, of course, expect the Pope to show the same concern for the blood of schismatics as for the blood of the Hungarians, yet his consent to this fatal and lamentable enterprise is a stain on his record. The sordid squabble of the Comneni family did not deserve the sacrifice of a single knight, and the part of Isaac Comnenus was espoused by the Crusaders and the Pope only because the young Alexis promised money and provisions to the troops and the subjection of the Greek Church to the Lateran. The issue is well known. The Crusaders took Constantinople, sacked the city, and desecrated the churches with a brutality that must have shocked the Saracens; and they then settled down to divide its territory between themselves and the Venetians. The letters

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which Innocent sent, as the successive news arrived, are painful reading. He must blame their excesses, he says at first, but, after all, these outrages had been merited by the sins of the Greeks; let the Crusaders inform him that the submission of the Greek Church has been secured. At last they send him, for his confirmation, a treaty from which he learns that they have arranged all the affairs, spiritual as well as secular, of the new Empire without consulting him, and he writes more warmly. To the outrage they have committed he is still almost insensible; it is their audacity in ruling the new Church—in permitting the hated Venetians to select a Patriarch—which excites his anger.

The last phase of the enterprise caused him grave distress. Instead of proceeding to the East, the Latins set up an Empire and several petty princedoms, and the Greeks disdainfully watched their quarrels and awaited their own opportunity. Monks and priests were summoned from France, but the people were secretly wedded to their old religion and the new Church was a hollow sham. For years Innocent had to maintain a fretful correspondence, settling quarrels about jurisdiction and property, and scolding his Crusaders for their oppression and spoliation of the clergy. But it is needless to recount all the details of that historic failure. The weariness of Innocent may be appreciated from the fact that in 1213 he naïvely wrote to the Khalipha himself, beseeching him "in all humility" to restore to the Christians the land which they had not the courage or the interest to win by the sword.

The crusade against the Albigensians was more successful, and even more lamentable, and I need do no more here than elucidate Innocent's relation to that monstrous crime. The degradation of morals and of

religious practice, the corruption of the clergy, and the stupendous claims of the Papacy, had already provoked in Europe the beginnings of protest. A somewhat modified form of Christianity's old rival, Manichæism, had lingered in the East and had in time mingled with the austere Christianity of the Pauline Epistles. From the Eastern Empire it had spread to Bulgaria, and from there, in the thirteenth century, it passed rapidly over Europe, assimilating all the anti-clerical and anti-ritualist feeling which the corruption of the time inspired. In one or other form it obtained considerable strength in Switzerland, Piedmont, and the south of France, and it was fast gathering recruits in Italy and Spain. The light-living princes of Languedoc had little inclination to persecute; nor would they think that, if one might sing ribald contempt of the ecclesiastical system in the tavern and the monastery, this disdain was less respectable in the mouths of a generally sincere and upright body of fanatics.

In the first year of his Pontificate Innocent sent two Cistercian monks, Guy and Renier, to convert the heretics and incite the civil and religious authorities to enforce the law. Of corporal persecution he assuredly did not dream at that time, and indeed his letters made it clear that he preferred persuasion to coercion of any kind. The monks failed either to convert the heretics or to induce the bishops and princes of the south of France to persecute (by confiscation and exile), and they were replaced by the more vigorous monk-legates, Pierre de Castelnau and Raoul, to whom the resolute Abbot Arnold of Citeaux was afterwards added. Their powers set aside all ordinary episcopal jurisdiction, and, in pursuance of their policy of displacing lax and reluctant prelates, they put the fanatical Foulques

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of Marseilles in the bishopric of Toulouse. For eight years these energetic apostles worked almost in vain among the heretics. Apparently at the suggestion of St. Dominic, who was just entering the history of Europe, the Pope directed them to raise a corps of Cistercian monks who should live and preach on the model of the coming mendicant friars, but even this device made little impression on the heretics or the light-living Catholics. Arnold and Foulques, in particular, became desperate, and the lamentable policy of persecution began to grow in their minds and that of the Pope.

The principle of persecution had, as we saw, been established in the Lateran centuries before, and the only thing that restrained Innocent from applying it, in its bloodless form, was the refusal of the secular rulers to co-operate. Raymond of Toulouse was too healthily Epicurean to favour either the sombre creed of the heretics or the more sombre creed of the persecutor. Apologetic writers speak with horror of the number of his wives and fair friends, but we do not find that his conduct in this regard, or the similar conduct of other princes and prelates, attracted the attention of the Pope. When, however, he slighted a sentence of excommunication and still refused to persecute his excellent but unorthodox subjects, he received a withering letter.<sup>1</sup> "Who does he think he is?" the Pope asks scornfully, to disobey one before whom the greatest monarchs of the earth bow. Let him cease to "feed on corpses like a vulture"—to break a lance with his neighbours—and obey the Legates, or the Pope will invite a more powerful prince to displace him. As early as November 17, 1207, Innocent bade the King

<sup>1</sup> X., 69.

of France, the Duke of Burgundy, and other nobles, prepare for an expedition to Toulouse; and the privileges of Crusaders were promised to all who joined it.

Raymond was more moved by the political threat than by the spiritual censures, but there was sullen anger amongst his followers, and on January 15, 1208, the Legate Pierre de Castelnau was assassinated. There is not a tittle of evidence to incriminate Raymond, and it is in the highest degree improbable that he would thus open the gates to his greedy neighbours, but Innocent chose to believe that he had directed the murder. Without trial, he declared that Raymond had forfeited the allegiance of his subjects, and his dominions might be seized by any Christian prince. He spurred Philip of France—who must have been flattered to find himself now described as “exalted amongst all others by God”—to the attack.<sup>1</sup> He addressed a fiery summons to “all the nobles and people of France” to “avenge this terrible insult to God.”<sup>2</sup> Philip wanted Toulouse, but he overreached himself in making terms and he dreaded England. There were, however, plenty of nobles willing to lead their men to the plunder of prosperous Provence, and the clergy had become seriously alarmed at the spread of the heresy in France. A vast army, joyous at the rich prospect of loot, converged upon the southern State. Innocent III. knew better than we know the forces he had set in motion. The end sanctified the means.

The next phase was pitiful: the issue is one of the most horrible pages of mediæval history. Raymond sent representatives to Rome to offer submission, and the Pope and his Legates were embarrassed and be-

<sup>1</sup> Xi., 28.

<sup>2</sup> Xi., 29.

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haved abominably. When Raymond justly complained of the bitterness of Arnold of Citeaux, the Pope sent a peaceful notary from the Lateran; giving the man secret instructions to take no step without the directions of Arnold, who was to be in the background, and writing to Arnold that this Legate Milo is to be only "the bait to conceal the hook of thy sagacity." Arnold, meanwhile, went to organize the crusade, for they intended to impose on Raymond terms which seemed impossible. The helpless Raymond licked the dust: he was stripped and scourged, he had to surrender seven of his chief castles as hostages, and he was forced to promise to lead the troops against his own subjects. Innocent sank deeper into his awful policy. In an amazing letter to his Legates<sup>1</sup> he reminded them of the words of Paul (II. Corinthians, xii., 16): "Being crafty, I caught you with guile." They were to affect to regard the repentance of Raymond as sincere, and, "deceiving him by prudent dissimulation, pass to the extirpation of the other heretics." In other words, they were to crush Raymond's chief nobles and then, if he winced, crush him. Raymond did not wince, yet the army, with Abbot Arnold as Captain General, moved southward to that historic butchery of the Albigensians.

The modern plea that Innocent could not arrest the avalanche is as wanton as the idea that he was moved by "social considerations." A sentence of excommunication, promulgated by Arnold of Citeaux, would have reduced the army to impotent proportions. Innocent would not disappoint Arnold and Foulques, and those who had responded to his summons; and he felt more sure of success this way. After the first two months of butchery and seizure of cities, he sent his

<sup>1</sup> Xi., 232.

blessing to the ambitious de Montfort. He was, however, superior to his Legates. The ferocious Arnold made every effort to goad Raymond to rebellion, and at last excommunicated him again on the plea that he had not fulfilled his promises. Innocent tried—rather tamely—to restrain Arnold, refused to confiscate Raymond's castles (as Arnold demanded) until he had a just trial, and received him courteously at Rome. At last, utterly revolted by the baseness of the Legates, Raymond winced. He was denounced to Rome, was confronted with terms which no man with a spark of honour could accept, and, when he refused, was excommunicated: the Pope confirming the sentence. Raymond's dominions were transferred to "the Blessed Peter," and de Montfort was to levy an annual tax—on which Innocent is painfully insistent—for the Papacy.

Two years butchery of men, women, and children had not yet broken the spirit of the Albigensians, and at the beginning of 1213, the Legates and Simon were dismayed to hear from Innocent that the crusade was over, and the troops had better proceed against the Saracens; that Raymond had not yet been legally convicted of heresy and murder, and had not therefore forfeited his fief; that, in any case, Raymond's sons, rather than Simon de Montfort, were his natural successors. Two Bulls (January 17 and 18, 1213) and four letters in quick succession apprised the miserable group that Innocent—largely owing to the intervention of Pedro of Aragon—at length appreciated their misconduct or had the courage to consult his better feelings. Unhappily, his courage did not last long. They stormed Rome with their remonstrances, and Innocent yielded. As, moreover, the King of

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Aragon failed in his attempt to reduce them by arms, the cause of Raymond was utterly lost and his territory was made over to Rome. To the end Innocent wavered between his more humane feeling and the policy he had so long countenanced. He refused to confirm the appointment of Simon as sovereign (under Rome) of the whole territory, and when Arnold (who was now Archbishop of Narbonne) quarrelled with Simon over the title of Duke of Narbonne, he supported Arnold. At the Lateran Council, which was to decide the issue, he made a plea for leniency to Raymond and justice to his heirs, but he yielded to the truculent priests, and the unhappy prince was cast aside with an annual pension of four hundred marks. Innocent did not live to see the arrogant Arnold excommunicate de Montfort, and the two Raymonds return and win back much of their estate.

*Causa causæ est causa causati*, the schoolmen used to say. The Pope who maintained Arnold of Citeaux, Foulques of Marseilles, and Simon de Montfort in their positions when their characters were fully revealed, and the whole of Europe knew the atrocities they committed, bears the guilt of the massacre of the Albigensians.

The fourth Lateran Council was his last work, and one of the most important Councils of the Middle Ages. He summoned all the bishops, abbots, and priors of Christendom to come, on November 1, 1215, to discuss the reform of the Church, the suppression of heresy, and the recovery of Palestine. A vast audience listened to his opening sermon on November 11th, and for nineteen days they framed laws against heretics, Jews, and schismatics: vainly thundered against the vice, sensuality, and rapacity of the clergy: reduced the



forbidden degrees of kindred (in marriage) to four—since there were only four humours in the body: imposed on all Christians a duty of confessing at least once a year: and fixed the next Crusade for June 1, 1216. But Innocent, if he marked with pride the contrast of that gorgeous assemblage to the little group of Christians who had met in an inn in the Transtiberina a thousand years earlier, cannot have been content. Not a single Greek had responded to his summons: grave murmurs at his hard policy and despotic action arose in the Council itself: half the prelates, at least, were unfit to impose reforming measures on their priests: and the ghastly mockery of his last Crusade gave little hope for the future. He did not even appreciate the new forces for good which were rising. He had coldly received, if not actually discouraged, Dominic and Francis. His ideal was power: of love he knew nothing. He flung himself ardently into the preparation for the new war on the Saracens, and died, on June 16, 1216, with the call to arms on his lips. He sacrificed himself nobly in the interest of his high ideal, and was one of the greatest makers of the Papacy, but he sacrificed also much that men inalienably prize, and he began the unmaking of the Papacy.

## CHAPTER X

### JOHN XXII.: THE COURT AT AVIGNON

IN maintaining that the power of the Papacy waned after the Pontificate of Innocent III., I do not mean that there was such visible decay as even the most acute contemporary observer might have detected. The thirteenth century must have seemed to the statesmen of the time to strengthen the Papacy. The Dominican and Franciscan friars, quickly recognized by Innocent's successors, impressed on Europe the duty of implicit obedience. The great canonists began to make an imposing body of law out of the decrees of the Popes. Art developed in close association with religious sentiment. The hereditary feud with the Hohenstauffens ended, fifty years after the death of Innocent, with the complete overthrow of the son and grandson of Frederic II. Yet most historians now recognize that the thirteenth century was, for the Papacy, a period of slow and subtle decay. The mighty struggle with Frederic, Manfred, and Conradin exhausted the high-minded, but not heroic, successors of Innocent, and it ended only when, by summoning Philip of Anjou, they substituted French for German predominance and inaugurated another exacting period of conflict. The alternative was a period of comparative impotence and flabby parasitism. Into this the Papacy passed;

and, unfortunately for it, the degeneration occurred just when the eyes of Europe were growing sharper. It was the date of the early renaissance of culture, inspired by the Moors: it was a rich period of civic development and prosperity: it was the time when castes of keen-eyed lay lawyers and scholars were growing. Arms were yielding to togas in the work of restricting the growth of the Papacy.

Boniface VIII. (1294-1303) is the last great representative of the Papal ideal in its earlier and more austere mediæval form. His Bull *Clericis laicos* (1296) which declared all clerical and monastic property in the world to be under his protection and sternly bade secular rulers respect it, was one of the last Olympic fulminations; and it was defeated by England and France. Then, in 1300, he declared the Jubilee; and some historians see in that prostration of Christendom at the feet of the Papacy the last notable expression of its world-power. Men said at the time—I am not pressing it as fact—that Boniface was so exalted by the spectacle that he put on the imperial crown and sandals. No one questions that the Papacy decayed from that year. Under the banner of Papal absolutism Boniface made war on the great Ghibelline family of the Colonnas, and on Philip the Fair and his lawyers, and he ignominiously fell. The blameless and gentle Dominican, Benedict XI., who succeeded him, could not sustain for more than a few months the struggle he had inherited, and the Gascon Clement V. then inaugurated what has been too forcibly called “the Babylonian Captivity.”

After a secret compact with Philip, after a complete sacrifice of his ideals, and after the distribution of much French gold among the cardinals, he obtained the tiara (1305). In 1309 he settled at Avignon, basely surren-

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dered the Templars (after an appalling travesty of justice) to the cupidity of the King, and settled down, in the company of his sister and niece and dear friend the Countess of Talleyrand-Périgord, to a life of sensuous luxury and the accumulation of wealth. He died on March 12, 1314, leaving 1,078,800 florins (about £500,000) nearly the whole of which went to his family and friends, and the cardinals gathered anxiously to choose his successor.

Clement had died near Carpentras, about fifteen miles from Avignon, and the cardinals met in the episcopal palace of that town. The austere Gregory X. had decreed in 1274 that the cardinal electors should be walled into their chamber (or Conclave) until they had chosen a Pope, and the twenty-three princes of the Church prepared for a desperate encounter in their isolated quarters. There were six Italians, eager to tell a pitiful story of the ruin of Rome and the patrimonies because of the absence of the Pope from Italy. But there were nine Gascons—three of them nephews of Clement, all creatures of Clement—and, as two of the eight French cardinals supported the Gascons, they made a formidable majority and demanded an Avignon Pope: in fact, a Gascon Pope. Day followed day in angry discussion, and the cries of the infuriated followers of the Gascon cardinals without grew louder and louder. At last, on July 23d, there came a thundering on the doors, and the terrified cardinals, breaking through the wall, fled from the town and dispersed. For two years, to the grave scandal of Christendom, they refused to agree on a place of meeting, until at last Philip of Valois enticed them to Lyons, entrapped them into a monastery, and told them that they were prisoners until they made a Pope.

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Under these auspices Jacques de Cahors, Cardinal of Porto, became John XXII. He was a little, dry, bilious old man of seventy-two: but an able lawyer and administrator, and a man of wonderful vigour for his age. In his case the more careful research of modern times and the opening of the Vatican Archives have tended to give him, in some respects, a more honourable position in history than he had hitherto occupied. The reader will hardly find him morally and spiritually attractive, but he had a remarkable and powerful personality, and he achieved more than has been supposed. His "Register" in the Vatican Archives contains 65,000 letters. Most of these are very brief notes written by the Papal clerks, but there are many of interest and they enable us at times to correct the anecdotists of his age. He had virulent enemies, and they must be read with reserve.<sup>1</sup>

Jacques d'Euse, of Cahors, is said by unfriendly writers of the time to have been the son of a cobbler (or, according to others, a tailor). As he had relatives in good positions, and received a good schooling, this is probably a legend. But his early life is obscure. He studied under the Dominicans of Cahors, and then attended the lectures at Montpellier and at Paris. The story of Ferretti di Vicenza, that he went with a

<sup>1</sup> For the letters see *Lettres de Jean XXII.* (2 vols., 1908 and 1912), edited by Arnold Fayen: a selection of 3653 letters, generally business notes of little importance. Various short lives of John are given in Baluze's *Vita Paparum Avenionensium*, vol. ii., and there are censorious allusions to him in G. Villani's *Historie Florentine*: a contemporary but biassed work. Bertrand's *Recherches sur l'origine, l'élection, et le couronnement de Jean XXII.* (1854) is valuable for his early years, as well as Dr. J. Asal's *Die Wahl Johann's XXII.* (1910). V. Verlaque's *Jean XXII.* (1883), is foolishly partisan, and declares John "one of the greatest successors of St. Peter." Sectional studies will be noticed in the course of the chapter.

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trading uncle to Naples and became tutor to the sons of Charles II., does not harmonize with these facts, and we must therefore reject the further charge that he obtained his bishopric by forging a letter in the name of Charles. He seems rather to have taught civil law for a long period at Cahors, and then at Toulouse, where he earned the friendship of the Bishop, St. Louis, and was thus brought to the notice and favour of the Bishop's father, the King of Naples. Charles secured the bishopric of Fréjus for him in 1300, and made him his Chancellor in 1307. When Charles died, his son Robert continued the patronage and got for him the bishopric of Avignon. Clement V. found him a useful man and pliant lawyer. It was he who did the most accommodating research for Clement in the suppression of the Templars, and he was rewarded with a red hat in 1312. He was a sober man, liking good solid fare and regular ways, and kept his energy and ambition in his eighth decade of life.

Robert of Naples pressed his candidature for the Papacy when Clement died, and the Gascons adopted him. He won the vote of Cardinal Orsini—this statement of his critics is confirmed by later events—by professing a most determined intention to transfer the Papacy to Rome. The anecdotists say that he swore never to mount a horse until he was established at the Lateran; and, after a gorgeous coronation-ceremony at Lyons on September 5th, he at once proceeded *by boat* to Avignon. The Italian cardinals left him in disgust, and he promptly promoted ten new cardinals, of whom nine were French (and three, including his nephew, from Cahors). Of his later seventeen cardinals, thirteen were French, three Italian, and one Spanish. The Papacy was fixed at Avignon.

The little town which Clement had chosen as the seat of the Papacy had the advantage, in John's eyes, of being separated from Philip's territory by the Rhone and being under the suzerainty of Robert of Naples. It was still a small, poorly built town. Clement had found the Dominican monastery large enough for his Epicurean establishment. John returned at first to his old episcopal palace, but the great rock on which the Papal Palace now stands soon inspired his ambition and he began assiduously to nurse the Papal income. Much of Clement's money had been removed and stored by his clever and unscrupulous nephew, the Viscount Bertrand de Goth, who would not easily disgorge it. After a time John asserted his spiritual power, and summoned the Viscount to present an account. Three times the noble ignored his summons, and then, when John was about to proceed against him, he judiciously distributed some of the money among the cardinals and had the case postponed. At length he rode boldly into Avignon to give his account. He had, he explained, with a most insolent air of simplicity and candour, received 300,000 florins from his uncle. This sum was destined to be used in the next Crusade, and he had sworn on the Gospels not to yield it for any other purpose. John was baulked and was compelled to compromise. They agreed to divide the money, and a receipt preserved at the Vatican shows that 150,000 florins were all he obtained of Clement's huge fortune. Clement had left only 70,000 florins directly to his successor, and half of this had to go to the cardinals. All the rest Clement regarded as private fortune and distributed among his friends and servants.

John turned to the organization of the Papal income, and his success in this direction is notorious. Villani

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says in his *Florentine History*<sup>1</sup> that at his death John left a fortune of 25,000,000 florins<sup>2</sup> in coin and jewels. Villani is hostile, but he affirms that he had this information from his brother, who was one of the bankers appointed to appraise the sum. Other chroniclers give different figures. It happens, however, that John's ledgers are still preserved in the Vatican archives, and as in this case they completely refute the anti-Papal chroniclers—a point certainly to be carefully noted by the historian—they have been published.<sup>3</sup> Some of the ledgers are "missing," but there are general statements (tallying with the separate ledgers), and from these it appears that the entire income of the Papacy during the eighteen years of John's Pontificate was about four and a half million florins (or about £120,000 a year), and that the greater part of this was spent on the Italian war. There is an expenditure of nearly three millions under the humorous heading of "Wax, and certain extraordinary expenses," and the items show that the Italian campaign to recover the Papal estates absorbed most of this. At the same time the ledgers do not quite confirm the edifying tradition of John's sober and simple life. His table and cellar cost (in modern terms) nearly £3000 a year: his "wardrobe" nearly £4000 a year: and his officials and staff about £15,000 a year. Immense sums seem to have been given to relatives—there is one item of 72,000 florins paid to his brother Peter for certain estates—and we know that in 1339 he began to build the famous Papal Palace.

<sup>1</sup> Xi., 20.

<sup>2</sup> The gold florin is estimated at about ten shillings of English money.

<sup>3</sup> *Die Einnahmen der Apostolischer Kammer unter Johann XXII.* (1910), by Dr. Emil Göller, and *Die Ausgaben der Apostolischer Kammer unter Johann XXII.* (1911), by K. H. Schäfer.



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In sum, the editors of John's accounts conclude that the Papal treasury would, at his death, have shown a deficit of 90,000 florins but for a loan of half a million from his private purse; and that the total amount left behind by him (besides his valuable library of 1028 volumes, his collection of 329 jewelled rings, etc.) was only about 800,000 florins. It is true that, in spite of the businesslike appearance of the ledgers, we must not take this as a statement of the Pope's entire estate. Vast sums were collected which did not pass through Avignon, but went straight to the Legate in Italy (and possibly elsewhere). Moreover, the "private purse" of the Pope is an interesting and obscure part of his system. It was discovered at his death that he had a secret "little chamber," over one of the corridors, into which a large part of the income went. There are historical indications that he diverted to his private account large sums for military and special political purposes. He did not foresee how Clement VI. would genially dissipate it, with the words: "My predecessors did not know how to live." This account was not entered in books, and we have to be content with the assurance that he left at his death rather less than a million florins in all.

Yet an income of—if we make allowance for the unrecorded sums—something like £200,000 a year, at a time when the patrimonies were mostly alienated, was enormous, and there is no reason to doubt the statement of all historians that it came largely from tainted sources. John's fiscal policy is a stage in the degeneration of the Papacy. Clement IV. had, in 1267, reserved to the Pope the income of the benefices of clerks who died at Rome, and Boniface VIII. had enlarged this by including all who died within a two

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days' journey of Rome. John extended the law throughout the Church and demanded three years' revenue for each that fell vacant. By his Bull *Execrabilis* he ordered all clerks (except his cardinals) who held several benefices to select one and surrender the rest to the Apostolic See. He created bishoprics—he made six out of the bishopric of Toulouse—by subdividing actual sees (on the plea, of course, that the duties would be better discharged), and by an astute system of promotions he, when a see fell vacant, contrived to move several men and secure the "first fruits" on their appointments: a vacant archbishopric, for instance, would be filled by a higher bishop, the higher bishopric by a lower bishop, and so on. It was possible to put a complexion of reform on all these measures, but clergy and laity muttered a charge of avarice. Then there were the incomes from kingdoms and duchies (England, Aragon, Portugal, Naples, Sicily, Corsica, Sardinia, and Spoleto) which owed an annual tribute, the yield of the surviving patrimonies, the taxes on dispensations and grants, and a certain beginning of the sale of indulgences which, unfortunately, we cannot closely ascertain.

John was not wholly immersed in finance and insensible of higher duties. He created universities at Cahors and Perugia, regulated the studies at Oxford, Cambridge, and Paris, and even (as we shall see) concerned himself with the state of the East. But the only council we trace under his control (held at St. Ruf, in 1326) was almost entirely concerned with ecclesiastical property and immunities, and his correspondence is, in effect, almost wholly fiscal and political. He greatly enlarged the Rota (or legal and business part of the Curia), and filled it with a cosmopolitan

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staff of clerks, to deal with this large and lucrative side of his affairs. It is pleaded that the Papacy could not discharge its duties without this wealth and power; and it must seem unfortunate that the acquisition and maintenance of the wealth and power left so little time for the duties they were to enable the Pope to discharge.

Watered by this stream of gold, Avignon flourished. John was generous to his family and his cardinals: palaces began to rise above the lowly roofs of the town: a gay and coloured life filled its streets. A Papal household costing £25,000 a year would of itself make an impression. We know Avignon best in the later and even richer days of Benedict XII. and Clement VI. who followed John. Not far away, even in the days of John, dwelt a writer who was destined to immortality, and he passed scathing criticisms on Avignon. Petrarch is a rhetorician and poet, as well as a fierce opponent of the Avignon Papacy, but one cannot lightly disregard his assurance that Papal Avignon was "Babylon," "a living hell," and "the sink of all vices."<sup>1</sup> He is chiefly describing Avignon under Clement VI., but he says that it is only a change "from bad to worse" since John's days.

An episode that occurred soon after John's elevation is, perhaps, more convincing than Petrarch's fiery rhetoric, since its features were determined in a legal process. Hugues Géraud, a favourite of Clement V., had obtained from that Pope the bishopric of Cahors, paying the Papal tax of a thousand florins for it. He

<sup>1</sup> See, especially, the book of his letters "Sine titulo," most of which contain appalling invectives on the Popes and cardinals and clergy. *Epistola xviii*, is a classical picture of vice, even among the elderly clergy. Its chief defect is to associate the name of tolerably respectable Babylon with such a picture.

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proceeded to make his possession as lucrative as possible and live comfortably on the revenue his clerks extorted for him. John's townsfolk appealed to him, as soon as he settled in Avignon, and he summoned the Bishop to his court. Hugues Géraud sealed the lips of his priests by an oath of silence, but, of course, a Pope could undo that seal, and the inquiry revealed enormities on the part of the Bishop. Toward the close of the inquiry certain men were arrested bringing mysterious packages into the town. They had with them various poisons and certain little wax images concealed in loaves. The Bishop and his chief clerks were at once arrested, and, although the Papal officials used torture to open their lips, the substance of their story seems reliable. Fearful of the issue, Hugues Géraud had applied to a Jew at Toulouse, and to others, for these poisons and wax images. It was proved in court that members of the Papal household, including a cardinal, were bribed to facilitate the poisoning, and that the wax images, which were not effective without the blessing of some prelate, were actually blessed by the Archbishop of Toulouse. The Archbishop pleaded that he had no suspicion of the awful purpose of these images—familiar as they were in the Middle Ages—but he soon fled from Toulouse, and it is conjectured that he had hoped that the death of the Pope would save his diocese (and income) from the threatened dismemberment.<sup>1</sup>

Some of these images had already been smuggled into Avignon and the Bishop and his archpriest had, in the well-known mediæval manner, set up one of them

<sup>1</sup> See a full (and conservative) analysis of the evidence in E. Abbe's *Hugues Géraud* (1904). I am entirely ignoring the gossipy chroniclers of the time, whom Milman too frequently follows.

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as representative of the Pope's nephew, Cardinal Jacques de Via, and stabbed it in the belly and legs with silver styles, while the wicked Jew repeated the suitable imprecations. John XXII. fully shared the views of his age in regard to these magical practices, and we can imagine how he and others were confirmed in that belief when, in the course of the trial, Jacques de Via sickened and died. The trial came to a speedy conclusion. The Bishop of Cahors was dragged by horses through the town and burned at the stake: his numerous clerical and lay accomplices were adequately punished: and John spurred the Inquisitors to a deadly campaign against magicians throughout the country. Some of the cardinals were involved in this or a similar plot, but John shrewdly disarmed them with gold rather than make powerful enemies.

These details will suffice to make clear the state of the clergy and laity at the close of a century which some writers appraise as one of profound inspiration, and we must go on to consider the large policy which John's wealth was intended to support. The central theme is, once more, the political struggle with the Emperor—the undying curse which temporal power had brought with it—but we cannot understand this aright unless we first regard a spiritual struggle of great interest.

The followers of Francis of Assisi had branched into the customary parties of rigourists and liberals. On the one hand were the great body of the friars, living in large comfortable monasteries, raising a stupendously rich church over the bones of their ascetic founder. On the other hand were the faithful minority, the genuinely ascetic, casting withering reproaches on the liberals, assimilating much of the mystic and—we may

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justly say—protestant feeling which was growing in Europe. There were bloody conflicts as well as highly seasoned arguments. The “Spirituals” and “Fratricelli” could not but regard the wealth and sensuality of the higher clergy as an apostasy from the Christian ideal, and they had become one of the most pronounced “protestant” sects of the time and were anathematized repeatedly by the Popes. During the Papal vacancy the Spirituals had prospered and become more strident. Christendom had apostatized, and they were the heralds of a new religion, revealed to Francis of Assisi. This arrogant Papacy and priesthood must disappear before true religion can flourish.

In the spring of 1317 John condemned them, and, when they still preached revolt, summoned about sixty of them to Avignon. They used very plain speech and received a very plain reply. The Papacy had now discovered that persistent or “contumacious” disobedience amounted to heresy, and the Inquisitors belonged to the rival Dominican order. So several sons of St. Francis were burned at the stake—four were burned at Marseilles on May 7, 1318—and many were cast into prison. But John went too far. He ordered the Franciscan authorities to consider whether absolute poverty was the genuine basis of their rule, and they decided that it was: in the sense of a Bull (*Exiit qui seminat*) of Nicholas III., which allowed them “the use” of things without the actual “ownership.” John revoked the Bull, and in a Decretal of December 8, 1322 (*Ad Conditorem*), declared that this was impossible nonsense. When the friars retorted that such poverty had actually been practised by Christ and his Apostles, John consulted the learned doctors of Paris and, in the Decretal *Cum inter nonnullos* (November

12, 1323), pronounced this thesis heretical. The "Spirituals" were now reinforced by abler men, who fled to Italy and joined the anti-Papal campaign of Louis of Bavaria. Michael de Cesena, the General of the Order, nailed to the door of Pisa cathedral a document in which he impeached John for heresy. William of Ockham, the English friar, one of the most acute of the later schoolmen, and others, discharged a shower of invectives which would have made the fortune of a sixteenth-century Reformer. John was "Anti-Christ," the "Dragon with Seven Heads," and so on. They induced Louis of Bavaria to declare John's Decretals heretical, and fought shoulder to shoulder with the learned Paris doctors, Marsiglio of Padua and Jean of Jandun, whose *Defensor Pacis* (1324) was a crushing indictment of the Papal pretensions and vindication of the secular power. All over Italy and Germany there was a fierce scrutiny of the bases of the Papal claims. The Reformation was commencing, two centuries before Luther.

The spiritual struggle had thus merged in the political struggle, owing to the common opposition to John XXII., and this must now be considered. Frederic of Austria and Louis of Bavaria were both chosen King of the Romans, and, as neither had had the full number of votes, there was the not unfamiliar struggle for recognition. They disregarded John's summons to his tribunal, took to the sword, and Frederic was beaten and imprisoned in 1322. John coldly acknowledged Louis's letter announcing his victory; unquestionably he from the first wanted the imperial crown to pass to France and the imperial rule to vanish from Italy. Then Louis invaded Italy, and John declared war.

Italy already gave the Pope concern. The Ghibel-

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lines, or Imperialists, had grown powerful in the Pope's absence, and their chief leader, Matteo Visconti of Milan, a ruthless and exacting ruler, was "Imperial Vicar" in the country. When Visconti, in defiance of the Pope's commands, gave aid to the Ghibellines of Genoa, John, who claimed to represent the Empire during the "vacancy," withdrew his title of Vicar and awarded it to Robert of Naples. Robert went to consult John at Avignon, and a campaign followed. Cardinal Bertrand de Poyet—who was, says Petrarch, so much like John "in face and ferocity"<sup>1</sup> that one could easily credit the rumour that he was John's son—was sent to direct the Papal cause and to denounce the Viscontis to the Inquisition. Matteo was found guilty of heresy (or contumacious refusal to abandon the title of Vicar), and he and his son were charged with oppression of the clergy (which is plausible enough) and with a quaint and amusing mixture of magic and other devilry.<sup>2</sup> Possibly John relied more confidently on the troops of Philip of Valois and Henry of Austria, whom he successively summoned to Italy; but they retired almost without a blow. Matteo repented and died, but his sons and their associates continued the war.

At this juncture Louis conquered Frederic and sent word to the Legate to keep his troops out of imperial territory. When the Legate refused, he joined the Ghibellines and drew from John a vigorous denunciation. He was to abandon the "heretics" and come to

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* xvii. of the book "Sine titulo."

<sup>2</sup> See Michel, "Le Procès de Matteo et de Galeazzo Visconti," in *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, xxix. (1909), and H. Otto, "Zur Italienischen Politik Johans XXII.," in *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*, Bd. xix. (1911).



Avignon for the examination of his claim to the Empire. Louis, retorting (under the inspiration of the friars) that there were heretics at Avignon as well as in Italy, went his way, and John turned to France. Charles the Fair, the new King, had discovered that, when Clement V. had authorized his marriage with Blanche of Burgundy, a remote godmothership had been overlooked, and he was in the painful position of living with one to whom he was not validly married. John declared the marriage void, allowed Charles to marry another lady, and was soon in conference with Charles and with Robert of Naples. Germany took alarm at this plain hint of an intention to make Charles Emperor; the Italian spiritual war upon the Pope was vigorously repeated in that country, and the Diet of Ratisbon rejected John's authority and called for a General Council.

Louis, in 1326, became reconciled with Frederic of Austria and was recognized in Germany as sole Emperor, but John had gone too far to withdraw, or was too deeply involved with Charles of France and Robert of Naples. In alliance with the Ghibellines, Louis made a triumphant tour over Italy, and on April 18, 1328, to the immense joy of his throng of rebel supporters, solemnly declared, in St. Peter's, that "James of Cahors" was guilty of heresy and treason.<sup>1</sup> Friar Peter of Corbara was substituted for him, with the name of Nicholas V., and Rome exulted in the restoration of the Papacy. But the drama ended as it had often ended before. Louis oppressed the country and alienated his supporters; and before the end of the year Friar Peter was, with a halter round his neck, at the Pope's feet in Avignon and Louis was back in Germany.

<sup>1</sup> Baluze, ii., 512; and a later indictment, p. 522.

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John refused to compromise honourably with Louis, and the agitation against the Papacy in Germany, whither all the rebels had now gone, was more bitter than ever.

The next phase of the struggle is not wholly clear. John of Bohemia intervened and overran Italy. It seems probable that the Pope had nothing to do with this invasion, and at first suspected that John was in league with Louis; but that, as John made progress and had friendly communication with Avignon, the Pope began to hope that the new development offered him a stronger King of Italy (under Papal suzerainty) than Robert and a less oppressive protector than Philip VI. of France.<sup>1</sup> Philip and John visited the Pope at Avignon, and it was announced that John was to be recognized as King of part of Italy. The curious alliance of the three reveals some miscalculation. Philip must have trusted that John of Bohemia would work for him, but the Pope had assuredly no idea of abandoning his claim to Italy. The issue was singular. The Italians, in face of this alliance, united under Robert of Naples and overcame the Papal and Bohemian troops. John had, as part of the campaign, announced his intention of transferring the Papal Court to Bologna, and the Legate actually began to erect a palace for him. When the Bolognese realized that John had no serious intention of coming, they joined the Imperialists and cast out the Legate and his troops. It is said that the collapse of his costly Italian campaign weighed so heavily on the Pope that he did not leave his palace during the year of life which still remained.

John's relations with other countries are not of great interest. He was almost the master, rather than the

<sup>1</sup> See the essay on John's policy, by H. Otto, quoted above.

slave, of the three French monarchs who ruled during his Pontificate, and some of his letters paternally chide them for such defects as talking in church. In letters to Edward of England he tried to reconcile that monarch with Robert Bruce, and he begged more humane treatment of the Irish, who had appealed for his intervention. In Poland he excommunicated the Teutonic knights for taking Danzig and Pomerania from King Ladislas. His eye wandered even farther afield. He was genuinely interested in the fate of Christians in the East, and sent a mission to the Sultan, who sharply dismissed it. No Pope had, in a sense, a wider horizon, for John not only sent friars to preach in Armenia and Persia, but actually appointed a Legate for India, China, and Thibet. Yet his ruling of the Christian world was singularly slender in comparison with that of his great predecessors. His energy was absorbed in fiscal and political matters. In co-operation with Philip he sent a fleet against the Saracens, and it won a victory, but the Crusade he announced on July 26, 1333, never went beyond that naval success. On the other hand, when the Pastoureaux, a wild rabble, marched over France proclaiming a popular Crusade, John excommunicated them for taking the cross without his permission; of their appalling treatment of the Jews he made no complaint, nor did he move when the lepers of France were brutally persecuted on some superstitious charge of the time. He was oppressive to the Jews, and ordered the burning of the Talmud.

He has, in fine, the distinction of putting forward a doctrine which his Church condemns as heretical. Preaching on All Saints' Day in 1331, he suggested that probably the saints did not enjoy the direct vision (or Beatific Vision) of God in heaven, and would not do

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so until after the Day of Judgment. There is no doubt whatever that he held this as an opinion, though he made no effort to impose it on others; beyond a certain liberality in bestowing benefices on clerics who supported him. There was a violent agitation in France. The Dominican friars and the universities strongly opposed the view, and, when the General of the Franciscan Order thought it advantageous to support the Pope, the King of France swore that he would not have his realm sullied by the heresy. This agitation, and John's correspondence with Philip VI., make it quite clear that the Pope held the heresy, as an opinion. A few days before he died, however, he wrote a Bull—at least, such a Bull was published by his successor—endorsing the received doctrine and declaring that he had put forward his theory only “by way of conference.”

He died on December 4, 1334, bowed with age and saddened by the failure of his work. A more complete study of his letters than has yet been made may in some measure enlarge our knowledge of his properly Pontifical action, but there can be little doubt that money and politics chiefly engrossed his attention. The chief interest of his Pontificate is the light it throws on the preparation for the Reformation. John's fiscal policy, however much open to censure, was unselfish; but he opened to his even less religious successors the road to disaster.

## CHAPTER XI

### JOHN XXIII. AND THE GREAT SCHISM

THE next important stage in the devolution of the Papacy is the Great Schism, the spectacle of which moved the increasing body of cultivated laymen and the better clergy to examine critically the bases of the Papal claims and seek an authority which should control the wanton conduct of the Popes. The essential mischief of the long stay of the Papal Court at Avignon is obscured when it is called a Babylonian Captivity. Few of the Popes were servile to France, and it was not France that detained them on the banks of the Rhone. The gravest consequences of their voluntary exile were, that the isolation from their Italian estates led them to pursue a corrupt and intolerable fiscal policy: that the College of Cardinals degenerated and became less scrupulous in the choice of a Pope: and, especially, that the rival ambition of French and Italian cardinals to control the Papacy led to an appalling schism. This phase will be best illustrated by an account of the antecedents and the remarkable Pontificate of John XXIII.

The return of the Papal Court to Rome was mainly due to political causes. Clement VI. (1342-1352), whose voluptuous indolence ignobly crowned the fiscal system of John XXII., was followed by three Popes

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who at least desired reform. The third of these, Gregory XI., was too weak or resourceless to curb the ruthless action of his Legates in Italy, and the sight of wild Breton mercenaries and hardly less wild English adventurers (of Hawkwood's infamous company) spreading rape and rapine under the Papal banner, disgusted the cities and states of the Peninsula. Under the lead of Florence, they proceeded to affirm and establish the independence of Italy. It was this threat, rather than the romantic rebukes of a young nun (Catherine of Siena), which drew Gregory XI., in 1376, from the safe and luxurious palace-fortress at Avignon. A month after his arrival at Rome the Breton hirelings under Cardinal Robert of Geneva committed a frightful massacre at Cesena, and Gregory was almost driven back to Avignon by the storm which ensued. But he died on March 27, 1378, and the cardinals met nervously at Rome to choose a successor.

The din of the bloody encounter of Gascon, Breton, and Roman troops in the streets reached the cardinals in the privacy of the Conclave. One day, indeed, the armed Romans burst into the sacred chamber, and brandished their weapons before the eyes of the terrified French cardinals. Yet it is generally agreed that there was not such compulsion as to invalidate the election, and Urban VI. became the legitimate head of the Church. In the circumstances a delicate and tactful policy was required, and the austere Neapolitan, of humble birth, who secured the tiara was in this respect the least fitted of the cardinals. He violently and vituperatively denounced the wealth and luxury of his colleagues, and he alienated Italians no less than French by the grossness of his manners. Within a few months the French cardinals retired to Fondi,

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discovered that the election was invalid on account of intimidation, and set up Robert of Geneva, a ruthless soldier and entirely worldly-minded priest, as Anti-Pope, with the title of Clement VII. So the schism began, and Christendom split into two bitterly hostile "obediences." Clement retired to Avignon, and preyed on France more avariciously than John XXII. had done: Urban's impetuous rudeness wrapped Italy in a flame of war once more. In 1389 another Neapolitan, Boniface IX., succeeded Urban, and it is during his Pontificate that there came upon the scene Baldassare Cossa, the unscrupulous adventurer who became John XXIII.

Cossa was a Neapolitan, and is said by his hostile contemporary Dietrich von Nieheim to have been a pirate in his youth.<sup>1</sup> Many recent historians reject this statement, but as it is certain and admitted that Cossa's two brothers were condemned to death for piracy by Ladislaus of Naples, and it is clear that in his youth Cossa took some part in the Angevin-Neapolitan war, it is not improbable that Baldassare was himself engaged in raiding the Neapolitan commerce. He was born about 1368, of a noble but impoverished Neapolitan house, and he seems to have been known to

<sup>1</sup> *Historia de Vita Papæ Joannis XXIII.*, which must be cited with reserve, as the author had a bitter quarrel with John and is often inaccurate. See C. Hunger, *Zur Geschichte Papst Johannis XXIII.* (1876). More reliable are the references in the *Commentarii rerum suo tempore in Italia gestarum* (in Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum scriptores*, xix.), of Leonardo of Arezzo, at one time John's secretary. Leonardo's temperate verdict, that John was "a great man in temporal things, but a complete failure and unworthy in spiritual things," is endorsed by all. Exhaustive bibliographies will be found in E. J. Kitto's excellent works, *In the Days of the Councils* (1908), and *Pope John the Twenty-third and Master John Hus of Bohemia* (1910).

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the Neapolitan Pope. In his early twenties he forsook the army or the sea, for which alone he was qualified, and went to study law at Bologna. In 1392 Boniface made him Archdeacon at Bologna: in 1396 he was summoned to the office of Private Chamberlain at Rome, and his career began.

He was a typical Neapolitan—dark-eyed, keen-witted, of very robust frame and very frail moral instincts—and the Pope needed such men. During the first seven years of his Pontificate Boniface was kept in check by the older cardinals, but, as they died, he sought money by fair or foul means for the recovery of Italy. France and Spain sent their gifts to Avignon, and England and Germany were not generous. Benefices, from the highest to the lowest, were sold daily, and the “first fruits” were demanded in advance. As the system developed, spies were employed over Italy and Germany to report on the health of aged beneficiaries, and there was a sordid traffic in “expectations.” Baldassare Cossa, the chief instrument of this gross simony, had various scales of payment, and the purchaser of the “expectation” of a benefice might find it sold over him to a higher bidder for a “preference.” A Jubilee had been announced for the year 1390, and Boniface got the fruits of it, but this did not deter him from reaping another golden harvest from a Jubilee in 1400. As, moreover, many pilgrims, especially in Germany and Scandinavia, were deterred from coming to Rome by the bands of robbers and ravishers who infested the Papal estates, Boniface generously enacted that Germans might obtain the same pardon by visiting certain shrines nearer home and paying to Papal agents the cost of a journey to Rome.

These simoniacal practices are established and ad-



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mitted, quite apart from the testimony of Dietrich. We must, indeed, admit the evidence of Dietrich when he tells us that he saw these Papal agents spread their silk curtains and unfold their Papal banners in the churches of Germany, and heard them declare to the ignorant people that St. Peter himself had not greater power than they. We may also easily believe his assurance that many of the German clergy denounced this traffic in indulgences<sup>1</sup> and that it brought enormous sums to the Papacy. But the precise sums, and the romantic stories, which Dietrich gives on hearsay, especially in regard to Cossa, must be regarded with reserve. He says that Cossa, when Legate at Bologna, arrested one of these monk-agents returning to Rome with his bags of gold and relieved him; and that the monk hanged himself in despair. These are fragments of foolish rumour. We cannot deal so summarily with his statement that the Chamberlain had his percentage of the profits and let it grow in the hands of the usurers; and that he extorted money from prelates by mendaciously representing that Boniface was angry with them and offering to mediate. All that we can say with confidence is that Cossa was the chief instrument of the Pope's nefarious system, and that, although he had no private means, he amassed an enormous fortune.

<sup>1</sup> As in modern Spain, the word "traffic" or "sale" would be resented. The theory is that you give an alms to the Church and the Church grants the indulgence. The amount of the alms is fixed according to the grace required: there are four different *bulas* in Spain today. It is hardly necessary to add that the agents did not officially sell the pardon of sins, but the remission of the punishment due in Purgatory for such sins as were confessed. Nevertheless we have the official assurance of the Council of Constance (art. 20) that John XXIII. "sold absolution both from punishment and guilt," and there are other indications of this grave abuse.

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The Council of Constance established this charge against him, as we shall see.

In 1402, Cossa became Cardinal-deacon of St. Eustace—the Council of Constance found that he bought that dignity—and in the following year he was made Legate at Bologna. We cannot control Dietrich's statement that the Pope wished to put an end to a scandalous *liaison* of Cossa's at Rome. It is not improbable, and would not be very unusual at Rome, but the fact is that he knew Bologna and was a soldier, and Boniface needed a soldier-legate in the north. In a very short time Cossa won Bologna from the Milanese troops and made it a prosperous and profitable Papal possession. He fortified it and restored its institutions, even establishing a university of a very liberal character. But he ruled it with an iron hand and ground it with taxes. Even its gamblers and prostitutes had to pay the tithe of their earnings, and the grumblers who constantly revolted or attempted to assassinate Cossa were mercilessly punished. Dietrich boldly accuses him of violating two hundred maids and matrons of the city, but we can do no more than suspect that there must have been some foundation for so large a repute. Again the Council of Constance sustains the substance of the charge.

Boniface died on September 29, 1404, and Cossa was not present at the Conclave. He had constantly to lead his troops against external as well as internal enemies. The new Pope, Innocent VII., spent two futile years in dreams of peace, and in November, 1406, the See again fell vacant. Christendom now clamoured for an end of the scandalous schism, and, when Gregory XII., an ascetic and worn old cardinal, assumed the tiara, he was greeted as "an angel of light." He

thanked God, with tears in his eyes, that he was chosen to end the schism; if he could not get mules or galleys, he would go on foot to meet Benedict XIII. (who had succeeded Clement at Avignon) and resign together with him. And within a few months Christendom witnessed the still more odious spectacle of the two Popes, both men of advanced years and great piety, straining every nerve to avoid each other and evade resignation. They were to meet at Savona, but, as Leonardo quaintly says, "whenever there was question of their meeting, one would, as if he were a land animal, not approach the coast, and the other, as if he were an aquatic animal, would not leave the sea." Benedict reached Savona; Gregory could not be driven beyond Lucca. The best that can be said for him is that he was ruled by greedy relatives. At last, on a pretext provided by his supporter Ladislaus of Naples, Gregory fled back to Rome and refused to listen to any further counsel of resignation.

Christendom, in disgust, now called for a General Council. France disowned Benedict and, when he excommunicated the King, tore his Bull in halves and ordered his arrest. He fled to Perpignan and Gregory to Venice, and the cardinals began to negotiate with the princes for the holding of the Council of Pisa. Cardinal Cossa, who had disdainfully taken down the arms of Gregory XII. at Bologna, and who was in league with Florence against Naples, took the lead in the new movement. When Gregory excommunicated him, he burned the Bull in the market-place. When Ladislaus of Naples advanced against Pisa, he united his troops to those of Florence and scattered the southerners. When Benedict's representatives asked for a safe-conduct through Italy, he said: "If you come to

Bologna, with or without a safe-conduct, I'll burn you." So the Council met at Pisa, deposed Benedict and Gregory, and, in effect, set up a third Pope, Alexander V. The situation being without precedent, there was no canonical basis for such a Council, and no executive to enforce the Council's decisions. Benedict and Gregory—the one under the protection of Spain and the other with the support of Naples, Rimini, and part of Germany—continued to fulminate against each other, and a third discharge of anathemas only distracted Christendom the more.

Cardinal Cossa set out once more at the head of his troops, and, with the aid of Louis of Anjou and the Florentines, swept the Neapolitan troops southward and opened Rome for Alexander. But that feeble and aged Anti-Pope never reached the Lateran. He died at Bologna on May 4, 1410, and Louis of Anjou (representing the French influence) and the Florentines urged on the cardinals the election of Cossa himself. At midnight on May 17th, the expectant crowd at Bologna was informed that the cardinals had come to an agreement, and an hour later Baldassare Cossa, or John XXIII., stepped forth in the scarlet mitre and spotless robes of a Vicar of Christ. There are chroniclers who say that he had bribed the electors, and chroniclers who say that he had bullied them. The first charge is not unlikely, as bribery was now becoming common enough on the eve of or during a Conclave, but we cannot check these rumours. Dietrich von Nieheim admits that Cossa nominated another cardinal for the tiara, and the Council of Constance did not impeach the regularity of his election. He was chosen because of his vigour and military ability. Such was the condition of the Papacy that none seemed to care

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that he was "a complete failure and worthless in spiritual matters."

He must have been at that time about forty-three years old: a tall, spare, soldierly-looking man, with large nose and piercing dark grey eyes under bushy eyebrows. After devoting a few days to the customary festivities, he set about the work of enabling Louis of Anjou to displace Ladislaus on the throne of Naples and thus destroy Gregory's main support. It may have been in deference to the feeling of some of the cardinals that he first summoned Benedict and Gregory to resign and asked his bitter enemy Ladislaus—the man who had condemned his brothers—to pay the arrears of sixty thousand ducats which he owed to the Roman See. All three contemptuously refused to recognize him, and, as Ladislaus presently destroyed the fleet of Louis of Anjou and advanced against the Papal troops, the prospect was uncertain. John feverishly sought allies and funds. He conciliated England, where the call for a real Ecumenical Council to depose the three Popes was already heard, by suppressing an obnoxious Bull of Boniface IX. and by other graces, and he contrived—after the blunders of his legates had roused fierce opposition—to get a good deal of money from France. Spain still supported Benedict.

The uncertain element was Germany, where, at the time, the outstanding figure was Sigismund of Hungary. Sigismund had stood aloof from the Council of Pisa. For some years he had diverted all money from the Papal agents to his own pockets, because Boniface had recognized Ladislaus, and he detested the French, who had had much to do with the Council at Pisa. His support was of material importance to John, as owing to the death of Rupert the day after John's election,

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he became the chief candidate for the Empire. To John's delight, Sigismund now sent ambassadors to do homage, and an agreement was reached. The Pope was to validate the appropriation by Sigismund of church-moneys and influence the Electors in his favour, and Sigismund would support John against Ladislaus.<sup>1</sup> But there was still an element of danger and uncertainty. Sigismund had sworn to end the Papal schism, and he was known to be favourable to the summoning of another and more weighty council. Moreover, John, who was a poor diplomatist, made a serious blunder. The elected monarch became, by law of the Empire, King of the Romans without any Papal confirmation; the *imperial* crown and title alone were given by the Pope. Yet John, seeking to magnify his authority, persisted in addressing Sigismund until the anxious days of the Council of Constance, as "Elected to be King."

I may tell very briefly the sequence of events in Italy. After a year at Bologna, John proceeded to Rome and flung his troops upon the Neapolitans. They won the important battle of Rocca Secca, but, owing to the incompetence of the Papal legate who held supreme command, they failed to follow up the success and Ladislaus recovered. In the next few months John heard with increasing alarm that Louis of Anjou had returned in despair to France: that the ablest Papal commander, Sforza, had transferred his services to Naples: that Malatesta of Rimini, the only other supporter of Gregory, was winning success in

<sup>1</sup> We learn from later letters of the Pope that he worked for Sigismund in Germany, especially when a rival "King of the Romans" was elected. See the evidence in Dr. J. Schwerdfeger's *Papst Johann XXIII. und die Wahl Sigismunds zum römischen König* (1895).

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the north: and that the Neapolitans were marching against Rome. He levied taxes on the churches and citizens of Rome until they became restless. He petulantly had an effigy of Sforza hanged on a gallows at Rome. He pressed the sale of indulgences so flagrantly, and by such repellent agents, that the reformers of Bohemia burned his Bull in the streets. He excommunicated Ladislaus and proclaimed a crusade against him; and not a prince in Europe stirred.

Now seriously concerned, John offered to recognize Ladislaus as King of Naples if he would abandon Gregory, and that monarch at once basely deserted his Pope. He ordered the stubborn old man to quit Gaeta, and it is said that the people of Gaeta, who had grown fond of him, had to pay his passage to his last refuge, the lands of the Lord of Rimini. Ladislaus was made Gonfaloniere of the Church, and the Pope promised him 120,000 ducats. But so onerous a peace could not endure. After some mutual charges in the spring of 1413 the Neapolitan troops approached Rome. The Romans assured John that they would eat their children rather than surrender, but, when they saw the Pope and cardinals secure their own position by crossing the river, they opened the gates and admitted the Neapolitans. Their warrior-Pope, surrounded by cardinals who wept for the treasures they had abandoned in Rome, fled to the north, and at length reached Florence. Even here the citizens were afraid to admit him. They assigned him the bishop's palace outside the walls, and from this lowly centre John continued his sale of benefices and indulgences.

One other event will complete the record of John's Pontificate, before we begin the story of his undoing. The abuses of the Roman Curia had excited, or encour-

aged, various hostile movements. There were Lollards in England, and followers of Hus and Jerome of Prague in Bohemia. These vague and unimportant movements—from the Papal point of view—were left to local prelates, but the growing Christian demand for another General Council was disquieting. The Council of Pisa had put itself above the Popes, and grave doctors at many universities argued that a council must effect that reform of the Church which Popes refused to effect. Probably John XXIII. did not appreciate the full significance of this Conciliar movement, but he did see that there was grave danger that a Council would depose him, as well as Benedict and Gregory, unless he controlled it. He, therefore, in 1412, announced that a General Council would be held at Rome, and he reminded prelates that the Council of Pisa had enjoined this. But only a few French and Italian prelates responded to his summons, and a strange accident increased his uneasiness. One day, when all were assembled in St. Peter's, a screech owl issued from a dark corner and perched opposite the Pope. John reddened and perspired, as he gazed into the uncanny eyes of the bird, and at last he left his seat and broke up the sitting. It was there again at the next sitting, and was killed only after a great commotion. A strange form for the Holy Ghost, the mockers said; a dreadful omen for the Pope, said others. Reforms were promised, and the works of Wyclif were condemned, but the Council was too small to have effect and it was prorogued until December 1, 1413.

Meantime John was driven to the north, and from Florence he appealed to Sigismund. Many eyes were turned to Sigismund from various parts of Europe, and that singular monarch took quite seriously the high



function which was thrust upon him of saving and reforming Christendom. He was a man of considerable ability, though it was apt to take the form of cunning rather than statesmanship, but his narrow cupidity, his notorious license in morals, and his general indifference to principle made him an incongruous instrument for the reform of the Church. He at once informed John that the state of the Church was to be submitted to a General Council, and a struggle ensued between the two as to whether it should be held south or north of the Alps. We have the reliable assurance of Leonardo, John's secretary at the time, that the Pope proposed to send two cardinals with full powers to treat, which they were to show to Sigismund, and with secret instructions restricting them. John told this design, with great complacency, to his secretary,<sup>1</sup> though he did not carry it out. The Papal legates met Sigismund at Como in the autumn and were pleased to think that they made an impression on him, but John was dismayed to learn that, on October 30th, the King of the Romans issued a proclamation to the effect that a General Council would be held, under his presidency, at Constance, on All Saints' Day, 1414.

John is described as stricken with fear and grief at the prospect of a council outside Italy, but Sigismund was inflexible. They spent two months together at Piacenza and Lodi, and the Pope must have penetrated the King's design. He already leaned to the plan of deposing the three Popes and electing another. John was compelled, on December 9th, to issue a Bull convoking the Council, and he then went to Bologna to await the attack of the Neapolitans. There, about the middle of August, he received the welcome news that Ladislaus

<sup>1</sup> *Commentarii*, p. 928.

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had been poisoned by the father of one of his mistresses. He proposed to break faith with Sigismund and disavow the Council, but the cardinals restrained him from taking this wild step, and on October 1st he set out for the north, sadly, with a troop of six hundred horse. He had for some time wavered between gloomy apprehensions of a mysterious fate which pursued him and buoyant confidence in his wealth and power.

The last words of his friends at Bologna must have recurred to him again and again as he passed up the autumnal valley of the Adige and entered the snows of the Tirol. He would not return a Pope, they said. In the Arlberg Pass his carriage was overturned, and he exclaimed, as he lay in the snow: "Here I lie, in the name of the devil, and I would have done much better to stop at Bologna." He remained for some days at Meran with Duke Friedrich, whom he made captain-general of the Papal troops, with a salary of six thousand ducats a year. It was well to make a friend of this powerful and discontented vassal of Sigismund. At last, on October 27th, his troops turned the crest of the last low hills before Constance, and he gazed down on the hollow between the guardian mountains. "A trap for foxes," he is said to have muttered. On the following day he rode into Constance, on his richly harnessed white horse, under a canopy of cloth of gold, and occupied the episcopal palace.

For three weeks the snowy roads down the mountain-sides from all directions discharged gay streams of princes and prelates, bishops and abbots, theologians and lawyers, thieves and prostitutes, bankers and acrobats, upon the sleepy old town, until it seemed to burst with a ravening multitude. Something between fifty and a hundred thousand visitors had to be housed and

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entertained, and it is reported by grave observers that more than a thousand prostitutes flocked to Constance in the days of the Council.<sup>1</sup> There were, in the course of time, twenty-nine cardinals, thirty-three archbishops, a hundred and fifty bishops, a hundred and thirty-four abbots, and a hundred doctors of law and divinity: among the latter a certain pale and thin man, Master John Hus, who did not suspect that he had come to be tried on a capital charge. But the Emperor was late—he was crowned at Aachen on November 8th—so the first sitting of the Council, on November 5th, was adjourned to the 16th, and then until the new year. Meantime the thousands of entertainers did their duty, and the city rang day and night with revelry, and a crowd speaking thirty different languages filled the streets and overflowed on to the roofs and into the sheds and even the empty tubs of Constance.

On Christmas morning, two hours after midnight, Emperor Sigismund made a stately entrance from the Lake and a vast crowd attended John's midnight mass. Then the struggle began. John's money circulated freely, yet the view that he must be deposed with the other two was gaining ground. He was gouty and his vigour was prematurely undermined, but he fought for his tiara. Envoys came to represent Benedict and Gregory, and he objected to their being received with

<sup>1</sup> The clergy had, of course, large troops of lay followers, and numbers of lay doctors attended the Council, but we have seen often enough the moral state of the clergy themselves in the Middle Ages. A picturesque summary of the chroniclers is given by Kitto, *Pope John the Twenty-third and Master John Hus of Bohemia*. See also H. Blumenthal's *Die Vorgeschichte des Constanzer Concils* (1897) and, for the proceedings, H. Finke's *Acta Concilii Constantiensis* (1896), and H. von der Hardt's *Magnum Ecumenicum Constantiense Concilium* (1696, etc.).

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honour: he was overruled. He held that none less in rank than a bishop or abbot should vote, and that the voting should be by heads, not nations; and again he was overruled, and his Italian prelates would be outvoted. Then some anonymous Italian put into circulation a memoir on his crimes and vices, and he was greatly alarmed. To avoid scandal, however,—for John admitted some of the accusations,—it was suppressed, but it was decided that he must abdicate. After some evasive correspondence, he promised to abdicate “if and when Peter de Luna and Angelo Corario” did the same, and on March 7th he was compelled to embody the formula in a Bull. He became ill and desperate, and there were rumours that he was about to fly. Sigismund put guards at all the gates, but refused to imprison him as the English, headed by the fiery Bishop of Salisbury, demanded.

On March 20th, Duke Friedrich of Tirol drew all Constance to a grand tournament outside the city, and in the midst of it he was noticed to receive a message and leave the ground. Presently it was learned that the Pope, disguised as a groom, had slipped out of the gate on a poor horse, with two companions, and Friedrich had joined them at Schaffhausen. Sigismund sternly forbade the dissolution of the Council, laid a heavy punishment on his vassal, and sent some of the cardinals to see John. The Pope declared that he had left solely on account of his illness; he would abdicate and not interfere with the Council, but the cardinals must join him at once or be excommunicated. The Council, now led by the great Gerson and other strong French doctors, ignored the Pope, and declared that it had, direct from Christ, a power to which Popes must bow. As Sigismund’s troops were after them, John

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and Friedrich fled farther, and at last John quarrelled with his supporter and fled in disguise across the Black Forest to Freiburg. He arrived within reach of Burgundy, whose Duke was friendly, and he demanded better terms. He would resign on condition that he was appointed Perpetual Legate for the whole of Italy, with a pension of 30,000 florins; the alternative in his mind seems to have been a court at Avignon under the protection of the Duke of Burgundy.

The end of his adventures is well known. The burghers of Freiburg refused to protect him and he fled to Breisar, where the envoys of the Council came to press for his resignation. He put on his rough disguise once more, and made off with a troop of Austrian cavalry, but Friedrich, to obtain a mitigation of his own sentence, betrayed him. For several days he miserably resisted the pressure of the envoys, weeping and wailing piteously, and on May 2d the Council summoned him to appear before it within nine days to answer charges of heresy, schism, simony, and immorality. On the seventh day a troop of horse came for him, but he was ill and irresolute. On May 14th the patience of the Council was exhausted; it suspended him from office and ordered the public trial of the charges which had already been examined and on which a mass of evidence had been taken. Two days later the great assembly of prelates and doctors drew up the appalling indictment, in seventy-two articles, of Baldassare Cossa. In the main the charges referred to those acts of simony, bribery, corruption, and tyranny which I have recounted, but it should be added that he was described as "addicted to the flesh, the dregs of vice, a mirror of infamy" (art. 6), and "guilty of poisoning, murder, and persistent addiction to vices of the flesh" (art 29). The

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worst charges of Dietrich were solemnly endorsed by the gravest lawyers and priests of Europe.

John lay, prostrate and in tears, in an inn at Rudolphzell. He wished to submit a defence, but a few friendly cardinals advised him to submit, and when, on May 26th, he heard that the Council had endorsed the indictment, he made no further resistance. He was deposed on the 29th and accepted the sentence with words of humility and repentance. A few days later the wretched man was consigned to the castle of Gottlieben, and then to a castle at Mannheim. There was, in the following year, a futile attempt to rescue him, and he was confined in the castle of Heidelberg, where he remained three years, with a cook and two chaplains of his once magnificent establishment, composing verses on the vanity of earthly things. The hollow words of his consecration-ceremony, *Sic transit gloria mundi*, had for him assumed a terrible reality.

How Gregory resigned, and Benedict retired with his tawdry court to a rocky fortress of his, and the Council burned John Hus and appointed a new Pope, may be read in history.<sup>1</sup> Martin left Cossa in Heidelberg, but in the spring of 1419 his keeper was heavily bribed and he was allowed to escape to Italy. It must have moved many when, as Martin officiated at the altar in Florence cathedral, the familiar figure of Baldassare Cossa broke from the throng and knelt humbly at his feet. He was restored to the rank of cardinal, and, apart from a foolish attempt, a few months later, to

<sup>1</sup> I have not dwelt on Hus, as the Pope had little to do with him. For some time, thinking to please the Emperor, John protected Hus from his rabid opponents. The shameful ensnarement of Hus seems to have been done without John's approval, and he was deposed before the trial of Hus began.

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form a Lombard league against the Emperor, he lived peacefully in the house of Cosmo de' Medici until his death in December (1419). He was buried with pomp by the Republic, and the fine monument which Cosmo raised in the Baptistery shows that some appreciable qualities must have been united with his undisputed vices.

## CHAPTER XII

### ALEXANDER VI., THE BORGIA-POPE

THREE grave issues had been laid before the Council of Constance: the repression of heresy, the ending of the Schism, and the reform of the Church "in head and members." In the third year of their labours the prelates and doctors put an end to the Schism and elected Martin V.; and the new Pope soon put an end to the Council before it could reform the Church. Martin was a Colonna of high ideals and considerable ability; but he was not well disposed to this democratic method of reform by Council, nor was he strong enough to sacrifice Papal revenue by suppressing the worst disorder, the Papal fiscal system. He returned to Rome, and the task of restoring the city and the Papal estates demanded such resources that he dare not abandon the corrupt practices of the Curia.

Two worthy and able Pontiffs followed Martin, and equally failed to bring about a reform. Eugenius IV., an austere, though harsh and autocratic, Venetian, found that his attempts to recover Papal territory and curb the Conciliar party would not permit him to reform the financial system. The reformers forced on him the Council of Basle in 1431, but its renewal of the Schism and creation of a last Anti-Pope, when he resisted its proposals, discredited the Conciliar move-



ment. Reform must come from without: Popes and cardinals could not effect it, and in the prevailing creed there was no canonical basis for the action of a Council in defiance of them. Nicholas V., a quiet man of letters, crowned the financial and political work of his two predecessors with a great artistic restoration. He left politics to Æneas Sylvius and opened the gates of Rome to the fairer form of the Renaissance. Greek artists and scholars were now pouring into Italy—Constantinople fell to the Turks during this Pontificate (1453)—and fostering the growth of the Humanist movement. Rome began to assume its rich mantle of mediæval art, and the Papacy seemed to smile once more on a docile and prosperous Christendom.

But the restoration had been accomplished by an evasion of reform, and the new culture was sharpening the pens of critics. One of these inquisitive scholars, Lorenzo Valla, was actually declaring that the "Donation of Constantine" was a forgery. Many denounced, in fiery prose or with the cold cynicism of the epigram, the luxury and vice of the higher clergy. Heresy hardened in Bohemia, and, among the stricter ranks of the faithful, men like Nicholas of Cusa, John Capistrano, and Savonarola were raising ideals which, if they rebuked the laity, far more solemnly rebuked the clergy. And just at this critical period the Papacy entered upon a development which ended in the enthronement of Alexander VI., Julius II., and Leo X.; the Reformation inevitably followed.

At the death of Nicholas V., the Orsini and Colonna cardinals came to a deadlock in their struggle for the Papacy, and a neutral and innocuous alternative was sought in Alfonso Borgia (or, in Spanish style, Borja), a

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Spanish canonist of some scholarly distinction. Calixtus III., as he named himself, was a gouty valetudinarian who lay abed most of the day in pious conversation with friars. He very properly disdained the new art and culture, and saved the Papal funds to meet the advancing Turks. He had, however, one weakness, which was destined to prove very costly to the Papacy. There was a tradition of nepotism at Rome, and Calixtus had nephews. While he was Bishop of Valencia, his sister Isabella had come to him from Xativa, their native place, with her two sons, Pedro Luis and Rodrigo. When, in 1455, he became Pope, he sent Rodrigo to study at Bologna and enriched him with benefices. Pedro Luis was reserved for a lay career, and Juan Luis Mila, son of another sister, was sent with Rodrigo to Bologna.

At this time Rodrigo Borgia was in his twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year: an exceptionally handsome young Spaniard, with the most charming Spanish manners, and with rich sensuous lips and an eye for maidens which escaped his uncle's notice. He and his cousin were, within a year, made cardinals. In December (1456) he was appointed legate for the March of Ancona, and in the following May he was, in spite of the murmurs of the cardinals, promoted to the highest and most lucrative office at the Court, the Vice-Chancellorship. His elder brother became Duke of Spoleto, Gonfaloniere of the Papal army, and (in 1457) Prefect of Rome. Other needy Spaniards came over the sea in droves, and the disgusted Romans were soon ousted from the best positions. In 1458, however, Calixtus fell ill, and was reported to be dead; and the Romans chased the "Catalans" out of the city. Rodrigo at first retired with his more hated brother, but he cour-

ageously returned on August 6th, just in time to witness the actual death of his uncle.

Æneas Sylvius mounted the throne, under the name of Pius II., but the Humanists looked in vain for favour to that genial diplomatist, traveller, and *littérateur*. He had reached a gouty and repentant age, and his one pre-occupation was to stir a lethargic Christendom to a crusade against the Turks. Cardinal Rodrigo had been useful to him, reserving a vacant benefice for him now and again, so he kept his place and continued to win for himself wealthy bishoprics and abbeys. For a moment, in 1460, Rodrigo trembled. Pius had sent him to direct the building of a cathedral at Siena, and the Pope startled his Vice-Chancellor with a stern letter. Rodrigo and another cardinal, the Pope heard, had entertained a number of very frivolous young ladies for five hours in a private garden. They had excluded the parents of these girls, and there had been "dances of the most licentious character" and other things which "modesty forbids to recount." It was the talk of the town.<sup>1</sup> From the kind of dances and

<sup>1</sup> The letter is given in Raynaldus, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, year 1460, n. 31, and is translated in Bishop Mathew's *Life and Times of Rodrigo Borgia* (1912), p. 35. It is misrepresented in Baron Corvo's *Chronicles of the House of Borgia* (1901, p. 64). The chief apologist for Alexander, A. Leonetti (*Papa Alessandro VI.*, 1880), made the easy suggestion that the letter was a forgery, but Cardinal Hergenroether found the original in the Vatican archives. See the able essay by Comte H. de L'Épinois (another Catholic writer) in the *Revue des Questions Historiques* (April 1, 1881), p. 367. He shows, by the use of original documents, that the apologetic efforts of Ollivier, Leonetti, and a few others, are futile. Of these efforts the leading Catholic historian of the Papacy, Dr. L. Pastor, observes: "In the face of such a perversion of the truth, it is the duty of the historian to show that the evidence against Rodrigo is so strong as to render it impossible to restore his reputation" (*The History of the Popes*, ii., 542).

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women which Alexander had in the Vatican long afterwards we can imagine the things which startled Siena. Rodrigo urged that there had been exaggeration, but the Pope, while admitting the possibility of this, again sternly bade him mind his behaviour.

The long discussion of the morals of Alexander VI. has, in fact, now ended in entire agreement that by the year 1460, at least, he was openly immoral. The Papal and other documents relating to his children—at least six in number—which have been found in the Vatican archives and in the private archives of the Duke of Ossuna show an extraordinary laxity at Rome. There is a Bull of Sixtus IV., dated November 5, 1481, legitimizing the birth of Pedro Luis Borgia, “son of a cardinal-deacon and an unmarried woman”; he is described as “a young man,” and was probably born about 1460. There is the marriage contract of Girolama Borgia, dated 1482, which refers to the “paternal love” of the Vice-Chancellor; she must then have been at least thirteen years old. There is a document, dated October 1, 1480, dispensing from the bar of illegitimacy Cæsar Borgia, “son of a cardinal-bishop and a married woman”; and he is described as in his sixth year, or born about 1475. There is a deed of gift of Rodrigo to Juan Borgia, “his carnal son,” whose birth must fall either in 1474 or 1476. There are documents referring to the celebrated Lucrezia, whose birth is generally put in 1478, and to Jofre Borgia, who was born about 1480; and there are documents from which we have—as we shall see later—the gravest reason to conclude that the Pope had a son in 1497 or 1498, when he approached his seventieth year. Except that a few hesitate, in face of the strongest evidence, to admit the last child, no serious historian of any school now questions these

facts, and the evidence need not be examined in detail.<sup>1</sup>

At least four of these children were born of Vannoza (or Giovannoza) dei Catanei, a Roman lady who was the Cardinal's mistress from about 1460 to 1486. The story that she was an orphan entrusted to his care and seduced by him is not reliable. Nothing is confidently known about her early years, but her epitaph has been discovered, and it honours her, not only for her "signal probity and great piety," but because she was the mother of Cæsar, Juan, Jofre, and Lucrezia Borgia. Pedro Luis and Girolama may have been born of an earlier mistress, but it is not at all certain. Vannoza, who married three times, is constantly mentioned, by the ambassadors, as Borgia's mistress. She had a handsome mansion near the Cardinal's palace and the Vatican, and she entertained there and in her country house long after Borgia became Pope and replaced her by a younger mistress.

These monuments of parentage are almost the only

<sup>1</sup> The decisive documents, from the archives of the Duke of Ossuna, are published by Thuasne in his edition of Burchard's *Diarium* (Appendix to vol. iii.). Dr. Pastor (ii., 453) has a good summary of them, and there is other evidence in the *Lucrezia Borgia* of Gregorovius. See also the essay of Comte H. de L'Épinois, quoted above, and "Don Rodrigo de Borja und seine Söhne," by C. R. von Höfler, in the *Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Bd. 73. The chief original authorities are J. Burchard (*Diarium*, edited by Thuasne, 3 vols., 1884) and S. Infessura (*Diario*, in Muratori, iii.), and the despatches of the Italian ambassadors at Rome. Burchard and Infessura are gossipy and hostile, and must be controlled. Recent works on the Borgias are too apt to reproduce lightly the romantic statements of later Italian historians or contemporary Neapolitan enemies. The work of Bishop Mathew, to which I have referred, is less judicious than his volume on Hildebrand. Bishop Creighton's *History of the Papacy* is rather too indulgent to Alexander and needs supplementing by the documents in Pastor and Thuasne.

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evidences of the existence of Cardinal Borgia under Pius II. and Paul II. In 1471 a pious and learned Franciscan friar, Sixtus IV., assumed the tiara, and it is an indication of the strange temper of the times that under such a man the Papal Court became more corrupt than ever.<sup>1</sup> Sixtus vigorously restored the secular rule of the Papacy and encouraged the artistic and cultural development, but his nepotism was shameless and profoundly harmful. One of the nephews whom he drew from the obscurity of a Franciscan monastery and made a prince of the Church was Pietro Riario, who spent 260,000 ducats,<sup>2</sup> and within two years of his promotion wore out his life in the most flagrant dissipation. His immense palace, with its magnificent treasures, its five hundred servants in scarlet silk, and its prodigious banquets, was the home of every species of vice; and it is said that his chief mistress, Tiresia, flaunted eight hundred ducats' worth of pearls on her embroidered slippers. Another nephew was the sterner, though also immoral, Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere—also brought from a monastery—whom we shall know as Julius II. Other cardinals promoted by the friar-Pope were equally notorious for their indulgence and for the unscrupulous quest of money to sustain it.

<sup>1</sup> M. Brosch, the scholarly author of a study of Julius II. (*Papst Julius II.*, 1878), observes that research in the Rovere archives has discovered no trace of the Paolo Riario who is assigned as the father of Sixtus's nephews, and concludes that they were his natural sons. But Paolo Riario is expressly mentioned in the funeral oration on Cardinal Pietro Riario, and is more fully described in Leone Cobelli's *Cronache Forlivesi*. There is no sound reason to impeach the chastity of this Pope, as even Creighton does.

<sup>2</sup> The gold ducat is estimated at about ten shillings of English money, but probably this does not express its full purchasing power.

From the Bulls of Sixtus which I have quoted, it is clear that he was acquainted with the vices of Borgia, yet he sent him as legate to Spain, to excite interest in the crusade, in the spring of 1472. In spite of some compliments, it does not appear that Borgia did more than impress his countrymen with his display and gallantry, and he returned toward the close of 1473 and built one of the most stately palaces in the rich quarter which was now rising round the Vatican. When Sixtus died, in 1484, he made a resolute effort to get the tiara. The dispatches of the ambassadors who now represented the northern States at the Vatican afford us a valuable means of checking the chroniclers, and they put it beyond question that Borgia and Giuliano della Rovere entered upon a corrupt rivalry for the Papacy. Giuliano was now a tall, serious-looking man of forty: reserved in speech and brusque in manners, a good soldier and most ambitious courtier. Although he was known to have children, he kept a comparatively sober household and reserved his wealth for special occasions of display and for bribery. Borgia was his senior by thirteen years, but he had the buoyancy, gaiety, and sensuality of a young man. He, too, kept a moderate table and gambled little, but his amours were notorious and one could not please him better than by providing a ballet of handsome women. To these wealthy "upstarts" the haughty Orsini and Colonna were bitterly opposed, and the announcement of the death of Sixtus let loose a flood of passion. The splendid mansion of Count Riario, another nephew of the late Pope, was sacked, the Orsini entrenched themselves on Monte Giordano, and the other cardinals filled their halls with armed men.

In the Conclave it was soon apparent that neither

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Rodrigo nor Giuliano could command the necessary two thirds of the votes, and they agreed to adopt Cardinal Cibò, a Genoese noble who had outburned the passions of youth before he entered the service of the Church. During the night of August 28-29, when the supporters of Cardinal Barbo (who seemed to be sure of election) had confidently retired to their cells, Rodrigo and Giuliano, by intrigue and bribery, secured a majority for Cibò.<sup>1</sup> He became Innocent VIII. the next morning, and during the eight years of his amiable and futile Pontificate the College of Cardinals steadily sank. Innocent's natural son was drawn from his decent obscurity and made one of the richest and fastest nobles of Rome; and women were hardly safe even in their own homes when Franceschetto Cibò roamed the streets at night, with his cutthroats, in one of his wine-flushed moods. He took so ardently to the new cardinalial pastime of gambling that in one night he lost 100,000 ducats to Cardinal Riario. Cardinal la Balue left at his death a fortune of 100,000 ducats. Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, brother of the ruler of Milan, was the leading sportsman of Roman society. Cardinal Lorenzo Cibò owed his red hat to the fortunate circumstance that he was an illegitimate son of the Pope's brother. Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici, who was one day to be Leo X., had received the tonsure in his eighth year and the title of cardinal in his fourteenth. Cardinals Savelli, Sclafenati, and Sanseverino were members of the fast and luxurious group. Each cardinal maintained a large palace, with hundreds of gay-liveried servants and ready swordsmen, and the wealthier seem to have studied with care the pages in which Macrobius describes the exquisite or colossal banquets of the older

<sup>1</sup> See the dispatches quoted in Thuasne's Burchard, vol. ii.



pagans. Each—apart from the minority of grave and virtuous cardinals—had his faction in the city, and, as carnival time approached, they were engrossed for weeks in the preparation of the superb cars and brilliant troops of horse by which each sought to prove his superior fitness for the chair of Gregory I. and Gregory VII. Innocent VIII. smiled; and the thunders gathered beyond the Alps.

The state of Rome was in accord with the state of the Sacred College. We may hesitate to believe Infessura when he tells us that, if criminals were by some chance arrested, they bought their liberty at the Vatican; but we have in Burchard's Diary a sombre, incidental indication of the condition of Rome. There is in modern literature some tendency to look with indulgent eye on the coloured gaiety of late mediæval Rome, but—to say nothing of the ideals which the cardinals professed—the insecurity of life and property and the widespread brutality show that this license was far removed from genuine Humanism. Some years later, when Rodrigo's son Juan was murdered, a boatman said, when they asked why he had not reported seeing a body cast into the river, that it was not customary to have any inquiry made into a nightly occurrence of that kind. Rodrigo Borgia, the Vice-Chancellor, paid no heed to this condition of the city. He added year by year to the long list of his bishoprics and emoluments, and prepared to renew the struggle for the tiara. He lost, or discarded, Vannozza when she married her third husband in 1486 and entered upon a more sordid and equally notorious *liaison*. His cousin, Adriana Orsini, had charge of a young orphan, Giulia Farnese, a very beautiful, golden-haired girl. She married Adriana's son, Orso Orsini, in 1489—her fifteenth year—and at the same time be-

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came the Cardinal's mistress. Adriana was rewarded with a considerable influence and the charge of the young Lucrezia Borgia.<sup>1</sup>

The death of Innocent on July 25, 1492, led to fierce intrigue and passionate encounters. There were more than two hundred murders in Rome during the fourteen days before the Conclave, for which twenty-two cardinals were, on August 6th, immured in the Sistine Chapel. Giuliano della Rovere had spoiled his prospect by too patent a use of his influence on Innocent VIII., and Borgia set himself to win the next most important rival, Ascanio Sforza. Historians sometimes smile at the statement of Infessura, that four mule-loads of silver passed from Borgia's palace to that of Sforza, but it is not improbable. For some centuries there had been a custom (abolished a few years later by Leo X.) of sacking the palace of the cardinal who was elected Pope, and it was not unusual to take precautions. Borgia may have sent the silver on this pretext, as Infessura suggests, and he would hardly expect it to be returned. It is, in fact, now certain that Sforza was bribed with gifts far more valuable than Borgia's table silver; Borgia offered, and afterwards gave him, his splendid palace, the Vice-Chancellorship, the bishopric of Erlan (worth 10,000 ducats a year), and other appointments. The sober Cardinal Colonna accepted the abbey of Subiaco (or 2000 ducats a year). Eleven cardinals seem to have sold their votes, and Borgia already had three supporters and his own vote. He secured his majority and hastily retired

<sup>1</sup> I may repeat that I am not reproducing disputed statements, or relying on uncertain chronicles, in these chapters. The evidence may be examined in Thuasne, Pastor, L'Épinois, Creighton, Gregorovius, and von Reumont (*Geschichte der Stadt Rom*, 3 vols., 1867-8).

behind the altar, where Papal vestments of three sizes were laid out, and the genial Romans presently roared their greetings to Alexander VI.<sup>1</sup>

Rome and Italy then sustained their parts in the comedy. Alexander, although now sixty years old, was a vigorous and capable man, and some advantage would be expected from his Pontificate. But one's sense of humour is excited when one reads in Burchard's Diary, or in the letter (reproduced by Thuasne) written by the General of the Camaldolite monks, the description of the rejoicings at Rome. After the coronation at St. Peter's on August 27th, Alexander received, on the steps of the great church, the greetings of the orators who represented the northern cities. One wonders what was the countenance of the massed prelates and nobles when the Genoese orator read: "Thou art so adorned with the glory of virtue, the merit of discipline, the holiness of thy life . . . that we must hesitate to say whether it is more proper to offer thee to the Pontificate or to offer that most sacred and glorious dignity to thee." And, as Alexander passed in stately procession to the Lateran, he read on the triumphal arches which adorned the route, such maxims as "Chastity and Charity," and "Great was Rome under Cæsar, now is she most great. Alexander the Sixth reigns: Cæsar was a man, this is a God."

I make no apology for inserting these apparently trivial details in so condensed a narrative. They, most of all, illumine the next momentous phase of the history of the Papacy. In that year, 1492, a little German

<sup>1</sup> See the evidence in Thuasne (ii., 610), L'Épinois (pp. 389-91), and Pastor (v., 382). A writer in the *American Catholic Quarterly Review* (1900, p. 262) observes: "That Borgia secured his election through the rankest simony is a fact too well authenticated to admit a doubt."

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boy, named Martin Luther, sat at his books in the remote town of Mansfeld.

Infessura records that Alexander opened his Pontificate with large promises and small instalments of reform. He was going to improve the condition of Rome and the Church, to pacify Italy, and to check the Turks; he would remove his children from Rome and reduce the number of sinecures at the Curia. He did, in fact, make a drastic beginning of the administration of justice, and even appointed certain hours during which he would himself hear grievances. Possibly he had a sincere mood of reform; though we are not disposed to be charitable when we recall the appalling levity with which, a few years later, after the murder of his son, he returned to vicious ways. Whatever his initial mood was, he soon entered upon courses which made his Pontificate one of the most degraded in the annals of the Papacy. Modern research has discredited some of the most romantic crimes attributed to him, but it leaves on his memory an indictment which no eager search for good qualities can materially lessen.

He sustained the scandal of his personal conduct until the end of his life, and I will dismiss it briefly. During the first four years of his Pontificate, the youthful Giulia Orsini was his chief *favorita*—others are occasionally mentioned with that title by the ambassadors—and she was known to the wits of Rome as “the Spouse of Christ.” She and Adriana Orsini and Girolama (the Pope’s elder daughter) are described as “the heart and eyes of Alexander,” and suitors had to seek their favour. When Giulia’s brother Alexander received the red hat (Sept. 20, 1493), Rome gave the future Pope—who was by no means without personal merit—the name of “The Petticoat Cardinal.” When

her daughter Laura was born in 1497, the Pope was generally believed to be the father; though that remains a mere rumour. Pucci, in one of his dispatches, gives us a quaint picture. Giulia lived in Lucrezia's palace, apart from her husband, and, when the ambassador called one day in 1493, she dressed her long golden hair in his presence, and insisted that he must see the baby; and he remarks that the baby was "so very like the Pope that one can readily believe he was the father." Giulia was an almost indispensable figure for some years at the domestic (and even greater than domestic) festivities in the Vatican, laughing with the cardinals at the prurient comedies and still more prurient dances which enlivened the sacred palace.<sup>1</sup>

The last child attributed to him, though not accepted by all the authorities, seems to have been born in 1496 (his sixty-sixth year). There is a document dated September 1, 1501, legitimizing a certain Juan Borgia, but there are two versions of this document.<sup>2</sup> The first version describes him as the child of Cæsar Borgia: the second says that he was born "not of the said Duke, but of us [Alexander] and the said married woman." Creighton made the singular suggestion that possibly Alexander was giving prestige to an illegitimate offspring of his son, but it is now agreed that the second version is the more authentic; it was to be kept in reserve for some grave dispute of his rights. The distinguished Venetian Senator Sanuto tells us<sup>3</sup> that,

<sup>1</sup> Again I may refer to the convenient summaries of the evidence in Pastor (v., 417), L'Épinois (398), Gregorovius (Appendix, no. 11, etc.), and Creighton (iv., 203).

<sup>2</sup> There are copies, reproduced by Gregorovius, in the archives at the Vatican, at Modena, and at Ossuna.

<sup>3</sup> *Diarii* (ed. F. Stefani), i., 369.

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according to letters received from the Venetian ambassador at Rome and from private persons, the Pope had, about this time, a child by a married Roman lady, with the connivance of her father, and that the angry husband slew his father-in-law and stuck his head on a pole, with the inscription: "Head of my father-in-law, who prostituted his daughter to the Pope." These concurrent testimonies are grave. Most historians now rightly reject the charge that Alexander was intimate with his daughter Lucrezia, since it rests only on bitterly hostile Neapolitan gossip; but we cannot so easily set aside the persistent statements of the ambassadors that a new *favorita* appears at the Vatican from time to time. These were sometimes ladies of Lucrezia's suite.

Lucrezia, a merry, childish-looking, golden-haired girl, with her father's high spirits and constant smile, is not likely to have remained virtuous in such surroundings, but there is no serious evidence of incest. Before her father's election she was betrothed to a Spanish youth of moderate family, but her father cancelled the espousals and married her, at the Vatican, in 1493, to Giovanni Sforza. She was then, it is calculated, fifteen years old. Twelve cardinals and a hundred and fifty of the great ladies of Rome attended the wedding; and some of the prettier ladies remained to sup with the Pope and cardinals, and applaud the loose comedies he provided. Giulia and Lucrezia were present. When the Pope's policy estranged him from Milan, he forced Lucrezia's husband to swear that the marriage had not been consummated, and dissolved it. It seems probable that Giovanni, in revenge, then put into circulation the suggestion of incest. Lucrezia married Alfonso of Naples, who was murdered by her

brother in 1500. She then married the son of the Duke of Ferrara: and there is perhaps no more terrible indictment of the Papal Court under Alexander than the fact that, when his daughter was removed from it to Ferrara, she earned, and kept until her death, a just repute for virtue and benevolence.

These marriages introduce us to Alexander's political activity, on which some recent historians have passed a somewhat lenient judgment. Apart, however, from the treachery and brutality with which his aims were often enforced, we shall find that at his death he left the Papacy almost landless and impoverished, and we must conclude that his chief objects were his personal security and the aggrandizement of his children.

At the time of Alexander's accession, the duchy of Milan was improperly held by Lodovico Sforza, brother of the Cardinal Ascanio, who sought to convert his temporary regency into a permanent sovereignty. In this ambition he had the support of France, while Ferrante of Naples endeavoured to enforce the claim of the rightful Duke, Giovanni Galeazzo. Alexander's indebtedness to Ascanio bound him at once to the Sforzas, and the imprudence of Ferrante in helping his commander, Virginio Orsini, to purchase from the nephew of the late Pope certain towns which Alexander regarded as Papal fiefs, gave him an occasion for animosity. Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere was implicated in this sale, and when the Pope angrily rebuked him, he fled to Ostia and fortified that commanding town. Alarmed at this cohesion of his enemies and the support of their designs by Florence, Alexander entered into a counter-league with Milan, Venice, Siena, Ferrara, and Mantua, and married his daughter to Giovanni Sforza. Ferrante, however, appealed to Spain, sub-

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mitting (with the support of Cardinal della Rovere) that the corrupt election and profligate life of Alexander demanded the attention of a General Council, and the Pope sought a compromise. The matter of the towns in Romagna was adjusted, Alexander's son Jofre was betrothed to an illegitimate daughter of Alfonso of Calabria, and his younger son, Juan, Duke of Gandia, was wedded to a Spanish princess. Cæsar was destined for the Church and was made a cardinal on September 20, 1493. As Alexander had sworn before his election not to create new cardinals, and now calmly absolved himself from his promise and promoted several, the hostile cardinals again angrily deserted him.

Ferrante died on January 27, 1494, and the Pope had to confront a delicate problem. France, instigated by Milan, pressed a claim to the kingdom of Naples, and Alfonso II. demanded the investiture in succession to Ferrante. Charles of France refused to be consoled with the Golden Rose which Alexander sent him in refusing to recognize his claim to Naples, and he threatened a General Council or a separation of the French Church. When Alexander proceeded to take Ostia by force, driving Cardinal Giuliano to France, and sent Cæsar to crown Alfonso at Naples, the French monarch announced that he would lead his army into Italy in order to recover Naples, to reform the Church, and to conquer the Turks. The latter purpose furnished the Pope with a pretext for a disgraceful move. Djem, the brother of the Sultan Bajazet, had been enjoying the dissipations of Rome since 1489, and Bajazet paid the Papacy 40,000 ducats a year to keep his younger brother in this gilded captivity. Since Alexander's accession, Bajazet had refused to pay the fee, and the Pope now wrote to the Sultan to say that the King of



France was coming to seize Djem and make him the pretext for a war on the Turks; Bajazet must at once send 40,000 ducats to enable him to resist the French. The Sultan sent the money, but his and the Pope's envoy were captured by Cardinal della Rovere's brother, and were relieved of the money and the Sultan's letter. When this letter was published, Christendom learned with horror that the Sultan had offered its Pope 300,000 ducats if he would have Djem assassinated.<sup>1</sup>

Of the war which followed little need be said. As the victorious French advanced, Alexander tremblingly vacillated. At one moment he imprisoned the pro-French cardinals, and then released them; and at another moment he packed his treasures for flight, and then decided to meet the French King. Alfonso bewailed that the Pope's arm was too weak or too cowardly to launch an anathema against the invader. In the end the Pope met and disarmed Charles. To the intense disgust of Giuliano della Rovere, who had come with the King in expectation of the tiara, he persuaded Charles that an Italian, even in the chair of Peter, could hardly be expected to lead a saintly life; and to the equal indignation of Alfonso he, while refusing to recognize Charles's claim to the throne of Naples, abandoned the Neapolitan alliance and gave his son Cæsar as a hostage of his good behaviour. With similar treachery to the Sultan he abandoned Djem to Charles, yet stipulated that the yearly 40,000 ducats should still go to the Papal treasury.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Alexander said that the letter published was a forgery, and some historians have sought to prove this by internal evidence. It is the general feeling of recent authorities that the letter is, at least in substance, genuine. See Creighton (iv., Appendix 9) and Pastor (v., 429).

<sup>2</sup> Djem died shortly afterwards, and it was rumoured that Alexander

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Charles took Naples, and soon learned that the versatile Pope had, behind his back, entered into a league against him with Maximilian of Germany, Ferdinand of Spain, Venice, and Lodovico Sforza. Alexander prudently quitted Rome when the French King returned, and flung after him a feeble threat of anathema, as he was cutting his way through the allies. But by the aggrandizement of his family he made an evil use of the peace which followed. Cæsar was made legate for Naples and his nephew Juan legate for Perugia; and to his favourite son Juan, Duke of Gandia, he assigned the important Papal fief of the duchy of Benevento, to be held by him and his heirs for ever. Even loyal cardinals grumbled at the scandal, while the outspoken and more distant critics spread in every country the story of his private life. Alexander, delivered from the menace both of France and Naples, cast aside all restraint. But his gaiety was soon darkened by a grave tragedy, and it is, perhaps, the most precise and most damning characterization of the man to record that even this appalling catastrophe, occurring near the close of his seventh decade of life, did not disturb for more than a few months the licentious course of his conduct.

On June 14, 1497, Vannozza gave a banquet to her sons and a few friends in the suburbs. Cæsar and Juan returned to the city together, and were joined by a masked man who had for some weeks been seen in communication with the young Duke. Juan left his brother with a light hint that he had an assignation, and the same night he was murdered and his body

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had earned the 300,000 ducats by administering a slow poison before he left Rome. But the better authorities tell us that the weakened and dissolute youth contracted a chill and died of bronchitis.

thrown into the Tiber. We are as far as contemporaries were from identifying the murderer. That it was Cæsar Borgia few serious historians now believe. That suggestion did not arise until nine months after the murder, and the motives alleged are not convincing. It is more plausibly claimed that the Sforzas and the Orsini adopted this means of striking at the heart of the Pontiff, but it is equally possible that Juan incurred the penalty of some dangerous seduction. I am concerned only with Alexander. Appalled by this sudden clouding of his prosperity, the Pope summoned his cardinals and announced with tears that he would remove his children from Rome and abandon his corrupt ways. Six cardinals were at once appointed to draw up a scheme of Church-reform, and the draft of a Bull, which is still to be seen in the Vatican archives, shows with what devotion Cardinals Costa and Caraffa and their colleagues applied themselves to the long-desired task. But before the end of the year Alexander had returned to his vices and abandoned the idea of reform. He informed the cardinals that he wished to release Cæsar from membership of their College, in order that he might be free to contract an exalted marriage and pursue his ambition; and it was then (December, 1497) that he brought about the shameless divorce of Lucrezia from Giovanni Sforza. The Vatican chambers resumed their nightly gaiety.

The Orsini and the Colonna now buried their ancient and deadly feud and united with Naples, and the demand for a General Council was ominously echoed in Germany and Spain. Alexander sought at first a counterpoise in Naples, and wished to marry Cæsar and Lucrezia into the family of Alfonso. After some hesitation, and with marked reluctance, Alfonso II. gave

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his natural son Alfonso to Lucrezia, but he refused, in spite of the political advantage, to degrade his daughter Carlotta by a marriage with Cæsar. It is not immaterial to observe that Cæsar had, like four other cardinals of the Church, contracted the "French disease" which was then so fiercely punishing the vice of Italy. It happened that at that time Louis XII. sought a divorce, and, at first in the hope of bringing pressure on Naples, Cæsar, after resigning the cardinalate on August 17th, was sent to gratify and impress the French Court. Even Giuliano della Rovere, who lived quietly at Avignon, was induced to enter the intrigue. Carlotta and her father still disdained the connexion, but Louis offered Cæsar his young and beautiful niece, Charlotte d'Albret, and the counties of Valentinois and Diois. They were married on May 22d (1499), and the Papal policy entered upon a new phase.

The Papacy and Venice, preferring their selfish interests to the welfare of Italy, allied themselves with France, and for the hundredth time an invading army descended upon the plains of Lombardy. Spain and Portugal were now angrily threatening to have the Pope—who, with equal warmth, accused Isabella herself of unchastity—tried by a General Council for his scandalous actions, and he and Cæsar formed the design of establishing, with the aid of the French, a strong principality for Cæsar in central Italy. The Neapolitan alliance was discarded, and Bulls were issued to the effect that the Lords of Rimini, Pesaro, Imola, Faenza, Forli, Urbino, and Camerino had failed to discharge their feudal duties to the Papacy and had forfeited their fiefs. The victorious progress of Cæsar in these territories was checked for a time by a revolt at Milan, but that city was retaken by the French in 1500. The

successful Jubilee of 1500, which at one time drew 100,000 pilgrims to Rome, filled the coffers and helped to exalt the spirit of the Pope. His character, indeed, seemed to become more buoyant and defiant as his age advanced. During that year he had a narrow escape from death, owing to the fall of the roof of the Sala de' Pape, and Lucrezia's husband was cut to pieces in his chamber by the soldiers, and at the command, of Cæsar. These events hardly dimmed the joy of the Pope. Cæsar received the Golden Rose and was made Gonfaloniere of the Church; and he was permitted to appropriate a large share of the Jubilee funds and to exact large sums from the cardinals whom the Pope promoted in 1500. Meantime, the ambassadors relate, Giulia Orsini retained her influence over the seventy-year old Pope, and other *favorite* made a transient appearance at the Vatican.

The next two years were employed in the establishment of Cæsar's power in Romagna and the reduction of the Pope's personal enemies. Louis of France and Ferdinand of Spain drew up their famous, or infamous, scheme for the partition of Naples, and Alexander conveniently discovered for them, and proclaimed in a Bull, that Federigo of Naples had, by an alliance with the Turks, become a traitor to Christendom. The fall of Naples involved the ruin of the Colonna, and they and the Savelli were condemned to lose their estates for rebellion against the Holy See. From part of these estates the Pope formed the duchy of Sermo-neta for Lucrezia's two-year-old son, Rodrigo, and the duchy of Nepi was bestowed on his own infant son Juan. Alexander next turned his attention to Ferrara, and, when Venice and Florence forbade him to attack it, he arranged a marriage of the widowed Lucrezia

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with the Duke's son Alfonso: overcoming the abhorrence of the proud Este family by the influence of Louis XII. and by a grant to the Duke of all Church-dues in Ferrara for three years. From Ferrara, when it fell to his sister, Cæsar would have a comparatively easy march on Bologna, if not Florence.

So the year 1501 ended in such rejoicings as the fortune of the Borgia family inspired. At the date October 11, 1501, Burchard dispassionately notes in his diary that the Pope was unable to attend to his spiritual duties, but was not prevented from enjoying, in the Vatican, a "chestnut dance" and other performances of fifty nude courtesans whom Cæsar introduced.<sup>1</sup> Lucrezia, whose purity some recent writers are eager to vindicate, was present with her father and brother. On December 30th she was married. Alexander gave her the finest set of pearls in Europe and 100,000 ducats; and for a week Rome enjoyed such spectacles and bull-fights as had not been seen for years. Within the Vatican such comedies as the *Menæchmi* of Plautus were enacted before the Pope and his family and cardinals. Even tolerant Italy now broke into caustic criticisms, and Cæsar replied vigorously by the daggers of his followers. The Pope genially urged him to let men talk.

The last phase is, in its way, not less repulsive. By heartless treachery and brilliant fighting Cæsar spread his sway over central Italy and Alexander watched and

<sup>1</sup> *Diarium*, iii., 167. The details of this dance, which Burchard describes, and of the orgy which followed, may not be translated. It is absurd to question Burchard's evidence on this matter; he was then Master of Ceremonies at the Papal Court and describes every move of the Pope. The Papal servants took part in the performance, and he could easily learn the details. The Florentine and other ambassadors speak of Cæsar repeatedly introducing these women into the Vatican at night.

spurred his progress. The Pope's attendants had to endure unaccustomed fits of anger and abuse when his son did not advance rapidly enough. He treacherously arrested Cardinal Orsini; and the Cardinal's aged mother, who was ejected from her palace, had to send to the Pope (by Orsini's mistress) a magnificent pearl which Alexander coveted before she was allowed to provide her son with decent food. Cardinal Orsini died, and his property was confiscated. Cardinal Michiel died, and his fortune of 150,000 ducats was appropriated. The College of Cardinals trembled and the famous legend of the Borgia poison spread over Italy.<sup>1</sup> Nine new cardinals, mostly of unworthy character, were created and are said to have paid 130,000 ducats for the dignity, and 64,000 ducats were raised by inventing new offices in the Curia. Alexander, although seventy-two years old, was in robust health, and looked forward to years of pleasure under the protection of his victorious son. And one night in the unhealthy heat of August (the 5th or 6th) he and Cæsar sat late at supper with Cardinal Adriano da Corneto. Romance has it that the poisoned wine they intended for their host was served to them: modern history is content with the known malaria of an autumn night.<sup>2</sup> On August 18th Alexander died,

<sup>1</sup> There is, as Pastor and Creighton admit, grave reason to think that Orsini and Michiel were poisoned, but charges of this kind are difficult to check, and certainly there is a good deal of romance in the Borgia legend. The death-rate of cardinals under Alexander was not more than normal. See Baron Corvo's *Chronicles of the House of Borgia* (1901), and R. Sabatini's *Life of Cesare Borgia* (1911).

<sup>2</sup> The poison theory is not mentioned by Burchard or the chief ambassadors, and is positively advanced only by Neapolitan or later writers. No historian seems now to entertain it. Alexander's illness, which lasted thirteen days, followed a course more consistent with

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and both Cæsar and Cardinal Adriano were seriously ill.

Of other actions of Alexander his connexion with Savonarola alone demands some consideration, and it must be treated briefly. On July 25, 1495, Alexander, in friendly terms, summoned Savonarola to Rome to give an account of the prophetic gifts he claimed. Alexander was very tolerant of criticisms of his vices, except where they might provoke kings to summon a council, and it is probable that he wished to silence the politician rather than the preacher; Savonarola vigorously supported the idea of an alliance of Florence with France, which the Pope opposed. Savonarola evaded the summons to Rome, and the Pope suspended him from preaching and endeavoured to destroy his authority by joining the San Marco convent to the Lombard Congregation. Savonarola defeated the Pope on the latter point, and on February 11, 1496, he returned to his pulpit, in defiance of the Pope's order and at the command of the Signoria of Florence. In explanation of his act he urged that Alexander's Brief was based on false information and invalid, and he denounced Roman corruption more freely than ever. Alexander, in November, directed that a new congregation should be formed out of the Roman and Tuscan convents,<sup>1</sup> and when Savonarola and his monks again defeated the project, the Pope had recourse to secular measures.

A mind like that of the exalted and feverish preacher

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malaria, and the very rapid decomposition of his body, which seems to have impressed Lord Acton, is not inexplicable at that season.

<sup>1</sup> Savonarola was head of the Tuscan Congregation of the Dominican Order, and these proposals—which were inspired by jealous colleagues at Rome—aimed at putting him under a new and hostile jurisdiction.



was not likely to escape error and exaggeration in such circumstances, and his opponents in Florence made progress. Alexander now offered the coveted possession of Pisa to the Signoria if they would desert Savonarola and the idea of a French alliance. The monk was forbidden by the authorities to preach, and his defiance of the Signoria as well as the Papacy led to disorders of which the Pope took advantage to publish a sentence of excommunication (June 18, 1497). Alexander had meantime again listened to entreaties of delay and inquiry, but when he heard that the monk defied his anathema he said that the sentence must take its course. Up to this point the Pope had, in view of the very strong support which Savonarola had at Florence, proceeded with moderation, though we may resent the insincerity of his attack; it was not the prophecies, but the policy and the puritanism, of Savonarola which interested him. He complained bitterly to the Florentine ambassadors of Savonarola's attacks on himself and the cardinals, and was, as always, alarmed by the monk's demand of a General Council. However, the monk, not realizing the progress made by his enemies, struck a louder note of defiance, and on the plea of the public disorders to which he gave rise, he was arrested and put on trial. Alexander willingly granted the authorities a tithe on the ecclesiastical property at Florence when they announced the arrest. The sensitive monk was, by torture, driven into some vague disavowal of his supernatural pretensions, and he and two other friars were, on May 23, 1498, hanged by the Florentine authorities as "heretics, schismatics, and contemners of the Holy See." The sentence, however corruptly obtained, was technically just, since in the legislation of the time contumacious

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defiance of the Papacy implied heresy; but the respective positions of Savonarola and Alexander VI. in the history of religious progress are a sufficient monument to the bravery and inflexibility of the great Florentine puritan.

There are few good deeds to be put in the scale against the crimes and vices of Alexander VI. He made a considerable, though futile, effort to rouse Christendom against the advancing Turks. He fortified Sant' Angelo, and engaged Pinturicchio to decorate the Vatican apartments. He pressed the propagation of the faith in the New World, ordered the examination and authorization of printed books, endeavoured to check heresy in Bohemia, and vigorously defended the rights of the Church in the Netherlands. These things cannot alter our estimate of his character. He was a selfish voluptuary of—in view of his position—the most ignoble type; he countenanced and employed fraud, treachery, and crime; and the condition in which we shall soon find the Papacy will show that his policy had not the redeeming merit of effecting the security of the institution over which he ignominiously presided.

## CHAPTER XIII

### JULIUS II.: THE FIGHTING POPE

THE single merit which sober historians award to Alexander VI. is that, in forming a powerful principality for his son in central Italy, he was re-establishing the States of the Church and ensuring the protection of the Papacy. The course of events after his death prevents us from acknowledging this claim, and Alexander himself must have been well aware that Cæsar Borgia would, if his State endured, protect the Papacy only on condition that he might continue to dominate it. He told Machiavelli that he had made ample preparation to secure his position at the death of his father, but his own illness wrecked his plans. This is untrue. He was quite able to direct his servants and at his father's death they began to enforce his blustering policy. Some forced their way, at the point of the dagger, to the Papal treasury, and carried off the money and plate left by the Pope: leaving his enormous debts to his successor. Others sought to intimidate the cardinals. But Cæsar's power in the North at once began to crumble, his enemies gathered in force from all sides, and he was defeated. The cardinals would not assemble until his troops, and those of France, Spain, and Venice, withdrew from Rome.

The chief contest in the Conclave, which began on

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September 16th, lay between the French Cardinal D'Amboise and Giuliano della Rovere, who returned from Avignon. Neither could secure the necessary majority, and Cardinal Piccolomini, nephew of Pius II., was chosen to occupy the throne until a stronger man could prevail. The more luxurious cardinals may have smiled at the rejoicing with which reformers greeted the aged and virtuous Pius III., for they knew that he suffered from an incurable malady. He died, in fact, ten days after his coronation, or on October 18th, and the struggle was renewed. Giuliano della Rovere now pushed his ambition with equal energy and unscrupulousness. He promised Cæsar Borgia, who controlled the extensive Spanish vote, that he would respect his possessions and make him Gonfaloniere of the Church<sup>1</sup>; he distributed money among the cardinal-voters; he agreed to the capitulation that whoever was elected should summon a council for the purpose of reform within two years, and should not make war on any Power without the consent of two thirds of the cardinals. He worked so well that the Conclave, which met on October 31st, was one of the shortest in the history of the Papacy. Within three hours the sealed window was broken open and the election of Julius II. was announced.

We have in the last chapter followed the romantic early career of Giuliano della Rovere. He was born on December 5, 1443, at Albizzola, near Savona, of a poor and obscure family. His uncle, being first a professor and then General of the Franciscan Order, sent him to be educated in one of the monasteries of that Order. Some historians strangely doubt whether he actually took the religious vows, but it was assuredly not the custom of the friars to keep young men in their

<sup>1</sup> Burchard, *Diarium*, iii., 293.

monasteries to the age of twenty-eight unless they were members of the fraternity. At that age (in 1471) Fra Giuliano and his cousin Fra Pietro heard that their uncle had become Sixtus IV., and they were raised to the cardinalate.

Giuliano did not emulate the vices which carried off his younger cousin within two years. He "lived much as the other prelates of that day did," says Guicciardini, in a sober estimate of his character, and his three known daughters confirm the great historian of the time; but he kept a comparatively moderate palace and spent money on a refined patronage of art and culture. He displayed some military talent when he commanded the Papal troops in Umbria in 1474, and afterwards served as Legate in France (1476) and the Netherlands (1480). He, as we saw, maintained his position after his uncle's death by corruptly ensuring the election of Innocent VIII. and exercising a paramount influence over that Pontiff. His power inflamed the animosity of his rivals, and at the accession of Alexander VI. he was driven from Italy. From his quiet retreat in Avignon he instigated the French monarch to invade Italy and depose Alexander, and, when Alexander gracefully disarmed Charles, Giuliano returned in disgust to Avignon. It is true that in 1499 he rendered some service to Alexander, in connexion with Cæsar's marriage, but he felt it safer to remain in Avignon until the announcement of Alexander's death recalled his many enemies to Rome.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Guicciardini's *Storia d'Italia* and Burchard's *Diarium* are the chief authorities, supplemented by the dispatches of the Italian ambassadors. There is a slight and somewhat antiquated biography by M. A. J. Dumesnil (*Histoire de Jules II.*, 1873) and an abler study by M.

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In 1503, at the date of his election, Julius II. had long outlived his early irregularities, and had no personal vices beyond a fiery temper and a taste for wine which his enemies magnified into a scandal. The familiar portrait by Raphael brings him closer to us than any of the Pontiffs whom we have yet considered. He was then in his sixtieth year, with a scanty sprinkling of grey locks on his massive head, and with an aspect of energy and determination which must have been lessened by the long white beard he grew in later life. Though troubled—like most of the Popes of this period—with gout, he was still erect and dignified, and the cardinals, who had hardly seen him for ten years, can have had little suspicion of the volcanic fires which were concealed by his habitual silence and quiet enjoyment of culture. They soon learned that they had created a master, and they lamented that he united the manners of a peasant with the vigour of a soldier. He consulted none, and he lavished epithets on those who lingered in the execution of his commands. Yet this brusque and abusive soldier was destined, not merely to place the Papal States on a surer foundation than ever, but to do far more even than Leo X. for the artistic enhancement of Rome.

The supreme aim which Julius held in view from the

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Brosch (*Papst Julius II.*, 1878). J. F. Loughlin has a candid account, chiefly based on Brosch, of his early career in *The American Catholic Quarterly Review*.<sup>1</sup> Special treatises will be noticed in the course of the chapter, but there is little dispute about the facts I give. Full references will be found in the very ample, if somewhat lenient, study of Dr. Pastor (vi.), and in the works of Creighton, Gregorovius, and von Reumont.

<sup>1</sup> 1900, pp. 133-147.

beginning of his Pontificate was the restoration of the Papal possessions, but I may dismiss first the actions or events which have a more personal relation. He heard or said mass daily, and paid a strict regard to his ecclesiastical duties. He reorganized the administration of the city and the Campagna, suppressed disorder, purified the tribunals, reformed the coinage, and in many other respects corrected the vices of his predecessor, whom he had loathed. These *marañas* (half-converted Spanish Jews), as he called the Borgias, had fouled Italy with their presence. He improved the Papal table, which had been singularly poor under Alexander, but the vicious parasites whom Alexander had encouraged now shrank from the Vatican. At first he indulged the characteristic Papal weakness, nepotism. At his first Consistory (November 29, 1503) two of the four cardinals promoted were members of his family—his uncle and nephew—and two years later he married his natural daughter Felicia to one of the Orsini, his niece Lucrezia to one of the Colonna, and his nephew Niccolò della Rovere to Giulia Orsini's daughter Laura. One cannot say, as some historians do, that he was no nepotist; though one may admit that, in the words of Guicciardini, "he did not carry nepotism beyond due bounds." To the obligations he had contracted in bargaining for the Papacy he was quite unscrupulously blind, and, although he issued a drastic Bull against simony in 1505 (January 14th), his grand plans imposed on him such an expenditure that he even increased the sale of offices and indulgences until the annual income of the Papacy rose to 350,000 ducats.

Julius at once made it plain that he was not only determined to recover the Papal States, but would

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override any moral obligation or sentimental prejudice in the pursuit of his object. The treasury was empty, and he had contracted, at the price of several Spanish votes, to respect the person and possessions of Cæsar Borgia. But Venice had encouraged the petty lords of Romagna to recover the places which Cæsar had wrested from them, and itself had designs on some of the towns. Grasping the pretext that the whole of Romagna was thus in danger, Julius summoned Cæsar to surrender the remaining strongholds to the Church. When Cæsar refused, he found himself a prisoner of the Pope, instead of Gonfaloniere of his troops, and he seems to have been dazed by the sudden collapse of his brilliant fortune. Spain withdrew the Spanish mercenaries from Cæsar's service, Venice occupied Faenza and Rimini, and most of his towns cast off their enforced allegiance. After a futile struggle with the Pope the fallen prince surrendered to Julius his three remaining towns—Cesena, Forli, and Bertinoro—and was allowed to retire to Naples. There, at the treacherous instigation of the Pope,<sup>1</sup> he was arrested and sent to Spain. He escaped from Spain two years afterwards, and died in 1507, fighting in a petty war on a foreign soil.

Venice, now at the height of her power and flushed with wealth and conquest, paid little heed when, in the winter of 1503-4, Julius made repeated demands for the restoration of the places she had seized in Romagna. She had, she said, not taken them from the Church, and the Church would, if she restored them, hand them to some other "nephew." The Venetian ambassador at Rome seems to have miscalculated entirely the energy

<sup>1</sup> Pastor (vi., 244) quotes from the Vatican archives a letter in which Julius urges the Spanish commander at Naples to arrest Cæsar.



of the Pope, and Venice probably thought that her support of his candidature and his lack of troops and resources promised a profitable compromise; nor can we wonder if statesmen failed at times to see the justice of the Roman contention, that seizure by the sword was a legitimate title in princes who gave cities to the Church but wholly invalid in princes who took them from the Church. Venice offered to pay tribute for the towns which had been Papal fiefs. This Julius sharply refused, and he appealed to France, Spain, and the Emperor to assist him. Toward the close of the year (September 22, 1504) Louis and Maximilian concluded an agreement at Blois to join Julius against Venice, but a quarrel destroyed the compact, and Julius had again to deal with Venice. The Venetians surrendered all but Faenza and Rimini, and Julius, with a protest that the retention of these towns was unjustified, resumed amicable relations with them.

The Pope's next move has won the admiration of many historians, though it has prompted so liberal a judge as Creighton to exclaim that "his cynical consciousness of political wrong-doing" is "as revolting as the frank unscrupulousness of Alexander VI." During the period of disintegration of the Papal States the Baglioni had mastered Perugia and the Bentivogli had taken possession of Bologna. Julius had at his accession confirmed the position at Bologna, but in the spring of 1506 he resolved to recover both cities. France and Spain hesitated to lend their aid for this project, and on August 26th he impetuously ended the slow negotiations by sending a peremptory order to France to assist him and setting out at the head of his troops. With only five hundred horse—though he had sent on

<sup>1</sup> V., 28.

an envoy to engage Swiss mercenaries—Julius and nine of his cardinals set out on the long march to Perugia. At Orvieto his anxiety found some relief. Giampaolo Baglione, realizing the force which the Pope would eventually command, came to surrender Perugia, and at the beginning of September Julius sang a solemn mass in the Franciscan convent at Perugia which had once been his home. His energy was now fully aroused, in spite of the discouragement of the word sent by Louis XII. It is said that he already talked of leading his valiant troops against the Turks when he had settled the affairs of Italy. He crossed the hills, in bleak early-winter weather, in spite of gout, at the head of his 2500 men, and boldly sent on to Bentivoglio a sentence of excommunication and interdict. Bentivoglio—more deeply moved by the approach of 4000 French soldiers—fled, and, again without striking a blow, the Pope entered Bologna in triumph on November 11th.<sup>1</sup> After spending five months in the reorganization of government he returned to Rome on March 28th (1507) and enjoyed a magnificent ovation. It may give a juster idea of his mental power to add that he had already (on April 18, 1506) laid the first stone of the new St. Peter's designed on so vast a scale by Bramante.

Three months after his return to Rome Julius had fresh and grave reason for anxiety. France and Spain had composed their differences, and in June of that year Ferdinand was to sail from Naples to meet the French

<sup>1</sup> The date was fixed by the astrologers, but Burchard says that, in order to show his contempt for their science, Julius unceremoniously entered the town on the previous day. He acted more probably from sheer impatience. More than one event during his Pontificate, including his coronation on November 26, 1503, was arranged by the astrologers.

King at Savona. Julius moved down to Ostia to greet him, and must have been profoundly disturbed when the galley conveying Ferdinand and his young French wife passed the port without a word. He would hear that the two Kings held long and secret conferences at Savona, and that among the five cardinals with them was D'Amboise, Louis's chief minister, who still hungered for the tiara of which Julius had robbed him. There had for some time been bad news from France. Louis was reported as saying: "The Rovere are a peasant family; nothing but the stick on his back will keep the Pope in order." Julius sent Cardinal Pallavicino to Savona, but he was not admitted to the counsels of the monarchs. It was rumoured that they meditated the reform of the Church: which meant a council and an inquiry into the election of Julius II.

Papal diplomacy, which, when Papal interests were endangered, never considered "Italian independence," for a moment now dictated an alliance with the Emperor-elect, Maximilian, who had himself proposed to come to Rome for his coronation. There are vague indications that that dreamy monarch already entertained the idea of uniting the tiara with the imperial crown on his own head.<sup>1</sup> However that may be, Julius sent Cardinal Carvajal to dissuade him from coming to Rome, to bring about an alliance of the Christian Powers against the Turks (which would disarm Ferdinand and Louis as regards Julius), and to enter into a special alliance with France and Germany against Venice. The Papal envoy Aretini told the Venetian envoy that, when the danger to Italy from an alliance of Louis and Maximil-

<sup>1</sup> See A. Schulte, *Kaiser Maximilian I. als Kandidat für den Papstlichen Stuhl* (1906). The point is disputed.

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ian was pointed out, Julius exclaimed: "Perish the whole of Italy provided I get my way."<sup>1</sup> The proposal was, at all events, treacherous; for both Julius and Maximilian had treaties of peace with Venice. But the age of which Machiavelli has codified the guiding principles was insensible to considerations of political honesty. Maximilian attacked Venice and was defeated, because she had the support of France. Then France was poisoned against the prosperous Republic, and the League of Cambrai was formed on December 10, 1508: Maximilian, Louis, and Ferdinand entered into a secret alliance for the destruction of Venice, and the Pope, as well as the Kings of England and Hungary, were invited to join in the act of brigandage.

It is clear that Julius hesitated for some months to join the League; though his hesitation was probably due to some anxiety at the prospect of seeing the victorious armies of France and Germany in Italy once more. He tried to induce the Venetians to restore Faenza and Rimini to him and merit his protection. When they refused, he joined the League (March 23d) and put his spiritual censure on the Venetians. The campaign occupied only a few weeks, and the vast territory of the Republic was divided among the conquerors, the Pope receiving Ravenna and Cervia as well as Faenza and Rimini. But the ill fortune and anxiety of Venice promised him further gains if he would break faith with his allies and deal separately with the Republic. To preserve the remnants of their territory the Venetians approached the Pope. At first he exacted formidable sacrifices, and, when they refused and importuned him, he went to his palace at Civita Vecchia to enjoy the rest, if not the pleasures, which Roman

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Brosch, p. 333.

gossip so darkly misrepresented.<sup>1</sup> He perceived, however, that the annihilation of Venice would endanger his own security, and in time he accepted the evacuation of Romagna and the abandonment of the Venetian exercise of authority over the clergy.

Louis XII. learned with great indignation in the summer of 1509 that Julius had not only withdrawn from the League of Cambrai, but was now endeavouring to form a league with Venice, Ferdinand, Maximilian, and Henry VIII. against himself. Henry and Maximilian refused to join, but Julius engaged fifteen thousand Swiss and added these to the Papal and Venetian troops. As the Duke of Ferrara was leagued with the French against Venice, and refused to follow the Pope's political example, Julius issued against him an anathema which a writer of the time describes as making his hair stand on end, and resolved to add Ferrara to the growing Papal States. In August he set out once more, dressed in simple rochet, with the troops, and made the tiring march to Bologna. There his great plans nearly came to a premature end. The Swiss failed him, and the French appeared in force before Bologna, where he lay seriously ill and greatly disedifying his attendants by the vehemence of his rage. No doubt his threats of suicide, which are recorded, were merely vague and rhetorical expressions of his despair. He saved himself, however, by a deceptive negotiation with the French commander until his reinforcements arrived, and, as his health recovered, his vigorous resolution became almost ferocious. The long white beard in Raphael's portrait of him reminds us how, at this time, he swore that he would not shave again until he had driven the French from Italy. Louis was now taking practical steps

<sup>1</sup> Priuli (*Diario*, ii., 102) says that Romans spoke of his "Ganymedes."

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toward the summoning of a General Council, and the temper of the Pope was terrible to witness. In the depth of winter, not yet wholly recovered from his long fever, he rejoined the troops, sharing the hardships of camp-life and stormily scolding his generals for their slowness. He never led troops on the field, but he interfered in the placing of artillery and more than once exposed himself to fire. At the capitulation of Mirandola he shocked his cardinals by ordering that any foreign soldiers found in the town should be put to the sword.

He spent some months thus passing from town to town, infusing his fiery energy into the troops, but his successes and his personal conduct of the war inflamed the indignation of the French King. Louis not only sent reinforcements to his army, but he, with his adherent cardinals, arranged for the holding of a General Council on Italian soil. *Perdam Babylonis Nomen* ("I will erase the very name of Babylon") was the terrible motto he now placed on his medals. In quick succession the Pope learned that the Bentivogli had recovered Bologna and derisively broken into fragments the magnificent statue of Julius which Michael Angelo had erected: that his favourite Cardinal Alidosi had been assassinated by his (the Pope's) nephew and commander the Duke of Urbino; and that Louis and Maximilian, with the seceded cardinals, had announced a General Council of the Church at Pisa and summoned Julius II. to appear before it.

The attendants who marched by the Pope's closed litter, as he returned to Rome on June 26, 1511, concluded from his unrestrained sobs and groans that his power, if not his life, approached its end. His health was ruined and his troops were scattered. But there

was an energy mightier than that of Hildebrand in his worn frame, and with some improvement in his condition he raised his head once more. He had in the spring created eight new cardinals, to replace the seceders, and he now announced that a *real* Ecumenical Council would assemble at the Lateran on April 19, 1512. That was his answer to Pisa, and to the Papal aspirations of the Cardinal of Rouen and the Emperor-elect. He again fell dangerously ill—so ill that his death was confidently expected. Election-intrigue filled the corridors of the Vatican, and a band of democrats held a meeting in the Capitol and decided, at his death, to restore the republican liberty of Rome. In a few weeks the terrible old man rose from his bed, thin and white but with unbroken energy, and scattered the intriguers. He anathematized the schismatical cardinals, and announced (October 4th) that he had formed a Holy League with Ferdinand of Spain and Venice for the defence of the Church; Maximilian was presently induced to join the League, and before the end of 1511 Henry VIII. was persuaded, by a promise of assistance in his designs on France, to give it his adhesion. Only three months before Julius had apparently lain at the point of death, his new possessions utterly ruined. Now he once more commanded the situation. The schismatical Council of Pisa, which opened on November 1st, turned out a puny French *conciliabulum*, with fourteen bishops and five abbots to represent the universal Church.

The campaign which began in January need not be followed in detail. After a series of varying engagements the French won a crushing victory at Ravenna, and there was panic at Rome. The cardinals demanded peace with France, but Giulio de' Medici, cousin of

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Cardinal Giovanni, who had been captured by the French, now came to describe the exhausted condition of the French army, and Julius resolved to prosecute the war. He opened his General Council at the Lateran on May 3rd, and had at least the satisfaction of seeing seventy Italian bishops respond to his summons. Then, covering his preparations by a pretence of considering the terms which Louis XII. offered him, he engaged further troops, fired his commanders, and induced Maximilian to withdraw the four thousand Tirolese mercenaries from the French ranks. In a few weeks the French were driven out of Italy, the schismatics were forced to transfer their discredited Council to French soil, and the Pope found himself master of Bologna, Ravenna, Rimini, Cesena, Parma, Piacenza, and Reggio. In appraising Julius as founder of the Papal States one must bear in mind the history of this remarkable period. In October, 1511, Julius was stricken and apparently ruined; by the summer of 1512 he was master of the richest provinces of Italy. But he had not left Rome, and his personal action at this juncture was slight in comparison with those tremendous earlier exertions which had ended in disastrous failure.

Julius was far from satisfied, and his conduct in the hour of victory was at the low political level of the time. He assisted the Medici to impose themselves again on Florence, and the Sforza to recover Milan. He then made a lamentable effort to secure Ferrara. The Duke came to Rome, under a safe-conduct of the Papal General Fabrizio Colonna, and of the Spanish ambassador, to plead that he had acted only in honourable discharge of his engagements to France. Julius had approved the safe-conduct, but when the Duke re-



fused to surrender his territory to the Church, the Pope affected to discover that he had committed crimes not covered by the safe-conduct and detained him. The Colonna redeemed the credit of Italy by cutting their way through the Papal guards and restoring Alfonso, after romantic adventures, to his duchy. When the poet Ariosto was afterwards sent by Alfonso to make peace with the Pope, he had to fly for his life; Julius, in one of his now frequent outbursts of violence, threatened to have him thrown into the sea.

To the end Julius pursued his tortuous diplomacy. Neither Spain nor Germany wished to see any increase of his power, and he was forced to abandon his designs on Ferrara. He then disrupted his Holy League, and made a fresh alliance with Maximilian against Venice and to the disadvantage of Spain. Julius was concerned about the growing power of Spain in Italy; and we shall hardly be unjust if we suspect that, as Alexander VI. had done, he dreamed of adding Naples to the Papal dominion. But he never entirely recovered his health, and his great schemes were closed by death on February 20, 1513. He was neither a great soldier nor a great statesman. There is no indication that his interference in the military operations was useful, and, as I pointed out, the one permanently successful campaign was fought while he directed an ecclesiastical Council at Rome. In the sphere of politics and diplomacy he relied on cunning and deceit rather than statesmanship, and, if he had not represented a spiritual power to which the nations were bound to return in the end, he would have been mercilessly crushed. He had, also, little ability to organize such possessions as he obtained, and his career is marred by violent outbursts and acts of treachery and cruelty. It is sometimes said that he was the greatest

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Pope since Innocent III. One imagines the shade of that great spiritual ruler shuddering; and one is disposed to agree with Guicciardini that, if Julius was great, a new meaning must be put on the word. He had wonderful energy, and by good fortune his aim was finally attained.

In view of this strenuous campaign for the recovery of the Papal States, we can expect only a slender record of strictly Pontifical work. Julius attended to the propagation of the faith in the new lands beyond the seas, and he impelled the Inquisitors to check the spread of heresy. That he restrained the Spanish Inquisition, and supported its exclusion from Naples, was not due to humane feeling, but to its exorbitant claims of independent authority. He forbade duelling, and endowed a college of singing for the maintenance of the Papal Choir. His Lateran Council was, of course, a political expedient, but there is evidence that when death closed his career Julius was turning more seriously to plans of reform. In spite of his own Bull against simony, the Curia remained as corrupt as ever, and money was raised in all the evil ways known to it. It is, however, curious and creditable to have to place one great reform to the merit of Julius. He passed so drastic a decree against corruption at Papal elections that the rivals who gathered in Rome after his death did not dare to employ bribery.

Julius is probably most deserving of esteem for his artistic work. The literary parasites who swarmed about his successor have associated the glory of late mediæval Rome with the name of Leo X., but discriminating research is convincing historians that Leo did not even sustain the great work of his predecessor. The bold scheme which Julius adopted was due to his

artists rather than to his own inspiration, yet he has the distinction—no mean distinction for one immersed, as he was, in an exacting policy—of reflecting at once the vast ideas which were put before him. The new St. Peter's which he was compelled to think of building was not intended at first to be of great dimensions, but he accepted Bramante's design of a church far larger even than the St. Peter's of today, and, in spite of his costly wars, he enabled the architect to employ 2500 workers. He accepted Bramante's designs for a new Vatican and for the Cortile di Damaso. He engaged Michael Angelo to carve a princely marble tomb for himself—his one great luxury—and, when his interest was transferred to the less selfish task of building St. Peter's, he set the artist to the execution of his immortal work on the roof of the Sistine Chapel. Michael Angelo made also, as I have noted, a great statue of Julius at Bologna, but this was destroyed at the return of the Bentivogli. There were many quarrels between the two men, but Michael Angelo found in Julius a manliness and a greatness of conception, if not a feeling for art, the lack of which he bitterly criticized in Leo X.

Cristoforo Romano, Sansovino, Perugino, Signorelli, Pinturicchio, and other great artists were enlisted in the work of making the ecclesiastical quarter of Rome the artistic centre of the world. Some of the finest of the old Greek sculptures which were then being sought in the rubbish of mediæval Italy were bought for the Belvedere, and painters of distinction were richly encouraged. New frescoes and new tombs were ordered in the churches of Rome; the walls and aqueducts were repaired; handsome new streets were laid out; and the cardinals and wealthier citizens were moved to cooperate with the Pontiff in his plans for the exaltation of

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Rome. We may deplore that the money for these plans was largely obtained by the sale of spiritual offices and indulgences, and we must resent the fact that money obtained by these means was diverted to the purposes of war. But the magnificence of the design and the generosity with which Julius prosecuted it as long as he lived seem to be a more solid and enduring merit than his good fortune—for in the decisive stage it was little more—in recovering a rich dominion which would but serve to enhance the frivolity of his successor.

Copy of the  
Fabric's original  
brother's copy of  
Jesus Christ, for well.  
does it not?

July 1860  
by Hook.

page 15



*P. Newhouse, copy.*

*5, Methuold Rd.*

*W.10.*

## CHAPTER XIV

### LEO X. AND THE DANCE OF DEATH

WHEN Julius II. made his last survey of the world in which he had played so vigorous a part, he must have concluded that he had placed the Papacy on a foundation more solid than any that had yet supported it. The Conciliar movement, its most threatening enemy in the mind of the Popes, had been discredited by the failure of its latest effort and by the naked ambitions of those who supported it. The princes of the world had proved less stubborn than in the days of the early Emperors, and the Papacy had now a broad and strong base of secular power. The new culture had been, to a great extent, wooed and won by the Pope's princely patronage of art and embellishment of Rome; and the Inquisition, in one form or other, could silence the intractable. There was still, among the dour and distant northerners, much cavilling at the avarice and luxury of Rome, but, if the succeeding Popes used the Lateran Council to ensure some measure of reform, it would diminish; it had, in any case, not yet proved dangerous. Neither Julius nor any other had the least suspicion that the Papacy was within five years of the beginning of an appalling catastrophe.

We have, however, seen that the opinions which were to bring about that catastrophe had long been diffused

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in Europe, and a particular conjunction of circumstances might at any time convert them into rebellious action. For more than a century, there had been a critical scrutiny of the bases of Papal power, and to a large extent the Papacy had escaped the consequences by a greater liberality toward rulers and by sharing with them the wealth it extracted from the people. France maintained the Pragmatic Sanction, which Rome detested, and other countries gave rather the impression of federation than of abject submission to a spiritual autocracy. Moreover, while the pressure of the central power was eased, doctrinal rebellion seemed to make little progress. Lollardism was extinct, Husitism confined to a sect, Savonarolism murdered. Yet the Reformation was coming, and we see now that Luther was but the instrument of its deliverance.

It is impossible here to discuss all the causes of the Reformation, and a few considerations will suffice for my purpose. Printing had been invented and printed sheets were being circulated. Men were now reading—which provokes independent reflection—rather than sitting at the feet of oracular schoolmen. Among the books which poured out from the press, moreover, the Bible—in spite of a popular fallacy on that subject—occupied an important place, even in the vernacular. Further—and this was most important of all—the last great extension of the Papal fiscal system, the granting of indulgences for money, was in one important respect based on a novel speculation of the schoolmen and was not supported by Biblical Christianity. The realization of this stimulated men to get behind the fences of Decretals and scholastic speculations, and to claim a reform which should be something more than the substitution of a good Pope for a bad Pope. Finally



the renewed corruption of the Papal Court under Leo X. set this psychological machinery in conscious motion.

Twenty-five cardinals were enclosed in the Sistine Chapel on March 4th for the election of the new Pope. Wealth was now of no direct avail, for all accepted the Bull of Julius condemning bribery. Some of the poorer cardinals, knowing that their votes were not marketable, had tried to secure the treasure (about 300,000 ducats) left by Julius, but the keeper of Sant' Angelo had been incorruptible. Yet we must not emphasize the absence of bribery: there is such a thing as gratitude for favours to come. For nearly a week the enclosed cardinals discussed and negotiated. It is confidently stated that, while the older cardinals were, as usual, divided in allegiance to several of their body, the younger cardinals stood aloof and were secretly resolved to elect Giovanni de' Medici. Cardinal Giovanni lay abed in his little cell—imagine the Sistine Chapel containing thirty-one bedrooms—suffering from fistula. A surgeon was with him in the Conclave, and his condition was unpleasantly felt in the sealed room. A close friend of his, Bernardo Dovizo, or Bibbiena as he was commonly called, canvassed for him, and assured the cardinals of his liberal and grateful disposition, his high origin, and his peaceful intentions. He was only thirty-seven years of age, but the older cardinals may have concluded that his malady compensated for his youth. At the first scrutiny, on March 10th, he was elected, and he took the name of Leo X.

The earlier life of Leo X. has been told in the previous chapters. The second son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, born on December 11, 1475, he was thrust into the ranks of the clergy at the age of seven, he received the

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title of cardinal at the age of fourteen, and he was openly admitted to the Sacred College two years later. He had received a stimulating education from the Humanist scholars of Florence, and amidst the dissipations of Rome he remained a sober and diligent scholar. He retired to Florence under Alexander VI., and, when his family were driven from power and repeatedly failed to recover it, he travelled in Germany, the Netherlands, and France. Under Julius II., he found some favour and became Legate for Bologna and Romagna. He was captured by the French at the fatal battle of Ravenna, but he made his escape on their retreat from Italy, and soon afterwards became the chief representative of his house on their restoration to Florence. His public record was, therefore, slight, and his time had been mainly devoted to the cultivation of letters and the enjoyment of art, especially music. His interests were so well known that on one of the triumphal arches erected for his coronation it was boldly announced that Venus (Alexander) and Mars (Julius) had now made way for Minerva; which a more discerning neighbour had modified by erecting an assurance that Venus lived for ever. It was, and is, believed that his life before he became Pope was free from irregularity. In spite of three fasts a week and a strenuous devotion to the chase, he was an abnormally fat man, and his pale, puffy face was not improved by his large myopic eyes, which saw little without the aid of a glass. But his unflinching smile, his charming manners, his ready wit, his prodigal generosity, and his unalterable love of peace and sunshine promised a genial contrast to the reign of his predecessor, and Rome gave him a princely welcome.

There are three chief aspects of the Pontificate of Leo X. which it is material to consider, and, although

it is difficult entirely to separate them, it is convenient to attempt this. There is his political—or more correctly his diplomatic—action, which, though, in that Machiavellian age, it seemed only a degree worse than was customary, impresses the modern mind as almost revolting in its studied duplicity. There is his personal life, which inspired the reformers with volumes of vituperation, while modern writers seem able to regard it without much sentiment. And there is the Pontifical activity which culminates in the struggle with Luther. His relation to mediæval art is less important than is commonly supposed.

Mediæval Italy was no place for a prince of peace, and Leo soon found that, if he were to avoid the sword, he must follow a crooked course. He sincerely loathed the clash of swords. He loved jewels and music and comedies and books; he wanted to spend the Papal treasury in surrounding himself with pretty things and flashes of wit—and he thus spent the whole of Julius's 300,000 ducats in two years. But France and Venice thirsted for revenge and sought his support; while the envoys of Milan, Spain, England, and the Empire claimed his blessing, and his ducats, for the opposite side. While, however, in the actual condition of Italy, the Papal States were safe, a victory of France and Venice would bring perils. Leo secretly joined the Holy League against France, and secretly paid for the service of 45,000 Swiss mercenaries. The policy turned out well. France was driven back, and the leaders of the schismatical cardinals, Carvajal and Sanseverino, came to Rome, and humbly accepted Leo's obedience. France repudiated the schism, and Venice, after a desultory struggle, was pacified.

Leo found some time for domestic matters, of which

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two may be noted here. On September 23d (1513) he created four cardinals, of whom three were relatives and one a literary friend. Bernardo Bibbiena (or Dovizo) had, as I said, promoted his interest in the Conclave, and at earlier times, and was an accomplished literary man; he was also entirely devoid of moral sentiment, composed the most indecent comedy that was enacted at the Vatican, and was a genius at organizing festivities. Innocenzo Cibò, son of Innocent VIII.'s natural son Franceschetto and Leo's sister Maddalena, was a youth who seemed eager to emulate the scandalous repute of his father. Giulio de' Medici, cousin of the Pope, had already received a Papal dispensation from illegitimacy, and the quiet and delicate youth was advanced a little nearer to the Papacy. Lorenzo Pucci, lastly, was quite a distinguished canonist, and a relative of Leo; he was also expert in pushing the sale of indulgences and very solicitous about his own commission.

Leo then regarded the fortunes of the chief lay members of his family. His brother Giuliano, a highly cultivated man of thirty-four, was too much softened by vice and indulgence to carry out the Medici policy at Florence. This policy, embodied in a paper of instructions which there is good reason to ascribe to Leo himself, was entrusted to the Pope's nephew Lorenzo, a vigorous young sportsman. Giuliano was made a Baron of Rome and commander of the Papal army—Leo remarking that he trusted there would be no demand upon his military talent—and it was so confidently rumoured that the Pope proposed to make him King of Naples that Ferdinand was alarmed and had to be reassured. It is still disputed whether Leo really had this intention, or whether he merely proposed to make a small principality in central Italy for his worthless

brother; nor, in view of the secrecy and duplicity of the Pope's methods, is the point ever likely to be settled on a documentary basis. It seems consistent both with the course of events and with Leo's character to suppose that he kept both alternatives in mind, but that nepotism was not the *first* principle of his policy: his fundamental idea was the maintenance of his own luxurious security.<sup>1</sup>

In this pleasant promotion of his friends and relatives and their innumerable followers, in the prodigal encouragement of the artists, musicians, poets, and jewellers who flocked to Rome from all parts, Leo spent two years which were only slightly clouded by the rapid exhaustion of the Papal treasury. Meantime, however, the political situation had once more claimed his impatient attention, and we may for the moment confine ourselves to that interesting aspect of his work. Louis, disgusted with the Papacy, approached Ferdinand of Spain and was prepared to abandon to him his claims on Milan, Genoa, and Naples. This prospect of the enclosure of Papal territory in a Spanish vice threw the

<sup>1</sup> F. Nitti, *Leo X. e la sua politica* (1892), seeks to defend Leo against the charge of excessive nepotism. He strains the evidence at times, and quite admits that duplicity was the essential feature of the Pope's policy. See also his *Documenti ed osservazioni riguardanti la politica di Leone X.* (1893). A biography of Leo was written by the contemporary Bishop of Nocera, Paolo Giovio, but this *Vita Leonis X.* is the work of a courtier. Guicciardini (*Storia d'Italia*), Sanuto (*Diarii*), and Bembo (*Opere*) are more critical, and the letters of the Roman ambassadors are valuable. P. de Grassis, Master of Ceremonies at the Papal Court under Julius and Leo, wrote a *Diary of Leo X.*, but there seems to be some reluctance to publish it. The work published by Armellini (*Il diario di Leone X.*, 1884) is merely a discreet compendium of it. Fabroni's *Leonis X. Vita* is too ancient (1797), and *The Medici Popes* (1908) by H. M. Vaughan, is an excellent popular work. Roscoe's stately *Life and Pontificate of Leo X.* (1805) is too flattering to its hero and is discredited in places by more recent research.

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Pope into a fit of diplomatic activity. He secretly negotiated with Venice and Florence and Ferrara, and sent a legate to England to help to reconcile Henry VIII. with Louis. He trusted to induce these Powers to form a league with him for the purpose of driving the Spaniards out of Italy, and aimed at securing Naples for his brother.<sup>1</sup> In October the French King married Mary Tudor, and the Spanish spectre was laid. But, with the unvarying logic of Papal politics, the fear of Spain was succeeded by a fear of France, and the Pope had recourse to the kind of diplomacy which is characteristic of him, and in which, we are assured, he took great pleasure. He made a secret treaty with Spain for the defence of Italy, and a secret treaty of alliance with Louis against Spain.<sup>2</sup> He encouraged Louis, who held out to him the prospect of Naples, to attack Italy, and secretly promised to assist Milan and the Emperor against the French if Louis did attack Italy, which he thought improbable. He thus, he thought, secured a principality for Giuliano, whichever side won. "When you have made a league with one man," he used to say, "there is no reason why you should cease to negotiate with his opponent."

This policy, it is recorded, cost Leo sleepless nights, though not on account of moral scruples. Louis pressed him for a definite alliance against Milan, and he tried to evade it by pleading that it was not meet for Christian princes to engage in warfare while the Turk threatened Europe. The death of Louis in January (1515) made matters worse, as his successor, Francis I., determined with all the vigour and ambition of youth to press the

<sup>1</sup> Sanuto, *Diarii*, xviii.

<sup>2</sup> Guicciardini, xii. There is a copy of his Spanish treaty in the State archives at Florence.

French claims. Leo kept a legate negotiating with Francis, and we learn from the Legate's letters that he offered an alliance on condition that Naples should be surrendered to Giuliano. In the meantime (February 1st), he secretly approved of the league of Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Milan, and Genoa against France, and stipulated that he should have Parma, Piacenza, Modena, and Reggio; he would pay 60,000 ducats a month to the league, and would induce Henry VIII.—partly by making Wolsey a cardinal—to join it. In July he secretly signed the league, yet continued his deceptive correspondence with France. We have still the document in which Leo, after joining the league, offered an alliance to Francis on condition that he renounced his claim to Parma and Piacenza, made peace with Spain with a view to meeting the Turks, and surrendered his claim to Naples “in favour of the Holy See or of a third person approved by the Holy See.”<sup>1</sup>

During the campaign which followed, Leo wavered according to the news he received. When the French took Milan, he made peace with them; they were to respect the position of the Medici at Florence, and Leo was to renounce the Papal claim to Parma and Piacenza. He had, however, a more creditable object in view than the interest of his family. He met Francis at Bologna, and there can be no doubt that they then agreed to substitute a Concordat for the

<sup>1</sup> The instruction is reproduced by Nitti, p. 61. As the document adds that Leo will not allow any prince, “even were it his own brother,” to hold “both the head and the tail of Italy” (Milan and Naples), Nitti and Pastor claim that it shows that nepotism was not the key-note of Leo's policy. It seems strange that, in view of all his admitted duplicity, they can take seriously this phrase of the Pope's. We may admit, however, that the security of the Papal States was the Pope's first consideration.

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Pragmatic Sanction of 1438. For the promise of a tithe on his clergy, Francis surrendered their Gallican privileges, and became, as he thought, the real ally of the Pope. Leo ordered the Swiss to refrain from attacking the French in Milan, and listened approvingly to the King's designs on Naples. Within three months, however, the Emperor Maximilian led a body of Swiss troops, in the pay of Henry VIII., to an attack on Milan, and Leo was summoned by Francis to dispatch troops in accordance with their agreement. Carefully retarding the levy of his troops so that they should not arrive in time, and keeping a legate by the side of Maximilian, Leo awaited the result. The expedition failed, and he sought favour with the exasperated Francis by revealing to him that Henry VIII. had secretly paid the Swiss, and by sending once more an insincere command that the Swiss must not dare to attack an ally of the Papacy. He sought to retain the favour of Maximilian by reminding him that he had sent him two hundred Papal horse under Mark Antonio Colonna; and to Francis he protested that Colonna had acted without permission. He then assured Francis that he had sent a legate to induce Maximilian to make peace with France, and he gave secret instructions to the legate that such a peace would not be to the interest of the Papacy.

This is the admitted framework of that diplomacy which Roscoe contrives to dress in such opulent phrases, and it was a policy that Leo never altered. His next step was to seize the duchy of Urbino for his nephew Lorenzo: a step which, after all his apologies, Dr. Pastor admits to have "something repulsive about it." The Duke of Urbino (nephew of Julius II.) had, in spite of his feudal obligations, refused to attack the French at the command of the Pope, and seems to have dis-



cussed with Francis the duplicity of the Pope's procedure. Yet his liberality to the Medici in the days of misfortune had been such that Giuliano earnestly joined with Francis I. in imploring Leo to overlook his conduct. Leo harshly refused, and, to the disgust of many, the duchy was subdued and given to Lorenzo. I may conclude this matter by recounting that in 1517 the exiled Duke recovered his territory, and the long struggle for his ejection cost the Papal treasury, according to Guicciardini, 800,000 ducats.

A fresh anxiety clouded the Pope's pleasures when he heard that France, Spain, Germany, and Switzerland had formed an alliance, and that Francis I. and Charles V. (who succeeded Ferdinand on January 23d) were virtually to divide northern and central Italy between them. This project was abandoned, but in the following year an even more serious event alarmed the Pope. The younger cardinals who had pressed his election were generally aggrieved. Fast and luxurious as most of them were, they had expected a larger pecuniary gratitude on Leo's part, and they observed with annoyance that his relatives and his literary admirers secured the greater part of his lavish gifts. In 1517, one of these worldly young cardinals, Petrucci, conceived a particular animosity against Leo, on account of some injustice done to his brother, and there is little room for doubt that he spoke and thought of having the Pope assassinated. Whether or no we trust the romantic story told by Guicciardini and Giovio, that the surgeon who attended the Pope was to poison his wound, we can hardly accept the opposite rumour, that the whole conspiracy was invented by the Pope or his brother in order to secure money. Petrucci was not offered the option of a fine; and Cardinals Riario and Sauli confessed that

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they knew of the plot. After a dramatic period of inquiry and incrimination Petrucci was, in spite of the protests of cardinals and ambassadors, strangled in his prison, and the flesh of his guilty servants was torn from their bones with red-hot pincers. Cardinal Riario paid 150,000 ducats for his release, and the less wealthy Cardinal Sauli 25,000. Cardinals Soderini and Castellesi fled, when they were impeached, and their property and that of Cardinal Petrucci was seized.

These events caused the gravest scandal throughout Christendom. Cardinal Riario was the Dean of the Sacred College, and many preferred to think that the plot was an invention for the purpose of securing funds rather than that the cardinals had sunk so low. The dilemma was painful, but we can have little doubt that Leo, at least, was convinced of the reality of the plot. Instead of proceeding with greater caution, however, he went on to give a fresh ground of criticism. In a Consistory which he held on June 26th, he told the cardinals that he was going to add no less than twenty-seven members to their college. Their stormy protests increased his determination, and on July 1st he promoted thirty-one cardinals. The rumour at once spread through Christendom, and is in substance undoubted, that most of the new cardinals paid large sums of money for the dignity; Sanuto makes individual payments rise as high as 30,000 ducats. Some of them were men of low character, and others were either related to, or had lent money to, the Pope.

We may, however, conclude the political consideration before we discuss these domestic matters. Maximilian induced the Diet of Augsburg to elect his grandson Charles as his successor to the imperial title,

and, as a Bull of Julius II. enacted that the investiture of the kingdom of Naples reverted to the Papacy if its holder became King of Rome, the Pope was pressed to give a dispensation from this Bull. Leo pleaded that his "honour" was at stake; but he secretly negotiated with Francis (who bitterly opposed the dispensation) and with Charles, and bargained shamelessly for his refusal or consent. In the end Francis (out of funds raised in the name of a crusade) gave Lorenzo de' Medici 100,000 ducats "for services rendered," and promised a further sum of 100,000 to the Pope. It is an equally undisputed fact that on January 20, 1519, Leo, Lorenzo, and Francis entered into an alliance; the Pope and his nephew were to promote the interests of Francis, and the French King was to protect the Papal States and the estates of the Medici family, and to admit the claims of the Church at Milan. It is, perhaps, the choicest example of Leo's diplomacy—"unparalleled double-dealing," Dr. Pastor calls it—that he secretly drew up a similar treaty with Spain and signed it a fortnight after he had signed the preceding (February 6th).

In the meantime Leo heard that Maximilian had died on January 12th, and he confronted, or evaded, the situation in his distinctive way. He informed his German legate that Charles was already too powerful, and that either Frederic of Saxony (whom he wished to induce to surrender Luther) or Joachim of Brandenburg (a docile noble) ought to have the imperial title. Hearing, however, that these candidates had no prospect, he adopted Francis I. and urged him to defeat Charles. His policy at this stage is not wholly clear, and it is possible that at first he pitted Francis against Charles in the hope of making profit from one or the other. In time he seems seriously to have adopted

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Francis. He, on March 12th, offered the red hat to the Electors of Trèves and Cologne, and proposed (on the 14th) to make the Archbishop of Mayence (a disreputable prelate) permanent legate for Germany; and he then, on May 4th, issued a Brief to the effect that if three Electors agreed in their choice the election should be valid. His schemes were shaken for a moment by the premature death of Lorenzo, which moved him, in a nervous hour, to exclaim that henceforward he belonged, "not to the house of Medici, but to the house of God." But his associates were not kept long in suspense. He attempted to incorporate Urbino in the Papal States, and, when Francis objected that Urbino belonged to Lorenzo's surviving child (and her French mother), the Pope began to abandon France. He was just in time to approve Charles and promise a dispensation in regard to Naples before that prince was elected to be Emperor.

But the consciousness of his long opposition to Charles weighed upon him, and in September he again made a secret treaty with Francis I.; he would refuse the crown of Naples to Charles and would promote French interests by secular and spiritual weapons in return for the French King's aid against Charles and against "insubordinate vassals." Vassals of Leo X. cannot easily have kept pace with the remarkable policy of their feudal lord, but we are hardly reconciled to the Pope's mingled greed and nepotism. He secured Perugia and some of the smaller places in Ancona and Umbria, and made an unsuccessful attempt to get Ferrara. During all this time, he listened amiably to German proposals for an alliance, and in the first months of 1521 he again duped the two monarchs. In January—and it was repeated in March and April—he gave the

representatives of Charles a written assurance that he had no engagements to the disadvantage of that monarch and would not incur any within three months; in the same month (January) he agreed to secure for Francis, for the purpose of an attack on Naples, a free passage through the Swiss lines, and to receive in return Ferrara and a strip of Neapolitan territory.

By this time, however, the shadow of Luther had fallen on the Papal Court. The magnitude of the danger in Germany was by no means appreciated, but Leo was eager to get Luther to Rome and must conciliate the Emperor. In May, hearing that the French were approaching the Swiss and the Duke of Ferrara, he formed an alliance with Charles and prepared to use all his forces to drive his former ally out of Italy. The campaign opened successfully, but Leo did not live to see the issue and profit by it. He caught a chill as he sat at an open window in November watching the popular rejoicing, and died on December 1st, at the age of forty-two. Both the leading authorities, Giovio and Guicciardini, accept the current belief that either the Duke of Ferrara or the late Duke of Urbino had had him poisoned, but it is now generally recognized that the recorded symptoms of his seven days' illness point rather to malaria.

This admitted career of duplicity will not dispose us to expect a domestic atmosphere of virtue and piety at the Vatican, and it is singular that any historian has affected to find such. That Leo heard or said mass daily, and was attentive to his ceremonious obligations, is not, in that age, inconsistent with impropriety of conduct. His lavish charity was a becoming part of his habitual liberality, and his weekly fasts were rather intended to reduce the flesh than to subdue it. On the

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other hand, some of the frivolous remarks attributed to him have not the least authority. When the Venetian ambassador ascribes to him the saying, "Let us enjoy the Papacy now that God has given it to us," we may or may not have a mere popular rumour, though the phrase is at least a correct expression of Leo's ideal; but that the Pope ever mockingly attributed his good fortune to "the fable about Jesus Christ" is not stated until long after his death, and then only by an English controversialist, the ex-Carmelite Bale. Whether Leo was or was not addicted to sins of the flesh is not a grave matter of historical inquiry, but the evidence seems to me conclusive that, at least in his Pontifical days, he was irregular.<sup>1</sup>

The character of life at the Vatican and in Rome under Leo X. was, indeed, such as to prevent us from imputing any moral scruples to the Pope. Leo spent, on the lowest estimate, five million ducats in eight years, and left debts which are variously estimated at from half a million to a million ducats. He must have spent nearly £300,000 per year, and in order to make his official income of about 400,000 ducats meet this strain

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Pastor (viii., 81) is here less candid than usual. He says that "Giovio passes over the whole truth of the accusations brought against the moral conduct of Leo X.," whereas the Bishop of Nocera devotes several very curious pages to the subject (lib. iv., pp. 96-99 in the 1551 edition of the *Vita Leonis X.*) and ends with a reminder that we can never be quite sure about the secrets of the chamber and an assurance that Leo was at all events less guilty than other Italian princes. The courtly writer seems to me convinced that Leo was addicted to unnatural vice. Vaughan, on the other hand, is wrong in saying that Giovio alone mentioned these vices. Guicciardini (lib. xvi., c.v., p. 254, in the 1832 edition of the *Storia d'Italia*), in the course of a sober characterization of Leo, says that he was generally believed to be chaste before his election, but he was "afterwards found to be excessively devoted to pleasures which cannot be called decent."

he created and sold superfluous offices—they were estimated at 2150 at this death,—pressed the sale of indulgences and the exaction of fees and first-fruits, and borrowed large sums at exorbitant rates of usury; several of his bankers and friends were ruined at his death. A very large proportion of this money went in gifts to literary men and scholars. Leo was a royal spendthrift of the most benevolent and thoughtless nature. All the scribblers of Italy flocked to Rome, and money was poured out without discrimination as long as it lasted. Yet letters and scholarship actually decayed owing to the recklessness of the payments. “The splendour of the Leonine age, so often and so much belauded, is in many respects more apparent than real,” says Dr. Pastor, who has several valuable chapters on Leo’s relation to letters and art. The Roman University, which the Pope at first supported with great liberality, was suffered to decay, and great artists were not always encouraged. Ariosto was treated harshly, and, while Rafael and his pupils were richly employed, Michael Angelo was little used. Leo did not adequately appreciate sculpture or architecture, and even the building of St. Peter’s made very little progress during his Pontificate. It is true that the state of the Papal finances was the chief reason for the neglect of the great architectural and educational plans of his predecessors. The check to the sale of indulgences—brought about by Cardinal Ximenes in Spain as well as by Luther in Germany—was felt severely at Rome.<sup>1</sup> But we read that to the end Leo spent prodigious sums on musicians, decorators, goldsmiths, and jewellers. An inventory

<sup>1</sup> It is sometimes pointed out, rather in the way of merit, that Leo received less than some of his predecessors by the issue of indulgences. It was not from want of will on his part.

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in the Vatican archives values at 204,655 ducats the jewels he left behind.

It was, in fact, not so much the discriminating promotion of art and culture as a princely luxuriousness that absorbed Leo's funds. He was temperate at table. The cardinals and wealthier Romans continued to enjoy the senselessly rich banquets which they seem to have copied from the most decadent pages of Roman history. Cardinal Cornaro is noted as giving a dinner of sixty-five courses on silver dishes. Banker Chigi, a useful friend of Leo, had his valuable plate thrown into the river after one choice banquet; and on the occasion of his marriage with his mistress (whose finger was held by Leo to receive the ring) he brought luxuries, even live fish, from the ends of Europe. Banker Strozzi gave rival banquets, at which cardinals fraternized with courtesans. Leo approved, and sometimes attended, these banquets (at Chigi's palace), but was personally temperate. He had only one meal each day, and fasting fare on three days in each week, but he spent immense sums on musicians and trinket-makers, and many of his pleasures were in the grossest taste of the time. Men of prodigious appetite—one of them a Dominican friar—were brought to his table to amuse him and his guests by their incredible gluttony. The Pope bandied verses with half-drunken poetasters and patronized the coarsest buffoons as well as the keenest wits. When he went to his country house at Magliana for a few weeks' hunting—in which he displayed extraordinary vigour—he took a troop of his poets, buffoons, musicians, and other parasites. At Carnival time he entered into the wild gaiety of Rome; and comedies of the most licentious character were staged before him. Ariosto's *Suppositi* (in which Cardinal Cibò took a part), Machiavelli's



*Mandragola*, and Bibbiena's *Calandria* alternated with Terence and Plautus. The *Calandria*, written by Cardinal Bibbiena, Leo's chief favourite, the frescoes of whose bathroom seem to have been like those on certain rooms in Pompeii today, is a comedy of thin wit and unrestrained license; the Pope had it presented in the Vatican for the entertainment of Isabella d'Este.

Such was the Pope who presided over the Lateran Council for the reform of the Church, and the historian will hardly be expected to enlarge at any length on its labours. Julius had initiated the council in order to checkmate France and the schismatical cardinals, and it continued its thinly attended sittings, at wide intervals, for four years. Some seventy or eighty Italian bishops attended, and they issued some admirable counsels to the clergy to improve their lives, condemned heretical writings, and voiced the sincere wish that some Christian prince would arrest the advance of the Turks. A committee of the council drew up a stringent and comprehensive scheme for the reform of Church-abuses, but this was lost amid the vehement wrangles of monks, bishops, and cardinals. In the end (1514) a very slender reform-bill was issued; nor were the clergy disposed to comply with this when they noticed that, in the following year, Leo himself bestowed a bishopric, and soon afterwards the cardinalate, upon the boy-son of Emmanuel of Portugal, and granted to the father a large share of the proceeds of the issue of indulgences. The council also forbade the printing of books without approbation, and encouraged the spread of banks or pawn-shops (*Monti di Pietà*) for the poor. On March 16, 1517, Leo, in spite of the murmurs of the reformers and the revolt in Germany, brought to a close his

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almost futile council. He had no desire whatever for reform, and even the measures which were passed were not enforced. The reforming prelates were deeply saddened by his levity, and, before the close of the council, Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola drew up in their name an appalling indictment of the state of the Church and predicted that the refusal to remedy it would bring on them a heavy judgment.

The one work of the Council in which the Pope took a lively interest was the granting of a Concordat to France. The Gallican sentiments of the French prelates and doctors had been embodied in the Pragmatic Sanction (1438), and Rome had not ceased to protest against this cession to local councils of the powers it claimed. By the Concordat of 1516 the King and the Pope virtually divided these powers between them; the King had the right of nomination to bishoprics and abbeys, the Pope received the "first-fruits" (Annates). The Concordat was signed by Leo on September 16, 1516, but was not published until 1518, when it caused fierce indignation at the universities and among the clergy.

Leo had dismissed the reformers of the Lateran Council, and in the spring of 1517, the very year in which Martin Luther nailed his challenge on the door of the castle-church at Wittenberg, turned with relief to his corrupt court. There had, as we saw, long been an outcry in Germany against the corruption of a very large proportion of the clergy and against the Papal fiscal system, yet Leo had light-heartedly maintained the disorders. In 1514 he had, in order to secure the votes of two Electors, conferred the Archbishopric of Mayence upon a young and worldly noble, Albert of Brandenburg, and had (for a payment of 24,000 ducats) per-

mitted him still to retain the sees of Magdeburg and Halberstadt. In order to recover the 24,000 ducats, which he had borrowed on the security of a share in the sale of indulgences, the unscrupulous prelate pressed the traffic eagerly, and some of the more enlightened German clergy protested. There were already princes, such as the Elector of Saxony, who refused to allow the Papal envoys in their dominions, and there were writers, like Ulrich von Hutten, who violently assailed their procedure. Leo, however, failed to appreciate the gravity of the situation and proposed to raise large sums, ostensibly for the building of St. Peter's, by granting indulgences.

I have already explained that, though John XXIII. undoubtedly sold absolution "from guilt and from penalty," as the Council of Constance established, the indulgence was, properly speaking, a remission of the punishment due to sins which had been duly confessed. In earlier Papal practice, the indulgence was the commutation into a money-payment of the penance for sin imposed by the Church, but, as the doctrine of Purgatory developed, the indulgence came to be regarded as a remission of the punishment due in Purgatory. Two questions had then arisen on which the schoolmen had exercised their ingenuity: on what ground could the Church claim to remit this punishment, and whether the indulgence could be extended to the dead who were actually suffering in Purgatory? The schoolmen found a satisfactory answer to both questions. Then Boniface IX. decreed that an indulgence might be earned by a payment of money to the Church (the price of a voyage to Rome), and the way was opened for the later abuse. In their commercial zeal the Papal envoys and preachers undoubtedly represented that souls were de-

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livered from the fire of Purgatory when the coin rang in their collecting boxes.

The Dominican monk Tetzal, who in 1517 was sent to preach the indulgence as Albert of Brandenburg's sub-commissary, was more zealous than scrupulous in his representations, and people of Wittenberg, who had crossed the frontier in order to profit by the indulgence, came home with unedifying reports of his sermons. Martin Luther, then a professor at the Wittenberg University, heard these reports with disdain. There was no defined doctrine of the Church on the subject, and more than one divine had felt, like Luther, that this apparent traffic was as enervating to real piety as it was in itself distasteful. A man of intense and stormy spiritual experience, he sternly combated all that seemed to encourage "sloth" in religious life; his was the more arduous religion of St. Paul and St. Augustine. Conscious, therefore, that the whole practice was based on comparatively recent speculations of the schoolmen, which he had a right to dispute, he challenged Tetzal to justify his "lying fables and empty promises." A war of pamphlets ensued, and, as his opponents naturally appealed to the language in which the Popes had announced indulgences, Luther was compelled to slight the words of the Popes and appeal to the declarations of Councils and the teaching of Scripture. He was still orthodox; the language he used had been heard in the Church for two centuries, and in that age one would as soon have thought of claiming impeccability as infallibility for the Popes.

At the beginning of 1518 it was reported to Rome that the agitation raised by the robust professor was seriously interfering with the indulgences, and Leo, encouraged by the angry Dominicans, directed his superiors to re-

strain him. When they failed, he summoned Luther to Rome. The monk, knowing how such trials ended at Rome, appealed to the Elector of Saxony and to Maximilian. The appeal to the Emperor, however, fell at a time when the Papal favour was sought for Charles, and Maximilian encouraged the Pope to take action. Leo ordered Luther to present himself at once before the Papal Legate and prepare for trial at Rome. On the other hand Frederic of Saxony insisted that Luther should be examined in Germany, and the Pope dreaded to irritate an Elector on the eve of an imperial election. Legate Cajetan was therefore empowered to see the rebel at Augsburg, and a series of futile conferences took place on October 12th-14th. Luther wished to argue and justify his thesis: Cajetan was instructed merely to demand his submission. Luther insisted that he should be tried by the learned doctors of Basle, Freiburg, Louvain, and Paris: the legate was charged to assert the Papal authority. On October 18th Luther departed in disgust for Wittenberg; and his temper was not improved by the discovery that Leo had, on August 23d, directed the legate, in case of obstinacy, to declare him heretical. He appealed to a General Council.

Luther was still within the limits of orthodox sentiment and practice, and the protection of the Elector embarrassed the Pope. A more diplomatic envoy, Karl von Miltz, a Papal chamberlain, was sent to Germany, and some months were spent in amiable correspondence. Luther promised to be silent if his opponents would keep silence, and wrote a respectful letter to the Pope; to which Leo made a gracious reply. But the truce was little more than a diplomatic regard for Papal interests during the period of the imperial election, and the policy

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of silence soon proved impossible for both sides. Ulrich von Hutten and other critics encouraged Luther to assail the Papal authority, and the exaggerations of his opponents reacted on the growth of his mind. By the end of 1519 he seems to have concluded, with some firmness, that the Papal system was an unwarranted addition to primitive Christianity, and a formidable movement supported his ideas.

In January (1520) Luther's case was submitted to a commission of theologians at Rome, and the Elector was summoned to compel him to retract. Frederic refused, and in June Leo signed the Bull *Exsurge Domine*; Luther was to be excommunicated if he did not submit within sixty days, and the secular authorities would incur an interdict if they did not surrender him. It is not of material interest to quarrel with the Pope's procedure: to point out that the disappointed Cajetan was one of the heads of the commission of inquiry, and that Luther's vehement opponent Eck was one of the two legates entrusted with the publication of the Bull. Rome demanded submission; and, if Luther had submitted, some other German would before long have instituted the Reformation. Europe was ripe for schism, and it may be doubted whether even a reform of the Church would have long prevented the growth of a body of men holding the Reformers' view of the bases of Papal authority. On December 10th (1520) Luther publicly burned the Bull. Even this act was not without orthodox precedent, but Luther was constantly advancing. He was summoned before the Diet of Worms in April (1521), and he then stated that the word of neither Popes nor Councils would condemn him; he must be judged by reason and Scripture. But the political situation, which casts its shadow throughout

on the development, was now modified. Charles obtained his wish of an alliance with the Papacy against France. This alliance was signed on May 8th: on the 12th the Diet issued the Edict of Worms. Luther was, in accordance with the Pope's second Bull,<sup>1</sup> declared a heretic. He retreated to the Wartburg under the protection of Frederic, and the gravest phase of the struggle opened.<sup>2</sup>

Leo died in December, as I have stated, leaving to his successor the terrible legacy of his frivolity in face of a grave calamity. In his last two years he apprehended, to some extent, the magnitude of the German trouble, but he plainly proposed to answer the just demand of reform only by the burning of a few heretics. His entirely dishonourable diplomacy and his costly indulgence of tastes which ill befitted a successor of Leo I. imposed the last unendurable burden on the patience of Europe. For him the Papacy was a principality, and the religious nature of its financial sources makes more contemptible the use to which he put his wealth. Even that artistic splendour which casts a glow over the Papacy before the breaking of the great storm owed to him comparatively little. The middle or secular phase of the development of the Papacy came to an end in the tawdry luxuries and unscrupulous measures of a Pope who has been treated with singular favour at the bar of Catholic history.

<sup>1</sup> *In Cæna Domini*, March 28th.

<sup>2</sup> The situation in England does not call for consideration in this chapter. Henry VIII. wrote against Luther and, in presenting his book to the Pope, requested a title analogous to that of "the most Catholic King." By a Bull of October 26, 1521, Henry received the title of "Defender of the Faith," which his successors retain.

## CHAPTER XV

### PAUL III. AND THE COUNTER-REFORMATION

THE period immediately following the death of Leo X. is known as that of the Counter-Reformation. The name which has clung to the great religious schism of the sixteenth century still indicates how essentially it was, in its origin, a protest against the corruption of the mediæval Church. The reform of dogma was an afterthought; and the Reformation would probably have proved one more futile and academic criticism of the mediæval growth of doctrine if it had not primarily appealed to the very general resentment against the practices of the Curia and contempt for the unworthy lives of so large a proportion of the clergy and regulars. The situation, indeed, offers a romantic aspect to the historian. If a strong and entirely religious man, like Cardinal Carafa, had succeeded Leo X., it might have been possible, by a notable improvement in practice, to disarm a very effective proportion of the followers of the Reformers and thus to put back for a century or two the doctrinal revision. Unhappily for the Papacy, Leo X. had filled the Sacred College with men of his own disposition, and thirty years were wasted in fruitless efforts at compromise. In those thirty years, the hesitating criticisms of Luther crystallized into a settled creed which no persuasion could dissolve and no persecution could obliterate.



Hadrian VI., who followed Leo, spent two unhappy years (1521-3) in a pitiable and wholly vain attempt to save the authority of the Popes in northern Europe. Sprung from a pious working-class family of the Lowlands, and retaining his simple tastes and stern religious idealism in the evil atmosphere of the higher clergy, he sincerely resented the vices and frivolity of the cardinals. Rome itself now ridiculed so fiercely the contrast between their pretensions and their lives that the worldly cardinals were unable to put into power a man like Leo X., and the learned, venerable, and more or less disdained Hadrian VI. shuddered to find himself at the helm on so stormy a sea. He was not the type of man to save the Church. With simple fidelity, he at once made it clear that the debased policy of his predecessor was abandoned; but he had not the strength to control the crowd of discontented cardinals and prelates, or to frame and carry through a consistent scheme of reform. He was concerned, too, about the financial loss which would be caused by a thorough reform, and the traffic in benefices and indulgences was merely moderated instead of being abolished. The curtailment was in itself a confession that the system was corrupt, and the Reformers scoffed at Hadrian's invitation to return on such a basis, while orthodox Catholics deplored the candour of the admission. Between these antagonistic and weighty forces the slender energy of the well meaning Pontiff was exhausted in two years.

The Pontificate of Clement VII. (1523-34) was a compromise; he was a Medicean Pope (Giulio de' Medici), a patron of art and letters, but a man of sober taste and regular life. It was a compromise, too, between a keen intelligence and a flabby will—a sagacious per-

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ception of the danger and a complete lack of the virility needed to avert it—and eleven further years of impotence permitted the Reformation to take deep and indestructible root in Germany. Clement VII. was, in fact, largely absorbed in the unending political struggle. After some vacillation he allied himself with France against Charles V., and Charles won. Rome had to endure one of the most cruel and most prolonged pillages in its history, and the Pope was for seven months imprisoned in Sant' Angelo. He made peace with Charles, but he had little satisfaction in contemplating the imperial shadow which lay over fallen Italy, while the Turks came ever nearer and no Christian monarch would advance against them. In these circumstances, Protestantism became a creed and spread over the north. Henry VIII. married Anne Boleyn and became the "defender" of a new faith; and the revolt spread to Switzerland and Scandinavia. The scanty measures of reform passed by Clement were regarded with disdain by the dissenters, and the artistic Renaissance itself never recovered from the sack of Rome and the overrunning of Italy. It was left to the founders of new religious congregations, especially the Oratorians, Theatines, and Barnabites, and to the reformers of the older orders, to lay the foundations of the Counter-Reformation.

Clement died on September 25, 1534, and the College of Cardinals, which had almost become the curse of the Church, met to elect a successor. Few of these cardinals, even now, grasped with any intelligence the grave situation of their Church. It was, indeed, feared that, while the reform was spreading rapidly in the north, the Conclave would be wrecked by the conflict of the French and Imperialist partisans. The struggle was

so menacing that a politically neutral cardinal was forced upon the College, and the graver need of the Church—the need of a Pontiff of the most sincere and spontaneous religion, as well as of large mind and inflexible will—was almost unnoticed.

Alessandro Farnese, who now became Paul III.,<sup>1</sup> was a man of high intelligence, fine culture, and great will-power; but he had neither the immaculate record and deep piety which were needed to impress the Reformers nor the political decision which might have compensated for these defects. However much the historian may appreciate the difficulties of the Papacy, he cannot but recognize that the idea of compromising with the Reformers had at least since 1520 been futile. Paul III. had, it is true, no idea of compromise: the dissenters were to surrender every doctrinal and disciplinary claim, or to be extinguished. The great European schism could now have been remedied by no man. But a reform of the Church on other than doctrinal matters might have done much to arrest the spread of Protestantism, and on this Paul compromised. His policy was a reflection of his personality; he was a son of the Renaissance Church, and feebly—in spite of his admitted strength of will—he endeavoured to retain certain pleasant features of the vicious *ancien régime* with which to soften the asperity of the new ideal which was forced upon him. He was in a sense a Papal Louis XVIII.

We remember Paul as the brother of Alexander VI's doll-like mistress, Giulia Farnese. Born on February

<sup>1</sup> For the valuable letters of the Italian ambassadors at the time of the Conclave see *L'Elezione del Papa Paolo III.* (1907) by P. Accame. An almost contemporary biography of Paul is given in the *Vite et Res Gestæ Romanorum Pontificum* of Ciaconius.

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29, 1468, he had received early instruction in the new culture from Pomponio Leto at Rome, and had spent his youth in that seminary of the Humanists, the splendid palace of Lorenzo de' Medici at Florence, and then at Pisa University. His wealth was far inferior to the nobility of his descent, and it was not until his young sister had attracted the eye of the voluptuous Pope that he was promoted to the cardinalate (September 20, 1493). In 1502, he was appointed legate for the March of Ancona, and the more comfortable establishment he could now afford to maintain included a mistress. Four children—Pier Luigi, Paolo, Costanza, and Ranuccio—were born in his palace between 1502 and 1509; and the eldest son and Costanza were familiar figures in Roman society during his later Pontificate.

The more minute inquirer will find the documents transcribed from the Vatican archives, relating to these children, in Pastor.<sup>1</sup> His mistress died at an early age in 1513, and Alessandro (now forty-five years old) is described as moderating his irregularities and as devoting some attention to his bishopric of Parma. Papal historians observe with pride that his irregularities entirely ceased in 1519, when he was ordained priest. The friend of his youth, Leo X., cordially included him in his generous patronage, and he was able to build the Farnese palace and to cultivate ambition. In 1523, he made an effort to secure the tiara, but at the Conclave the cardinals had not the courage to present to the Reformers as Pontiff the father of four children. He stifled his lament that Clement VII. had "robbed him of ten years of the Papacy," and became as amiable a friend of that Pope as he had been

<sup>1</sup> XL, 19-20.

of his five predecessors; and amidst the fierce clash of political passion he retained a diplomatic neutrality. He shared Clement's bitter days in Sant' Angelo, yet did not quarrel with the Imperialists.

These characteristics marked Alessandro for the throne; and they at the same time ensured that his struggle with Protestantism would be entirely futile. He was now sixty-seven years old, and we easily picture him from Titian's wonderful portrait; frail and worn in flesh and stooping with age; yet his penetrating eyes and large bald dome of a forehead indicated a great energy of will and force of intellect. He was essentially a diplomat, and the cardinals, absorbed for the most part in the political troubles, did not reflect that the rapier of diplomacy was the last weapon with which to meet the stout staves of the northerners. He was an excellent listener, a sparing and deliberate talker, a most skilful postponer of crucial decisions; a "*vas dilationis*," the Roman wits said, parodying the description of a greater Paul.

Dr. Pastor thinks that the reforming cardinals—of whom there were now many—had much confidence in his disposition to reform. If they had, their trust is in the main another tribute to his diplomatic skill. He had no idea of reforming the Curia and the Church further than might be exacted of him by unpleasant circumstances.

Shrewd observers must quickly have observed that Paul III. remained at heart a Farnese. His son, Pier Luigi, visited him in Rome soon after his election. Pier Luigi had become a military adventurer, a feeble emulator of Cæsar Borgia, and by taking arms in the Imperialist service, had incurred excommunication under Clement. Paul is said to have received his son

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in secret and directed him to keep away from Rome. There was to be no open nepotism. But in a few weeks Pier Luigi was back in Rome and was observed to have plenty of money. Paul was crowned on November 3d (1534) and announced his intention to reform the Church. On December 18th he bestowed the cardinalate on two of his nephews, Guido Sforza and Alessandro Farnese. Sforza was a youth of seventeen; Alessandro was a fourteen-year old pupil at Bologna, yet he received, besides the red hat, the governorship of Spoleto and such a number of profitable benefices that he was soon able to outshine some of the more ostentatious cardinals; and in the next year he was made Vice-Chancellor. Both he and Sforza were notoriously immoral. Pier Luigi was made Gonfaloniere, Commander of the Papal troops, and Duke of Castro; and proportionate benefits were showered on all friends and connexions of the Farnese family.

It would not be history to dwell on the "obstinacy" of the Reformers and to fail to emphasize these very pertinent and entirely undisputed facts; but I will dismiss in few words this aspect of Paul's character. Nepotism was one of his most persistent traits, and we shall repeatedly find his direction of Papal policy perverted by a care for the worldly advancement of his family. He was equally unable and unwilling to break with the gayer tradition of the Borgia-Medici court. He loved pageantry and comedy, encouraged the merry riot of the carnival, favoured astrologers, buffoons, and pseudo-classical poets, and liked to dine with fair women. It is, perhaps, not much to say that his private life—at the age of seventy—was irreproachable; but it is not immaterial to observe that he gave an indulgent eye to the conduct of the looser cardinals. Instead of sternly

attempting to crush that large body of loose and luxurious cardinals to whom, in the first place, we may trace the catastrophe of the Church, he added, at each promotion, a few to their number. Of the seventy-one cardinals he promoted during his Pontificate the great majority were good men; but a few were of such a character that their election was, in the actual situation of the Church, unpardonable.

These little personal details must be considered first if we are to understand aright the attitude of Paul III. toward reform and the reforming council. From the first he assured his visitors that he intended to reform the Church. Before the end of 1534, he appointed two reform commissions—one on morals and the other on Church offices; though he chilled the zeal of the more ardent cardinals by enjoining them to take into account the circumstances. In the spring of 1535, he prosecuted Cardinal Accolti for grave abuse of his position of legate, but compromised for a fine of 59,000 scudi. The Reformers of Germany had from the first appealed to a council, and Paul declared himself in favour of a council; but he insisted that it must be summoned by him, presided over by his legates, and held in Italy; and this not only the princes of the Schmalkaldic League but the three monarchs concerned emphatically refused. Charles V. saw that such a council would be—as Paul III. well knew—utterly useless as an instrument of reconciliation; Francis I. did not want reconciliation at all, since it would give to Charles command of a united Germany; and Henry VIII., who accepted the title of Head of the English Church in 1534, and in the following year initiated his policy of bloody persecution, had done with Rome. In fact, instead of giving all the negotiations about a

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council, I would point out that there never was the slightest hope by such a means of ending the schism. Each side was absolutely convinced of the truth of its formulæ, and very few, least of all the Pope, thought that compromise was possible or desirable. Luther was quite willing to attend a council, even in Italy; but merely in order to convince the Church of its errors and abominations. The Pope wanted a council merely in order to formulate Catholic doctrine in clear official terms and thus to provide a standard for the condemnation and extermination of the heretics. No Pope could think otherwise.

Paul at length ventured to announce "to the city and the world" that a general council would be held at Mantua on the 23d of May, 1537; but when the Duke of Mantua directed the Pope to send an army to protect his council, the design was abandoned. A Bull next announced that the council would meet at Vicenza on May 1, 1538; but as only five prelates had arrived there when, on May 12th, the three Papal Legates made their imposing entry—after waiting in nervous hope some distance away—that project, also, was abandoned. I would not agree that Paul did not sincerely want a council, but during the first ten years the council he wanted was an impossibility.

Meantime, the idea of reform by commissions was sustaining the half-desperate hopes of the better cardinals at Rome. In February, 1537, the commission drew up so sound and true and large a scheme of reform that the anti-reformers successfully pleaded that it would injure the Church to publish it, and it remains "a scrap of paper" in the Vatican Archives. After much discussion, Paul decided to begin with the reform of the Dataria (an office of the Court which yielded



more than 50,000 ducats a year, nearly half the entire income, to the Papal exchequer in connexion with the issue of graces, privileges, dispensations, etc.), and a further long discussion ensued. The discussion lasted some three years, without practical issue, and it was not until the end of 1540 that a few obvious reforms could be carried in some of the departments of the Curia. Characteristic is the story of one of these reforms. Pressed by the sterner cardinals, who wrote grave letters to each other on the Pope's conduct, to put an end to the scandal of non-resident prelates (absentee landlords), Paul summoned eighty of them, who were living in comfort at Rome, to return to their dioceses. There was terrible alarm. But they successfully pleaded that they could not live on the mere incomes of their sees, and they remained in Rome. Paul had to be content with discharging a few officials, directing the clergy to reform their lives and their sermons, and encouraging the new religious congregations: among which was a certain very small community, calling itself the "Company of Jesus," which seemed to him, when it first appeared in Rome, eccentric and of very doubtful value to the Church.

In the meantime, Paul had successfully maintained the political neutrality which he had from the first contemplated. Francis and Charles both sought alliance with him, and he tried instead to reconcile them and avert war. It is to his credit that when Charles, perceiving his weakness, offered, as the price of alliance, the marquisate of Novara to Pier Luigi and a principality in Naples to Pier's son Ottavio, Paul still refused. But the fact that in 1536 he received Charles with great pomp at Rome irritated Francis, and war broke

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out.<sup>1</sup> In view of the advances of the Turks, Paul went in person to Nice, in the spring of 1538, and reconciled the two monarchs, but his nepotism again mars the merit of this work. He arranged that his grandson Ottavio, a boy of thirteen, should marry the Emperor's natural daughter, Margaret of Austria, a girl-widow of sixteen, who hated the boy; and their connubial arrangements added, for many years, to the scandal or the gaiety of Rome. Paul was also severely blamed for the unscrupulous way in which he wrested the duchy of Camerino from the Varani and gave it to Ottavio. When Francis violently objected to this virtual alliance, Paul married his granddaughter Vittoria to a French prince. Nor were the Reformers pleased when they learned that, in return for the Emperor's natural daughter, the Pope had granted to Charles the right to publish indulgences in Spain, and had given him other privileges which would yield him a million ducats a year of Church money; and that neither Francis nor Charles would help Italy to face the Turks.

The unchecked advance of the Turk had, indirectly, another grave disadvantage for the Papacy. Charles needed the united forces of his dominions to meet the Turks, and the Protestants profited by his need. Whatever may be said about the amiable intentions of Paul III., at an earlier date, he now plainly designed to crush the followers of the Reformers in the field.

<sup>1</sup> See, for this aspect of Paul's Pontificate, an article by L. Cardauns, "Paul III., Karl V., und Franz I.," in *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienischen Archiven*, Bd. XI., Heft I., pp. 147-244. The writer holds that an alliance with Charles was advisable with a view to crush Protestantism. There is certainly much evidence that Paul wished to discover which of the rival monarchs would do most for his children, yet he assuredly had a sincere desire for neutrality.

He sent his grandson, Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, to the courts of Francis and of Charles, and the instructions which he gave him, as well as the letters of the Cardinal himself, show that he sought, not only their support of his Italian council, but the co-operation of the monarchs against the Turks and the Protestants.<sup>1</sup> Both refused, and Charles, in spite of the Pope's vehement objections, consented to the holding of another conference or discussion with the representatives of the Protestants. The conference took place at Hagenau on June 12th, and had, of course, no result, but a fresh attempt was made at Worms in January 1541, and Paul sent Bishop Campeggio and four theologians to meet the Protestant divines. It is needless to discuss the Colloquy in detail, since such experiments never had the least prospect of success, but the next conference is of some interest.

Some of the German princes, like the Duke of Bavaria, had no wish to see a religious reconciliation, since their ambition had a larger chance of success in a disunited Empire; and Francis I. was only too eager to support these princes.<sup>2</sup> Other vassals of the Emperor were irreconcilable Protestants. But there were on both sides a few men of a moderate disposition, who believed that a round-table conference might still secure religious peace, if not the old unity. Charles V. was of this opinion, and he made it a test of the Pope's sincerity that he should co-operate in a last attempt.

<sup>1</sup> See *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland*, edited by W. Friedensberg, v. 140 and 59. Many useful documents will also be found in H. Loemmer's *Monumenta Vaticana historiam ecclesiasticam sæculi XVI. illustrantia*, 1861.

<sup>2</sup> See the report of the Venetian ambassador in *Le Relazioni degli ambasciatori Veneti*, edited by C. Alberi, 1st series.

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Cardinal Contarini, a man of impressive character and considerable ability, was sent as legate, and for some time before the opening of the Diet of Ratisbon, he zealously endeavoured to find the dogmatic formulæ which had some prospect of common acceptance. Charles had begged the Pope to confer large powers of concession on his legate, but we now know that Paul gave him but slender authority, couched in the vaguest of language.<sup>1</sup> If any attempt were made to settle important points of doctrine, he was to protest and leave the Diet. In a later instruction, he warned Contarini not to allow the Emperor to suspect that Rome favoured the use of force rather than persuasion, and to say, in regard to the proposal that the Papacy should send 50,000 scudi for the purpose of bribing influential Protestants, that such a design seemed neither decent nor safe, but that the 50,000 scudi would be sent "for distribution," if, and when, a reconciliation was effected.<sup>2</sup> It is plain that Paul foresaw the complete failure of the Colloquy—we must remember that success depended entirely on *concession* and no Pope could make a concession on doctrine—and intended to make the failure a ground for an appeal to arms.

The Diet opened on April 27, 1541, and in a few weeks Contarini and his friends announced with sincere joy that they had reached a common formula on so delicate a topic as justification. This agreement had been reached by the Papal Legate accepting a semi-heretical formula, which Rome afterwards rejected. But the

<sup>1</sup> E. Dietrich, *Kardinal Contarini* (1885), p. 565.

<sup>2</sup> This curious side-light on the history of the Reformation is given, in a document reproduced from the secret archives of the Vatican, by Dr. Pastor (xi., 431).

futility of the proceedings soon became apparent. When they went on to discuss transubstantiation and penance, priestly celibacy and monastic vows, the antagonism became acute, and the Colloquy ended in disorder. The Pope rejected all the formulæ approved by his Legate, and wrote him, on June 10th, that he was sending the 50,000 scudi, and would send a larger sum if the Catholics found it necessary to draw the sword against the heretics. Some of the stricter cardinals at Rome, such as Carafa and Toledo, were now convinced that force was necessary.

In September (1541) the Pope met the Emperor at Lucca. Charles insisted that the council, whatever form it took, must be held in Germany, but Paul pleaded that he wished to preside in person and that his age forbade so lengthy a journey. We shall hardly be unjust if we regard these pleas as pretexts. The forthcoming council was, in the Pope's view,—an inevitable view,—to be a canonical gathering for the stricter definition of the doctrines already rejected by the Reformers; when that council had formulated the faith, the secular powers must deal with any who dissented from it. Paul still fought for the holding of the council in Italy, where he could overwhelm the Protestant envoys, but as it became entirely certain that not a single Protestant would come to Italy, he spoke of Cambrai, Metz, and other alternatives, and at length consented to Trent. Still there was much friction, and many were not yet convinced that the Pope sincerely desired a reform-council. Francis I. angrily exclaimed that this council seemed to be an imperial concern, and he refused to publish the Bull of Convocation. Charles, on the other side, was annoyed to find that in the Bull he was put on a level with that perfidious ally of the infidel,

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Francis I., and he threatened to keep his German prelates from going to Trent. But the Pope energetically overbore all opposition, and the historic Council of Trent was announced for November 1st. In the meantime (July, 1542), the Pope reconstituted the Inquisition in Italy and put it under the control of the more fanatical cardinals like Carafa. It was empowered to imprison heretics, confiscate their goods, and (with the use of the secular arm) to put them to death. Dr. Pastor deplors that the Vatican authorities still refuse to allow access to the records of the Roman Inquisition, so that we are very imperfectly acquainted with its work.

The Papal Legates arrived at Trent with great pomp, on November 22d, three weeks after the appointed date, yet not a single bishop had appeared. Six weeks later the arrival of two bishops gave them a slender satisfaction, but by the end of March not more than a dozen bishops—and these mostly Italians—had reached the seat of the council. Neither Germans nor French would come, and the Italians thought it prudent not to arrive in a body so as to give to the council a national complexion. In the summer, Paul went to confer with Charles at Parma, but the issue of their conference was a bitter disappointment for the Catholic reformers. Paul proposed to suspend the opening of the council and to transfer it from Trent, and begged the Emperor to bring about a compromise with France, by yielding Milan to the Pope's nephew, Ottavio. Charles refused to assent, and Paul, on his own account, suspended the council and began to look to Francis I. for the aggrandizement of his family.

The events which followed make the historian wonder that any have attempted to clear the character of

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Paul III. of disgraceful nepotism and insincerity. Charles V. sought alliance with Henry VIII., and Paul sent his nephew, Cardinal Farnese, to the Court of Francis I. In that grave crisis of the Church's fortunes, we have the Catholic Emperor in alliance with Henry VIII., the most Catholic King in alliance with the Turks, and the Pope seeking, with a notoriety which gave great scandal, the enrichment of his illegitimate children and other relatives. Vittoria Farnese, the Pope's granddaughter, was betrothed to the Duke of Orleans, and the Pope promised her, from the patrimony of St. Peter, the duchies of Parma and Piacenza as her dowry. Charles angrily threatened to invade Rome, and the Spanish and German envoys at the Vatican used language which had rarely been heard in the Papal chambers. It is put to the credit of the Pope only that he refused still to disown or condemn Charles, as Francis demanded, and that he earnestly sought to reconcile the monarchs. In September, his efforts bore fruit in the Peace of Crespy. Yet we must recall that, as all acknowledge, Paul was in part concerned for the security of his family in refusing to incur the hostility of Charles; and we know that a secret clause of the Treaty of Crespy compelled Francis and Charles to unite for the purpose of destroying the Protestants as well as the Turks.

It was also stipulated at Crespy that the council should at last begin its labours, and Paul announced that it would open at Trent on March 25, 1545. But the attempt was again abortive, and only two bishops greeted the Papal Legates on the appointed date. The Catholic monarchs did not believe that the Pope was sincere, and the Protestants were violently opposed to a council on the orthodox Catholic lines. Cardinal

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Farnese was sent to induce the Emperor to send his German bishops, and we now find Charles leaning more decidedly to the plan of coercion and war. Cardinal Farnese writes in high spirits to his uncle that Charles is, in alliance with the Papacy, about to make war on the Protestants; and it is unhappily characteristic that he adds that this alliance may turn to the great profit of the Farnese family.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the Cardinal returned to Rome with all speed, in disguise, and Paul promised 100,000 ducats and 12,000 men for the war, besides granting Charles a half-year's income of the Spanish Church and permission to raise 500,000 ducats by the sale of monastic property. The eagerness of the Pope at this adoption of a design he had so long cherished may be judged from the fact that his courier to Charles left Rome on June 16th and reached Worms by the 23d. Charles, however, had begun to waver in his brave resolution, and the war was postponed; but the advancement of the Farnesi was not forgotten. The duchies of Parma and Piacenza were now given to Pier Luigi, and the Pope met the violent protests of the cardinals with a statistical "proof" that the duchies were of less value than a few small places which his son surrendered to the Holy See. The annoyance of the reforming prelates was complete when the Pope issued a medal representing a naked Ganymede leaning on an eagle and watering the lily which was the emblem of the Farnese family.<sup>2</sup>

Charles would not consent to the removal of the council to Bologna, and it was at length opened at Trent on December 13, 1545, with an attendance of

<sup>1</sup> Farnese's letter to the Pope is reproduced by A. von Druffel, *Karl V. und die Römische Kurie*, ii., 57.

<sup>2</sup> It is described in A. Armand, *Les Médailleurs Italiens*, i., 172.



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four archbishops and twenty-one bishops. The first session was purely formal, and the second session (January 7th) was occupied by a violent discussion on procedure. The Emperor feared that a formulation of Catholic doctrines would close the door of the Church definitively against the Germans, and he insisted that the reform of morals and discipline must come first. Paul feared that, if the question of reform came first, the council would almost resolve itself into a trial of the Papacy; and there is good ground to think that, on the other hand, he wanted the doctrines in dispute formulated as a preliminary step to the more drastic condemnation of the Reformers. The conflict ended in compromise: each sitting of the council was to consider both doctrine and reform. The correspondence of the legates with the Pope<sup>1</sup> shows how vehemently Paul fought for his plan, and it was only at their very grave and emphatic assurance that reform must proceed—that deeds, not Bulls, were wanted, as they put it—that he agreed to the compromise.

The fathers of the council, who, at the end of June, had risen in number to about sixty, had held two further sessions, and had discussed only a few dogmas and measures of reform when their labours were again suspended by the outbreak of the religious war. The Protestants had naturally refused to attend the Papal council, and had continued to spread their faith in the north. Paul, therefore, urged Charles to carry out his design of repressing them by arms, and in June (1546) a secret treaty was signed by Charles V., the Duke of Bavaria, Ferdinand I., and the Pope uniting their forces for an attack upon the Schmalkaldic dissenters. In order to prevent Charles from again losing

<sup>1</sup> See Pallavicini's *Istoria del Consiglio di Trento*, bks. vi. and vii.

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his resolution, the Pope dishonourably communicated this treaty to the Protestants, nor was Charles less angry with Paul for representing to France, Poland, and Venice that the impending struggle was a religious crusade in which any Catholic people might assist. It was the policy of Charles to place his enterprise on purely secular grounds. There was again grave friction between Charles and the Pope, and the Farnesi mingled with the graver issues a petulant complaint that Charles had done so little for them.

The Protestants, however, were badly organized and were soon defeated. Paul bitterly complained that Charles would not follow up his victory by initiating a policy of persecution in south Germany, and would not, when Henry VIII. died (1547), join forces with Francis I. for the invasion of England; and another fiery quarrel ensued. The prelates at Trent conceived that they were menaced by the distant and subdued Protestants, and Paul quickly availed himself of the apprehension to demand a removal to Italy. Charles went so far as to threaten to confiscate the whole of the property of the Church in Germany, but a convenient epidemic broke out at Trent and Paul removed the council to Bologna. Another year was spent in discussion as to the validity of the transfer, and the rumour that the Pope secretly desired to frustrate the work of reform once more gained ground. This is, as I explained, a half-truth. But so little reform was actually achieved during the life of Paul that I need not deal further here with the Council of Trent.

The year 1648 was filled with the acrid conflict of Pope and Emperor. Paul drew nearer to France, and Rome, believing that at length the Pope was about to abandon his policy of neutrality, prepared once more

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for invasion. Charles made no descent on Italy, but he now took a step which seemed to the Pope almost as scandalous an outrage. He issued his famous Interim: a document which enacted that, until the points in dispute were settled by a council, priests might marry, the laity might communicate from the chalice, and vague and conciliatory interpretations might be put on the doctrines of the Church. In spite of the intrigues of France, Paul wearily maintained his negotiations with Charles, and, to the last, pressed the ambitions of his family. In October (1549), however, his favourite grandson rebelled against his decision in regard to Parma, and the aged Pope abandoned the unhappy struggle. He died on November 10th of that year.

In spite of the efforts of some recent historians, the character of Paul does not stand out with distinction in the Papal chronicle. His lamentable nepotism mars his whole career, and his real reluctance to press the work of reform did grave injury to his Church. He belonged essentially to the earlier phase of the Papacy, and it is apparent that, if he could have extirpated Protestantism by the sword, the Papacy would have returned to the more decent levities of the days of Leo X. As it was, he did comparatively little for either culture or religion. He very cordially employed Michael Angelo and Sangallo, and showed a concern for the antiquities and the monuments of Rome. He had ability, power, and taste; but he had not that fiery will for reform and that deep religious faith which were needed in that hour of danger.

## CHAPTER XVI

### SIXTUS V. AND THE NEW CHURCH

THE Council of Trent, which had been convoked with the formal aim of healing the great schism of Christendom, hardened that schism and made it irremediable. I have already observed how natural it was that the Papacy should refuse to make open confession of its decay, and in some degree surrender its authority, by permitting the Church to reform, not only its members, but its head. The inevitable conception of the Popes was to retain the work of reform in their own hands and to use the council, if council there must be,—we have seen that Popes had reason to look with suspicion on councils,—to secure an agreement on doctrinal standards by which the Inquisitors might judge, and secular princes might exterminate, heretics. They miscalculated the power of the northern rebels and the chances of an unselfish cohesion of the Catholic princes against them. Nearly half of Europe adopted a new version of the Christian faith, and, when the Thirty Years' War finally proved the indestructibility of that creed, the task of the Papacy was narrowed to the ruling and reforming of southern Europe and the spiritual conquest of the new worlds which had appeared beyond the seas. For this fourth phase of Papal development—the period from the consolida-

tion of the Reformation to the first outbreak of Modernism in the French Revolution—the Pontificates of Sixtus V. and Benedict XIV. are the most illuminating and significant.

Even the failure of Paul III. did not entirely banish from the Vatican the levity which had been the immediate cause of its disaster. Julius III. (1550-1555) at first resumed, somewhat reluctantly, the sittings of the Council of Trent, but he again suspended its work in 1552 and entered upon a period of luxurious ease and frivolous enjoyment which deeply shocked the graver cardinals. At his death the fiery Neapolitan reformer, Cardinal Carafa, who had dictated the more severe decisions of Paul III., received the tiara, and he spent four energetic years (1555-1559) in a relentless attack upon heresy in Catholic lands. He made vigorous use of the Inquisition, which Paul III. had (largely at the instigation of St. Ignatius) set up in Rome, and he published a complete Index of Prohibited Books.<sup>1</sup> But his reforms, his heresy-hunts, and his hostility to Spain were enforced with such harshness that the Romans almost cursed his memory when his short Pontificate came to an end. It is a singular illustration of the tenacity of abuses at Rome that even the austere Carafa was a nepotist, and the nephews he favoured were of so unworthy a character that they were executed—though one of them was a cardinal—by his successor.

Pius IV. (1559-65) was a more persuasive reformer: a Milanese of lowly origin but of some distinction in canonical scholarship. He guided to their close the

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. G. H. Putnam's *Censorship of the Church of Rome* (2 vols., 1907), i., 168.

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labours of the Council of Trent,<sup>1</sup> and on January 26, 1564, put the Papal seal on the precise formulation of the Roman creed. Pius V. (1565-72) brought to the Papal throne the austere ideals of a sincere Dominican monk. He was not content with persecuting the Italians who criticized the Papacy; he did much to reform the Papal Court and the city. Gregory XIII. (1572-85), a scholarly Pope, mingled in strange proportion the virtues and vices of his predecessors. His name survives honourably in the Gregorian Calendar, and he did more than any other Pope to encourage the spread of that network of Jesuit colleges throughout southern Europe which proved so effective a hindrance to the advance of Protestantism; but the *Te Deum* he sang over the foul "St. Bartholomew Massacre" (1572) and the condition of infuriated rebellion in which he left the Papal States at his death betray his defects. The Papal income had fallen considerably since the loss of England and north Germany and Scandinavia, yet Gregory wished to pay heavy subsidies to the militant Catholic princes. He imposed such taxes, and aroused such fierce anger by seizing estates after disputing the title-deeds of the owners, that Italy almost slew him with its hatred.

In these circumstances the famous Sixtus V. mounted the Papal throne. Felice Peretti had been born at Grottamare, in the March of Ancona, on December 13, 1521. The unwonted vigour of his character is traced by some to the Dalmatian blood of his ancestors, who, in the preceding century, had fled before the Turks to Italy. They had preserved their robust health, and attained no fortune, by work on the soil, and there is

<sup>1</sup> See, besides the work of Pallavicini already quoted, Paolo Sarpi's *Istoria del Concilio Tridentino*.

not the least improbability in the tradition—which some recent writers resent—that Felice at one time tended his father's swine.<sup>1</sup> But at the age of nine he was sent to the friary at Montalto, where he had an uncle, and he proved a good student. He became so excellent a preacher that he was summoned to give the Lenten Sermons at Rome in 1552, and he attracted the notice of St. Ignatius and St. Philip Neri, and of some of the graver cardinals. After presiding over one or two convents of his Order, he was put in charge of the friary at Venice in 1556, and was in the next year made Counsellor to the Inquisition. His ardent nature and strict ideals caused him to use his powers with such harshness that both his brethren and the Venetian government attacked him. He was forced several times to retire, and in 1560 Rome was definitively compelled to withdraw him.

The fact that he had been thwarted by lax brethren and by an (from the Roman point of view) irreligious government commended the fiery monk still further to his reformer-friends. He received a chair at the Sapienza (Roman University) and was made Counsellor to the Holy Office. In 1565 Cardinal Buoncompagni was sent on a mission to Spain, and, apparently to the Cardinal's disgust, the learned friar was included in his train. The sincerely religious temper of Sixtus V.

<sup>1</sup> It is, however, true that the hostile Italian biographer, Gregorio Leti (*Vita di Sisto Quinto*, 3 vols., 1693), who tells this must be read with discretion; and we must use equal discretion in reading Tempesti's *Storia della Vita e Geste di Sisto V.* (1754), which is inspired by a contrary determination to praise Sixtus. I need recommend only the full and generally judicious biography of Sixtus which we owe to Baron de Hübnér (*Sixte Quint*, 3 vols., 1870), remarking that in it the panegyric tendency is more conspicuous than the critical. For a smaller biography M. A. J. Dumesnil's *Histoire de Sixte-Quint* (1869) is excellent.

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makes it difficult for some of his biographers to understand his very original character. In spite of his virtue he was quite clearly ambitious,—one must live in the ecclesiastical world to realize how the ambition of power and the ambition to do good fuse with each other in the clerical mind,—he had an atrocious temper, and he retained what higher-born prelates would call the rudeness of a peasant. He quarrelled with Buoncompagni, and, as the mission was never really discharged, he had no opportunity to distinguish himself. However, the new Pope (for whose election Buoncompagni returned prematurely to Rome) was the friendly Dominican colleague, Pius V. Padre Montalto was made Vicar Apostolic over the Franciscan Order—the General having died—and he made a drastic effort to reform the reluctant friars and nuns (1566–1568). For this he received the red hat (1570) and was entrusted with the task of editing the works of St. Ambrose.

Unhappily for the ambitious cardinal-monk, Pius V. died in 1572, and Cardinal Buoncompagni ascended the throne and took the name of Gregory XIII. He withdrew the pension which Pius had assigned to Felice, and for the next thirteen years the Cardinal had to live in retirement and comparative poverty. In this again the very original character of Peretti reveals itself. One might expect that so stern a monastic reformer would retire to a friary when the Papal Court no longer required his presence, but he retired, instead, to his very comfortable palace and garden on the Esquiline. He had brought his sister Camilla and her son Francesco to live in this palace, and even romance and tragedy entered the friar's home. Francesco had married a beautiful and light-minded Roman girl, and her brother, Paolo Orsini, murdered Francesco in order to set her



free for a nobler lover. The uncle could get no redress under Gregory XIII. He curbed his anger, quietly bent over his books, and watched the rising storm in Italy which was to close Gregory's reign.

Gregory died on April 10, 1585, and Cardinal Montalto was enclosed with his colleagues in the Sistine Chapel on April 21st for the making of a new Pope. He was in his sixty-fourth year, and his more malicious biographer would have us believe that he disguised his robustness under a pretence of decrepit age in order to deceive the cardinals. The fact seems to be that he waited quietly, and without taking sides, in his cell until the factions had worn themselves out and the hour had come for choosing a man who had not been regarded as *papabile*. Most assuredly he deceived the cardinals, though not by any dishonest artifice. For three days the Medici and Colonna and Farnese, and the French and Spanish factions, fought their traditional battle, and not one of the aspirants could get a majority. Then one or two cardinals bethought themselves of this quiet Cardinal Montalto, who had lived away on the Esquiline with his rustic sister for so many years, and who would surely be grateful to any for elevating him to the throne. They visited Montalto and found him humbly and gratefully disposed: they intrigued nervously and rapidly in the little colony: and presently cardinals rushed to do homage to the former swineherd and applaud the Pontificate of Sixtus V. He was duly grateful, for a few days. Lucrative appointments were at once divided amongst his friends and supporters; though some fear seized men when one of the cardinals ventured to bring before the new Pope the murderer of his nephew, and Sixtus, in sombre and terrible accents, bade the Orsini go and rid himself of

his cut-throats. He was crowned on May 1st, and he lost little time in applying himself to the drastic schemes of reform which he had, apparently, matured in his peaceful garden on the Esquiline.

Yet the first act of the reformer betrays a defect and compels us to deal at once with the chief irregularity of his conduct. After the unhappy nepotism of Paul IV., that ancient and disreputable practice had been severely condemned, yet we find it flagrantly and immediately revived by Sixtus himself. It was, as we shall see, an essential part of his scheme to reform the College of Cardinals, and he would presently enact that no one should be raised to the cardinalate under the age of twenty-one, and no man with a son or grandson should attain the dignity. Yet within a fortnight of his coronation he announced that his grand-nephew, Alexander Peretti, a boy of thirteen, would be raised to the Sacred College, and another young grand-nephew was appointed Governor of the Borgo of St. Peter's and Captain of the Papal Guard. Their sisters were similarly enriched by noble alliances in later years. This grave impropriety is not excused by references to the ambition and determination of the Pope's sister Camilla; indeed, the wealth which that lady now obtained, and the notoriety with which she invested it in Rome, rather increased the Pope's guilt. He was assuredly not less strong of will than she. The defect shows how deeply rooted the evil was at Rome, when so resolute a reformer yields to it within a few years of the Protestant convulsion of Europe.

With this single concession to the older traditions, however, Sixtus turned energetically to the work of reform. The condition of the Papal States under Gregory XIII. had become scandalous. The leading

officials sold the lesser offices to corrupt men, and these in turn recovered their money by receiving bribes to overlook crime. Brigandage of the most licentious character spread over Italy, and even Roman nobles supported bands of swordsmen who would with impunity rid them of an inconvenient husband, force the doors of a virtuous woman's house, or relieve the pilgrim of his money. A law prohibiting the use of firearms had been passed, but it had become the fashion to ignore law and police. The picture which Sixtus himself gives us in his early Bulls is amazing when we recall that, only a few years before, the future of the Church had depended in no small measure on the morals of Rome and Italy.

Sixtus had no cause to spare the memory of his predecessor, and he turned with truculence to the remedy of this disorder. Before the end of April he had four young men belonging to high Roman families hanged on gibbets, like common murderers, for carrying firearms in spite of the decree. At the Carnival he erected two gibbets, one at each end of the Corso, to intimidate roysterers from the use of the knife. On April 30th he, in his Bull *Hoc Nostris*, enacted the most drastic punishment for brigands and all who should support or tolerate them; and on June 1st he caused the Roman government to put a price on their heads. The nobles of Rome, who had included these picturesque criminals in their suites, were ordered, under the direst penalties, to yield or dismiss them, and even cardinals were threatened with imprisonment if they retained servants of that character. Such was the amazement of Rome that the wits are said to have dressed the statue of St. Peter for a journey and put into its mouth the reply, when St. Paul was supposed to ask the meaning

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of his travelling costume, that he feared that Sixtus was about to prosecute him for cutting off the ear of the high-priest's servant. From Rome the terror spread throughout the Papal States. Thousands—including renegade monks and mothers who prostituted their daughters—were executed or slain, and the bands fled to neutral territory. Thither the merciless hand of the Pope pursued them, and a few liberal concessions to the other Italian Powers induced them to fling back the banditti upon the arms of the Papal troops or the knives of those who sought blood-money.

That Sixtus pursued this very necessary campaign with absolute truculence and a disdain of delicacy in the use of means cannot be questioned, but, though the fact does not adorn his character, we know too well the licentious condition of Italy to waste our sympathy on his victims. The most stubborn and audacious outlaws fell in a few years before his attack. At Bologna, for instance, the Pepoli and the Malvezzi had for years sustained one of those terrible feuds which had so long disgraced the central State of Christendom. They laughed at Papal injunctions. Sixtus had Count Pepoli treacherously seized, tried (in his absence) at Rome, and decapitated. His followers, and those of the Malvezzi, scattered in alarm, and Bologna was not merely relieved of oppressive criminals, but was adorned with new buildings and enriched with educational institutions by the triumphant Pope. Later, in order to extinguish the embers of animosity, he promoted one of the Pepoli to the cardinalate. The feuds of the Gaetani, the Colonna, and other old families were similarly trodden out, or healed by marriages with grandnieces of the Pope, and Italy became more sober and

more prosperous than it had been for ages. Unhappily, the reform died with Sixtus and anarchy returned.

This campaign occupied a few years, but it had no sooner been launched than Sixtus produced other of the plans he had prepared in his secluded palace. I have shown how deeply the corruption of the College of Cardinals affected the religious history of Europe, and Sixtus began very quickly to reform it. It was, perhaps, not his misunderstood promise of gratitude to the cardinals who had elected him, but some feeling of incongruity with his own conduct in promoting his boy-nephews, which restrained him for a time. However that may be, he turned to the problem in the second year of his Pontificate, and his Bull *Postquam Verus*<sup>1</sup> laid down severe rules for the sustained improvement of the College. The number of cardinals was restricted to seventy (as is still the rule); illegitimates, and men who had sons and grandsons to favour, were excluded; and a cleric must have attained an age of at least twenty-two years before he could be promoted. In order to distribute and expedite the work of administration, he further divided the cardinals into fifteen "congregations" (some of which already existed), such as those of the Inquisition, of Public Works, of the Vatican Press, and so on.

We can hardly doubt that in this division he had an ulterior aim. The earlier procedure had been for the Pope to lay a question before the whole body of the cardinals and discuss it with them. Sixtus continued to do this, but the cardinals soon found that, although he desired discussion, he turned fiery eyes, and even showered rough and offensive epithets, on any who opposed his plans. He was essentially an autocrat,

<sup>1</sup> December 5, 1586.

and the impetuosity which was inseparable from so robust a character made him an unpleasant autocrat. The advantage to him of splitting the cardinals into small groups was that, on any grave question, he had merely to take account of the consultative opinion of a few cardinals. His more admiring biographers record that he rarely dissented from the conclusions of his congregations; in point of fact, he decided grave issues before consulting them, or made his will unmistakably clear to them. His own promotions were generally sound, though he at times strained his regulations in favour of a friend. But he greatly improved the College of Cardinals, and made an admirable effort to exclude from it nationalist influences.

We must not, on the other hand, suppose that these congregations of cardinals count in any degree—except as the mere executive of his will—in the great work of his Pontificate. His own teeming brain and iron will are the sole sources of the mighty achievements of those five years. He had studied the Papal problem on all sides and was prepared at once to remedy a disorder or design a new structure. Agriculture and industry were feeble and unprosperous throughout the Papal States. Ruinous taxation, lawless oppression, and the ease with which one obtained one's bread at the innumerable monasteries, had demoralized the country and ruined the Papal treasury. Sixtus had some of the qualities of an economist—we still possess the careful account book he kept in his days of monastic authority—and he was especially concerned to nurse the Papal income in view of certain grandiose plans which he seems to have held in reserve, so that he applied himself zealously to this problem. It is generally agreed that his work here is a singular compound of

shrewdness and blundering. By his restoration of public security he lifted a burden from agriculture, and he made special efforts to encourage the woollen industry and the silk industry.<sup>1</sup> He, at great cost, brought a good supply of water, from an estate twenty miles away, to Rome, and by this means and by the cutting of new roads re-established some population on the hills, which had long been almost deserted. We find Camilla speculating profitably in this extension of the city, but the more important point is that the population of Rome rose in five years from 70,000 to 100,000: still, however, only one tenth of the population of Imperial Rome. The Pope also gave a water-supply to Civita Vecchia and drained its marshes; and he spent—with very little result in this case—200,000 ducats in draining the marshes at Terracina, which he personally inspected in 1588.

Yet the admiration which his biographers bestow on his finance is misplaced. It seems to have been chiefly in his native March of Ancona that he granted relief from the heavy taxes and imposts of his predecessor; the Papal States generally were still ruinously taxed, even in the necessaries of life. His hoarding of specie, partly for excellent but partly for visionary purposes, injured commerce; and such measures as his prohibition of the sale of landed property to foreigners were short-sighted. The rise of the Papal income, which enabled him to store 4,500,000 scudi (about 8,000,000 dollars) in five years, besides spending large sums on public works, was chiefly due to deplorable methods. The income from the issue of indulgences had now fallen very low—it had not wholly ceased, as

<sup>1</sup> Bull *Quum Sicut*, May 28, 1586. Bull *Quum Alias*, December 17, 1585.

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some say, since they are still issued in Spain—and little money came from Spain or France. The fixed Papal income had fallen to 200,000 scudi a year, and in the expenditure of this the friar-pope made an economy of 140,000 scudi a year by reducing table-charges, dismissing superfluous servants, and (as is often forgotten) giving to other servants church-benefices so that they needed no salary. The result was still far too small for the creation of a fund, and Sixtus sold honours and offices as flagrantly as any Pope had done since Boniface IX. He sold positions which had never been sold before, and he created new marketable titles. He debased the coinage and imposed a tax on money-lenders. He carried to a remarkable extent the new Papal system of *Monti*.<sup>1</sup> He withdrew offices which Gregory XIII. had sold, and transferred them to higher bidders; and he must have known how the officials would recoup themselves.

By these means he raised his hoard, which seems to have been gathered for some visionary grand campaign against the Protestants and the Turks. We at once recall Julius II., but it is a comparison which the work of Sixtus V. cannot sustain; he was not so great a ruler as Julius, and he fell on less prosperous times. I must add, however, that part of his reserve fund was destined for practical uses. In 1586 famine and Turks and pirates caused grave distress in Italy. Sixtus did not even then abolish his heavy taxes on the necessities

<sup>1</sup> Recent Popes had established what was, in effect, a system of life assurance. A large money-payment secured an income for life out of the proceeds of certain taxes. Sixtus multiplied these *Monti* (as the funds were called) in order to obtain a large sum of money at once, and he thus mortgaged the resources of the Holy See. Ranke, whose chapters on Sixtus are amongst his best, heavily censures the Pope's finance.



of life and the means of distributing them, but he bought 100,000 crowns' worth of corn in Sicily, fixed the price of flour and punished unjust dealers, and set about collecting a fund of a million scudi to meet such emergencies. He was not economist enough to see the roots of the evil, and fair, fertile Italy continued to suffer under the unhappy Papal system.

The Pope's tenderness to the Jews was part of his crude financial policy. A Portuguese Jew, who had fled from the Inquisition, was his chief fiscal adviser, and Sixtus interpreted in the most genial manner the current teaching of theologians, that, since the Jews were irreparably damned on a greater count, they might lend money at interest, and the Papacy might tax their wealth. Baron Huebner, in a moment of unusual candour, corrects some of the less discriminating biographers: Sixtus, he says, "protected the Jews in order to exploit them."<sup>1</sup> Pius V. had expelled the Jews from all parts of the Papal States except Rome and the March of Ancona, and Sixtus, by his constitution *Hebræorum Gens*, cancelled the restriction and ordered Christians to treat the Jews and their synagogues with respect. We feel that interest led Sixtus on to a more human feeling. He dispensed the unhappy Jews from wearing the odious yellow dress which Christian princes and prelates imposed on them, and for a few years, in that one corner of Europe, they enjoyed the life of human beings.

Sixtus was less lenient to the Jesuits than to the Jews. The primitive fervour of the Society was already dimmed by prosperity or perverted by casuistry, and complaints came to Rome from all parts. Having been a Franciscan monk, Sixtus was not well disposed toward

<sup>1</sup> I., 349.

the new congregation, which had aroused the hostility of the older religious bodies. He used to observe, in his grim, meditative way: "Who are these men who make us bow our heads at the mention of their name?" He referred to the Catholic practice of inclining the head at the mention of the name of Jesus, but he disliked the whole constitution of the Society and resented the privileges it had won from his predecessors. A prolonged quarrel of the worldly and degenerate Jesuits of Spain with General Acquaviva gave him an opportunity to intervene, and he ordered an inquiry into their rules. In 1590 he announced that he would alter the name and the constitutions of the Society. Acquaviva stirred such Catholic monarchs as were docile to his brethren to petition the Pope in their favour, but Sixtus was not prepared to listen to the suggestions, in ecclesiastical affairs, of worldly princes. Acquaviva then persuaded Cardinal Carafa, to whom the inquiry had been entrusted, to prolong his inquiry, and it became a race between the failing energy of the Pope and the intrigues of the Jesuits. Rome witnessed the contest with the interest it had once bestowed on the chariot-races of the Blues and the Greens. The inquiry was transferred to other prelates, and, when these also were suborned, Sixtus peremptorily ordered Acquaviva to request that the name of the Society should be changed. The petition was reluctantly made, the Bull authorizing the change of name was drafted and—Sixtus V. died before he put his name to it. In the circumstances it was inevitably whispered that Jesuit poison had ended the Pope's life, but the legend was as superfluous as it was familiar.<sup>1</sup>

The rest of the Pope's administrative work must be

<sup>1</sup> See the author's *Candid History of the Jesuits* (1913), pp. 110-113.

briefly recorded before we pass to the consideration of his political activity. He attempted to restrict the prodigality of the Romans in dress, food, funeral and wedding expenses, etc., but this sumptuary legislation<sup>1</sup> was not enforced. He found general and disgraceful laxity in the convents of nuns, and enacted a death-penalty against offenders: the same penalty he, with his habitual truculence, imposed for cheating at cards or dice. He directed the police to cleanse Rome of prostitutes and astrologers, reformed the prisons,<sup>2</sup> made provision for widows and orphans, pressed the redemption of captives,<sup>3</sup> and constructed ten galleys for the defence of the Italian coast against the Turks and pirates. He cleared of debt the Roman University (Sapienza) and restored it to its full activity. He engaged Fontana to crown St. Peter's with its long-deferred cupola, and threw such energy into the work that he almost completed in twenty-two months a task which the builders expected to occupy ten years. He, with equal vigour, set up the obelisks in front of St. Peter's, reconstructed the Lateran Palace in part, and restored the columns of Trajan and Antoninus; though, in a naive desire to express the triumph of Christianity over Paganism, he put statues of Peter and Paul on the ancient Roman pedestals.<sup>4</sup> He also set up a press in the Vatican Library, which he restored and decorated,

<sup>1</sup> Bull *Cum Unoquoque*, January 1, 1586.

<sup>2</sup> Bull *Quæ Ordini*, 1589.

<sup>3</sup> Bull *Cum Benigno*, 1585.

<sup>4</sup> This edifying mood of the Pope might have been fatal to the ancient Roman remains if he had enjoyed a lengthy Pontificate. When the cardinals timidly curbed his iconoclasm, he replied that he would destroy the uglier of the pagan monuments and restore the remainder. Among these "uglier" monuments were the Septizonium of Severus, the surviving part of which he actually demolished, and the tomb of Cæcilia Metella!

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and from this he issued the Latin version of the Bible which the Council of Trent had ordered, as well as the works of St. Ambrose and St. Bonaventure.

The magnitude of this domestic program and the vigour of the sexagenarian Pope are enhanced when we further learn that his brief Pontificate was, as usual, occupied with grave political problems. With German affairs the Papacy had now little concern, but we must record that Sixtus permitted some of the Catholic bishops to allow the laity to communicate in both kinds. To England he devoted more attention, though his violent and undiplomatic methods only made worse the position of the Catholics in that country. Mary Stuart contrived to write to him, after she had been condemned, and he spoke of Elizabeth to the cardinals as "the English Jezabel." He urged Henry III. to intercede for Mary and himself wrote a defence of her. When she was executed, he spurred Philip I. in his designs against England and promised him 500,000 florins when his fleet reached England and a further half million when the Spaniards occupied London. When an English spy was detected at Rome, Sixtus ordered his tongue to be cut out and his hand struck off before he was beheaded. In defiance of his own decree he bestowed the cardinalate on William Allen, and he directed Allen to translate (for distribution in England) the Bull in which he enumerated the dark crimes of Elizabeth, renewed the sentence of excommunication against her, and declared her subjects released from their allegiance. These measures, which only increased the sufferings of the Catholics, betray again the limitation of the Pope's vigorous intelligence, and, when the Armada sank, he turned from Spain to France and realized the futility of his policy.

The chief political problem was, however, the attitude of Rome toward the rival Catholic Powers, Spain and France, and the less important action of Sixtus in Venice (which, as a bulwark against the Protestant north, he sought, in spite of his old grievances, to conciliate), Savoy (where he compelled the Duke to refrain from appointing bishops), Besançon (where he forced upon the reluctant chapter a friar-friend whom he had made Archbishop), Belgium (where he demanded a truce between the University and the Jesuits), and Switzerland (where he attempted in vain to restrain the secular authorities), need not be considered at length. The French problem, complicated by the ambition of Spain, might have given anxious hours to a more astute statesman than Sixtus, and we shall hardly expect a man with so little subtlety to reach a distinguished solution of it.

The ineptness of Catherine de' Medici and the folly and profligacy of her diseased son, Henry III., had brought France to a dangerous pass. Henry of Guise coveted the throne, under a pretence of zeal for the Church: Henry of Navarre grimly awaited his natural succession to it: and Philip of Spain dreamed of annexing France, as well as England, to his swollen dominion. The Spanish representative at Rome, Count Olivarez, who nourished a secret disdain of the peasant-Pope, urged Sixtus to eliminate Henry of Navarre from the competition by excommunication, for having relapsed to the Protestant creed, and, on September 5, 1585, Sixtus issued against him and the Prince of Condé the Bull *Ab Immenso*. Henry of Navarre retorted cheerfully that the Pope was himself a heretic, and Henry III. angrily drove the Pope's new Nuncio from France; to which Sixtus retorted by expelling from

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Rome Henry's representative, the Marquis Pisani. To the great delight of Philip and the Catholic League, Henry III., feeble and distracted, humbly submitted, and was compelled to put pressure on the remaining Protestants. Sixtus, in fact, promised Henry a Spanish army from the Netherlands to assist in coercing the Huguenots, and urged him to co-operate with Philip and with the League (under Guise). In his exclusive, and entirely natural, concern for the orthodoxy of the country, Sixtus failed to understand in any degree its peculiar political condition or the utterly selfish designs of Guise and of Philip. He was impelling the country toward civil war.

In 1587 the Germans invaded France, and Henry of Navarre in turn confronted the troops of the League. Some small initial victories of the League led the Pope to congratulate the Duke of Guise in the most extravagant language, and it was only the fear of exasperating Philip that restrained him from bestowing on the Duke's son the hand of one of his grand-nieces. One cannot suppose that Sixtus failed to see that Guise had ambition, but he showed little penetration of character in admonishing the Duke to recover Paris for Henry III. and to assist that monarch to set up the Inquisition in France and exterminate heresy. The Nuncio's letters show that he was, under the Pope's instructions, absorbed in a futile effort to reconcile the Duke and the King, and it is said that Sixtus angrily advised the effeminate monarch either to make a friend of Guise or to destroy him. Even Henry III. showed more appreciation of the political situation.

Sixtus turned impatiently toward Spain and encouraged the designs of Philip. On July 15, 1588, he signed a treaty with the League and Spain, and the new

alliance promised the complete eradication of heresy from France. The failure of the Armada and the Pope's habitual distrust of Philip clouded the alliance for a time, but Henry III. was not willing to accept the Pope's terms for a transfer of his affections. Sixtus was especially eager to have the decrees of the Council of Trent published in France. To this the Gallican clergy objected, and Henry himself declared that he would publish them only "salvis juribus regis et regni": a phrase which Sixtus, to use his own words, "cursed." Even when, to the Pope's extreme anger, Henry had the Duke and the Cardinal of Guise assassinated, Sixtus remained too irresolute to derive advantage from the King's remorse or apprehension, though the Spaniards and the League gained ground at Rome. Henry III., indeed, entered into alliance with the Protestant Henry against the League, and Sixtus was content to issue a fresh threat of excommunication against the Huguenot.

But the assassination of the King in August (1589) simplified the situation, and Sixtus definitely allied himself with Spain and the League against Henry IV.: a very natural, but equally impolitic, decision. Venice recognized Henry, and the Pope at first recalled his Nuncio from Venice and then, hearing the success of the new King, ordered him to return. Sixtus was beginning to appreciate the situation, and, when the Duke of Luxemburg came to Rome to tell of Henry's willingness to reconsider his religious position, he was amiably received. The Spaniards made a last violent struggle, and even threatened to arraign the Pope for heresy before a General Council, but Sixtus now saw his way clearly. Throughout the year 1590 he braved the threats of the Spaniards and watched the progress

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of Henry IV., but the struggle against Spaniards and Jesuits was too exacting for a man of his years and he succumbed to fever on August 24th.

Sixtus must unhesitatingly be included among the great Popes, but it is perplexing to read, as one often does, that he was "one of the greatest of the Popes." The work he accomplished in five years is far greater than most of the Popes achieved, or would have achieved, in twenty years, and at least the greater part of his reform-work in Rome and Italy was of considerable value. Yet even here we must not overlook his defects: he transgressed his own regulations when he would gratify his affections, he enforced reforms with harshness and violence, and he greatly lessened the value of his economic work by hoarding a vast sum for the purpose (apparently) of conducting a visionary grand campaign against Turks and heretics. His political attitude was, as I have shown, injudicious and irresolute. Both in character and statesmanship he falls far short of the greater Popes, and it is, perhaps, some indication of the evil plight of the Church that Sixtus V. should be the ablest man it could produce in a century of grave and persistent danger.



## CHAPTER XVII

### BENEDICT XIV: THE SCHOLAR-POPE

THE seventeen Popes who occupied the Vatican between Sixtus V. and Benedict XIV. do not call for individual notice. With common integrity of life and general mediocrity of intelligence they guarded and administered their lessened inheritance. A few fragments of the lost provinces were regained—Ferrara and Urbino were reunited to the Papal States, and Protestantism was crushed in southern Germany and Poland—but the general situation was unchanged. The Papal conception of European life, the conviction that heresy must and would be only a temporary diversion of the minds of men, was definitely overthrown, and the Church of Rome became one of various flourishing branches of the Christian Church. The interest of the historian passes from the personalities of the Popes to the movements of thought which herald or prepare the next great revolution.

In regard to that specific development of European thought which we call the birth of science we are, perhaps, apt to misread its earlier stages because we find it in its final stage so destructive of old traditions. The Popes of the seventeenth century are too much flattered when they are credited with a distinct perception of the menace of science and a resolute opposition to

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it. Properly speaking, they had no attitude toward "science," but, as the history of science and the fortune of such men as Giordano Bruno, Galilei, and Vesalius show, they resented and hampered departures from the stock of traditional learning.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the period we are considering was marked by the phenomenal material success and the moral degeneration of the greatest force the Counter-Reformation had produced—the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits did far more than the Papacy to arrest the advance of Protestantism and to conquer new lands for the Church, but the diplomatic principles inherited from their founder and the desperate exigencies of a stubborn war led them into a pernicious casuistry, while prosperity led to such relaxation as it had produced in the old religious bodies. In politics the new age was characterized by the decay of Spain and "the Empire," and the rise of France, and the increased power of France led to a revival of the old Gallic defiance, within orthodox limits, of the Papacy, culminating in the famous "Declaration of the Gallican Clergy" (1682), and to the powerful lay movements which gathered round Pascal and the Jansenists or Voltaire and the philosophers. Benedict XIV. mounted the Papal throne in the height of these developments, and his attitude of

<sup>1</sup> Modern research has easily settled that Galilei was not physically ill-treated, and that there was probably no intention to carry out the formal threat of torture. But this refutation of the excesses of the older anti-Papal historians leaves the serious part of the indictment intact. Galilei was forbidden by the Holy Office in 1616 to advance as a positive discovery his view of the earth's position. In 1632, to the great indignation of Urban VIII., he disregarded this prohibition, which he thought a dead letter, and was condemned by the Inquisition as "vehemently suspected of heresy." The crime against culture is not materially lessened by the fact that the Inquisition lodged the astronomer in its most comfortable rooms.

compromise makes him one of the most singular and interesting Popes of the new era.

Prospero Lorenzo Lambertini was born at Bologna, of good family, on March 31, 1675. At the age of thirteen he entered the Clementine College at Rome, and with the advance of years he became a very industrious student of law—canon and civil—and history. He took degrees in theology and law, and was incorporated in the Roman system as Consultor to the Holy Office, Canon of St. Peter's, and Prelate of the Roman Court. Successive Popes made the indefatigable scholar Archbishop of Theodosia *in partibus*, Archbishop of Ancona and Cardinal (1728), and Archbishop of Bologna (1731). Lambertini was a rare type of prelate. He did not, as so many high-born prelates did, relieve the tedium of the clerical estate with the hunt, the banquet, and the mistress. His episcopal duties were discharged with the most rigorous fidelity, his clergy were sedulously exhorted to cultivate learning and virtue, and his leisure was devoted to the composition of erudite treatises on *The Beatification of the Servants of God*, *The Sacrifice of the Mass*, *The Festivals of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, and *Canonical Questions*. Yet the Cardinal-Archbishop was no ascetic in spirit, and there was much gossip about his conversation. He loved Tasso and Ariosto as much as juridical writings. He liked witty society, and his good stories circulated beyond the little group of his scholarly friends. President de Brosses visited him at Bologna in 1739, the year before he became Pope, and wrote of him:

A good fellow, without any airs, who told us some very good stories about women (*filles*) or about the Roman court. I took care to commit some of them to memory and will find

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them useful. He especially liked to tell or to hear stories about the Regent and his confidant Cardinal Dubois. He used to say, "Tell me something about this Cardinal del Bosco." I ransacked my memory, and told him all the tales I knew. His conversation is very pleasant: he is a clever man, full of gaiety and well read. In his speech he makes use of certain expletive particles which are not cardinalitial. In that and other things he is like Cardinal Camus; for he is otherwise irreproachable in conduct, very charitable, and very devoted to his archiepiscopal duties. But the first and most essential of his duties is to go three times a week to the Opera.<sup>1</sup>

Lambertini's liberty and joviality of speech did not, in spite of his strict virtue and most zealous administration, commend him to the more severe cardinals, and when Clement XII. died, on February 6, 1740, he was not regarded as a candidate for the Papacy. But the struggle of French, Spanish, and Austrian partisans continued for six months without prospect of a settlement, and in the intolerable heat of the summer the cardinals cast about, as usual, for an outsider. Lambertini had humorously recommended himself from time to time. He used to say, President de Brosses reports: "If you want a good fellow [*coglione*—a particularly gross word] choose me."<sup>2</sup> The Emperor

<sup>1</sup> *Lettres familières* (1858), i., 250-1. The President was in Rome during the conclave in the following year and repeated that Lambertini was "licentious in speech but exemplary in conduct" (ii., 399). On a later page (439) he frankly describes the Pope as "indecent in speech." There is a passage in one of the Pope's later letters to Cardinal Tencin which may illustrate his censure. Benedict tells the Cardinal that he has bought a nude Venus for his collection, and finds that the Prince and Princess of Würtemberg have, with a diamond ring, scratched their names on a part of the statue which one may not particularize as plainly as the Pope does (*Correspondance de Benoît XIV.*, ii., 268).

<sup>2</sup> *Lettres familières*, ii., 439.

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Joseph II., who did not want an inflexible Pope, supported his candidature, and he was assuredly the most distinguished of the cardinals to whom the wearied voters now looked. He was elected on August 17th, and he took the name of Benedict XIV.

He was now sixty-five years old: a round, full-faced, merry little man, with piercing small eyes and an obstinate resolution to live at peace with the world. A few years later,<sup>1</sup> he describes his daily life to his friend Cardinal Tencin. He rises early and takes a cup of chocolate and a crust. At midday he has a soup, an entrée, a roast, and a pear: on "fast" days he reduces himself to a *pot-au-feu* and a pear, but it does not agree with him to observe the law of abstinence from meat, and he advises the cardinals to follow his example. In the evening he takes only a glass of water with a little cinnamon, and he retires very late. He works hard all day and feels that he is justified in seeking relief in sprightly conversation. Indeed, when one surveys the vast published series of Benedict's Bulls (some of which are lengthy and severe treatises), rescripts, works, and letters, one realizes that his industry was phenomenal. When he had to condemn some volume of the new sceptical literature which was springing up in Europe, he read it himself three times and reflected long on it. His interest ranged from England, whose political affairs he followed closely, to the mountains of Syria and the missions of China. Every branch of Papal administration had his personal attention. He thought little of the cardinals, and often pours genial irony on them in his innumerable letters. Of his two predecessors, Benedict XIII. "had not the least idea of government," and Clement XII. "passed his life in

<sup>1</sup> September 29, 1745.

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conversation," and "it is with the oxen from this stable [the cardinals promoted by them] that we have to work today."<sup>1</sup> In finance, politics, administration, liturgy, and all other respects he had inherited a formidable task, and he discharged it in such wise that he died at peace with all except his Roman reactionaries. The Catholic rulers deeply appreciated him. Frederick of Prussia had a genial regard for him. Horace Walpole celebrated his virtues in Latin verse, and one of the Pitts treasured a bust of him. Voltaire, through Cardinal Acquaviva, presented his *Mahomet* to him in 1746, and the amiable Pope, quite innocent of the satire on Christianity, wrote to tell Voltaire how he had successfully defended his Latin verses.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Tencin August 1, 1753 (ii., 282).

<sup>2</sup> The correspondence is reproduced in Artaud de Montor's *Histoire des Souverains Pontifes* (1849), vii., 79. Benedict was severely censured by the pious, and he declared to Cardinal Tencin that he "did not find it clear that Voltaire was a stranger to the faith" (i., 246). The biography of Benedict, one of the most interesting of the Popes, is still to be written. F. X. Kraus, in his edition of Benedict's letters, reproduces fragments of a pretentious Latin biography by a contemporary, Scarselli, and M. Guarnacci has a sketch in his *Vitæ Pontificum Romanorum* (1751, vol. ii., col. 487-94). These relate only to his earlier years. A. Sandini (*Vitæ Pontificum Romanorum*, 1754) has only three pages on Benedict, and the anonymous *Vie du Pape Benott XIV.* (1783—really written by Cardinal Caraccioli) is not critical. The biographical sketches in Artaud de Montor and Ranke are quite inadequate. But the biographer has now a rich material in Benedict's Bulls (complete *Bullarium*, 13 vols., 1826 and 1827), works (chief edition, 17 vols., 1839-1846, and three further works edited by Heiner in 1904), and letters. Of the latter the best editions are those of F. X. Kraus (*Briefe Benedicts XIV. an den Canonicus Pier Francesco Peggi*, 1884), Morani ("Lettere di Benedetto XIV. all' arcidiacono Innocenzo Storani" in the *Archivio Storico per le Marche e per l'Umbria*, 1885), Fresco ("Lettere inedite di Benedetto XIV. al Cardinale Angelo Maria Querini" in the *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 1909, tomo xviii., pp. 5-93, and xix, pp. 159-215), "Lettere inedite di Benedetto XIV. al Cardinale F. Tamburini" in the

Benedict's immediate predecessor, Clement XII., an elderly disciplinarian whose strength was not equal to his pretensions, had left the internal and foreign affairs of the Quirinal—the Popes now dwelt chiefly in that palace—in a condition of strain and disorder, nor was Benedict's Secretary of State, Cardinal Valenti, the man to relieve the Pope of the work of reform. Choiseul, who was then the French representative at Rome, describes Valenti as very able but very lazy: a man of great charm, especially to ladies, and easy morals. Yet the treasury was empty, and the finances were shockingly disorganized. Although Clement XII. had introduced the lottery to support his extravagant expenditure, the Papal income in 1739 fell short of the expenses by 200,000 crowns a year, and the Camera owed between fifty and sixty million crowns—President de Brosses says 380,000,000 francs—to the *Monti*, or funds out of which the Popes paid life-incomes. Smuggling was so general, even among ambassadors and cardinals, that half the Papal revenue was lost. Cardinals Acquaviva and Albani each granted immunity from excise to four thousand traders: so Benedict wrote to Tencin in 1743. A third of the population of Rome consisted of ecclesiastics who lived on the Papal system, and a third were foreigners of no greater financial value; while the natives could so easily obtain food at the innumerable monasteries, or by begging, that there was little incentive to industry.

Benedict XIV. had no financial capacity, but the desperate and ever worsening condition of the treasury spurred him to work. He restricted the immunities

*Archivio della R. Società Romana di Storia Patria*, vol. xxxiv. (1911), pp. 35-73, and E. de Heeckeren (*Correspondance de Benoit XIV.*, 2 vols., 1912).

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from excise, cut down the extravagant payment of the troops, and severely curtailed the number of his servants. In a few years he had a surplus, which he divided among the impoverished nobles. He then reduced the taxes, had new factories built, and encouraged the introduction of new methods into agriculture. His zeal in suppressing "usury" was not so fortunate, but he restored the Papal finances to such a degree that he could at length indulge his cultural tastes. Sandini gives a list of the monuments he restored at Rome—including the new façade with which he disfigured Sta. Maria Maggiore—and we know from his letters that he was assiduous in collecting classical statues and fine books for the Roman galleries and libraries. He founded four academies at Rome—for the study of Roman history and antiquities, Christian history and antiquities, the history of the Councils, and liturgy—and once in each week presided, at the Quirinal, over a sitting of each academy. To the Roman university (Sapienza) he added chairs of chemistry, mathematics, and art, and he pressed in every way the higher education of the clergy. In 1750 he appointed a woman teacher, Maria Gaetana d'Agnesi, of mathematics at Bologna University, and wrote her a gracious letter commending the ambition of her sex.

Jansenists and philosophers were now fiercely exposing the weaknesses of Papal culture, and Benedict, who freely criticized the errors of his predecessors, attempted some revision of the mass of legends which had been accepted by the Church. In 1741 he appointed a commission to revise the Breviary, but the extensive alterations they proposed to make in the lives of the saints alarmed the reactionaries. On April 26, 1743, we find Benedict wearily complaining to Tencin of the



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difficulty of reform: "There is now all over the world such a disdain of the Holy See that—I will not say the protest of a bishop, a city, or a nation—but the opposition of a single monk is enough to thwart the most salutary and most pious designs."<sup>1</sup> The French clergy had been compelled in 1680 and 1736 to issue more critical editions of the Breviary, and Benedict wished to provide one for the universal Church. But the bigots were too strong for the Pope and the scheme of reform lies in the dust of the Vatican archives, while the Roman Breviary still contains legends of the most remarkable character. In reforming the Martyrology (1748) the Pope was more successful, and he published a new Ceremonial for Bishops (1752). He also published an indult permitting any diocese that cared to reduce the number of Church-festivals. The number of days on which men rested from work had become a scandal, and many complaints had reached the Holy See. Benedict's indult was gradually adopted by entire nations.

Of far greater interest is Benedict's attitude toward what we may call foreign affairs, and in this we discover again the more genial side of his character. Those who had known the different aspects of the Pope's personality—the punctilious learning of the ecclesiastic and the *bonhomie* of the man—must have wondered how he would confront the hereditary problems of the Papacy. Benedict at once made it plain that his policy would be one of deliberate and judicious compromise. Anxious though he was, especially in view of the Italian ambitions of Maria Theresa, about his temporal possessions, he placed his spiritual power and responsibility in the foreground, and on temporal matters he made more

<sup>1</sup> L., 49.

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concessions than any Pope of equal wit and will had ever made. He was, he told Tencin, "the mortal enemy of secrets and useless mysticism." For disguised Jesuits and intriguing Nuncii he had no employment. He took court after court, with which his predecessor had embroiled the Papacy, and came to an agreement which almost invariably satisfied them; and in the war of the Spanish succession, when Spanish and Austrian troops in turn violated his territory, he remained strictly neutral.

The chief problem in France was the conflict of the Jesuits and the Jansenists, which was complicated by a revival of the Gallican spirit that put difficulties in the way of Papal interference. The Bull *Unigenitus*, with which Clement XI. had sought to extinguish the controversy, had increased the disorder, and the zealots pressed the Pope to intervene. Parlement would have resented his interference, and it was not until 1755, when the Assembly of the Clergy failed to find a solution, that Louis XV. asked the Pope to make a further declaration. The credit of his moderate Encyclical<sup>1</sup> is not wholly due to him. The French asked him to refrain from pressing the *Unigenitus* as a standard of faith and merely to demand external respect for it. This agreed with the Pope's moderate disposition, but the Jesuits and other zealots at Rome were enraged, and Choiseul—without Benedict's knowledge, of course—made extensive use of bribery to win the College of Cardinals. Benedict's letters reflect his weariness between the antagonistic parties and frequently express that he is

<sup>1</sup> *Ex omnibus Christiani orbis*, Oct. 16, 1756. It prescribes silence on the disputed issues and leaves it to confessors to determine whether their penitents are so wilfully rebellious against the Bull *Unigenitus* as to be excluded from the sacraments.

willing to respect Gallican susceptibilities to any extent short of a surrender of the faith. A draft of the Encyclical was submitted to the French court before it was published. Both the Jesuits and the lawyers attacked it, but the Parlement was won to the King by an attempt on his life and the Jesuits soon found all their energy needed to defend their existence.

With Spain the Pope concluded one of the most remarkable Concordats in Papal history. There had gradually been established a custom by which the Papacy appointed to all benefices which fell vacant during eight months of the year, and the bishops and their chapters appointed to vacant benefices during the remaining third of the year. The court had the right of appointment only to benefices in Granada and the Indies. As a natural result, Spanish ecclesiastics crowded to Rome, and it was estimated that the Dataria derived from them about 250,000 crowns a year. Spain resented the arrangement, but the clerical population of Rome clung tenaciously to it. Benedict in 1751 entered into secret negotiations with Spain, and contrived to keep them secret until 1753, when he startled and irritated Rome by publishing his famous Concordat. By this he granted the Spanish King the right to nominate to all except fifty-two benefices in Spain and America. The cardinals bitterly complained that they had not been consulted, while the officials deplored the abandonment of Papal prestige and the cessation of so much profitable employment. Benedict had, however, made a shrewd bargain with Ferdinand VI. The King had to pay a capital sum of 1,143,330 crowns, which, at an interest of three per cent., would cover the yearly loss to the Curia. At a later date the Pope released the Spanish Infanta from the dignity of cardinal, yet

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permitted him to retain a large part of his clerical income.

A similar agreement ended the long friction with Portugal and (in 1740) gave John V. the right to present to all the episcopal sees and abbeys in his dominions; and in 1748 the Pope further gratified the King with the title of *Fidelissimus*. The King of Sardinia received, soon after Benedict's succession, the title of Vicar of all the Papal fiefs in his dominions and the right, for an annual payment of 2000 crowns, to gather their revenues. Naples, in turn, was pacified, after many years of dangerous friction. There had been stern quarrels about jurisdiction over the clergy, and by a Concordat of the year 1741 Benedict consented to the creation of a supreme court, with an equal number of clerical and lay judges and an ecclesiastical president, for the trial of such cases. With Venice the Pope was less successful. The decaying Republic had a standing quarrel with Austria about the patriarchate of Aquileia; Austria, which possessed part of the territory, would not acknowledge the authority of the Venetian patriarch. Benedict appointed a Vicar for the Austrian section, and Venice, ever ready to flout Papal orders, drove the Nuncio from the city. The Pope thereupon divided the province into two archbishoprics, but Venice still angrily protested and the dispute remained unsettled at Benedict's death.

Austria gave the Pope his most anxious hours. The joy of Rome at the fidelity of southern Germany was in the eighteenth century clouded by the growth of a spirit akin to Gallicanism: the spirit which would presently be known as Febronianism. Charles VI. had in 1740 left the Empire to his elder daughter, Maria Theresa, and Spain had contested the succession

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in the hope of winning for itself the provinces of Lombardy and Tuscany. In the war which followed Benedict took no side, but the conflicting armies devastated his territory and approached very near to Rome. His letters to Tencin reflect his distress and anxiety, no less than his helplessness. When the war was over, he sent a representative to the conference at Aix-la-Chapelle, where his rights were endangered by the contest of the two ambitious queens; Elizabeth of Spain was the last of the Farnese and was disposed to claim for her son the principality which Paul III. had wantonly conferred on his son Pier Luigi. The chief question that interested the Papacy was whether Don Philip should receive the investiture of Parma and Piacenza from Rome or the Empress, and Benedict had the satisfaction of seeing it virtually settled in favour of Rome. On Paul III. himself, and other nepotist Popes, Benedict passes a very severe judgment in his letters. For his part he severely excluded his relatives from Rome, and when a young son of his nephew came to study at the Clementine College, he took care that the boy should receive no particular favour.

It is one of the remarkable features of Benedict's Pontificate that he won considerable respect even in the Protestant lands. Englishmen, perhaps, did not know, as we know from the Pope's letters, how deeply he sympathized with the exiled Stuarts. "James III." lived for some time at Rome on a pension provided by France, Spain, and the Papacy, and Benedict had often to relieve the financial embarrassment of the foolish and extravagant prince. His second son became Cardinal York, and, in conferring the dignity on him, Benedict declared that he would be pleased to withdraw it if ever Providence recalled him to the throne of his

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fathers. In spite of these amiable sympathies, Benedict was much appreciated by cultivated Englishmen, and in 1753 he reconstituted and enlarged the English hierarchy.

With Frederic of Prussia, also, he had friendly relations. He was the first Pope to recognize the title of "King of Prussia" assumed in 1701 by the Electors of Brandenburg, and in this again he overruled the opposition of the cardinals. In 1744 Frederic begged the Pope to make Scatfgoch, a Breslau canon whom the King liked, coadjutor to the Bishop of Breslau. Scatfgoch talked with scandalous license about religion and morals; it was said at Rome that he dipped his crucifix into his wine to give the Saviour the first drink. Benedict, to Frederic's anger, refused; but three years later, when the bishop died, and the Nuncio reported the conversion of the canon, the Pope gratified Frederic by making him bishop. Frederic permitted the erection of a Catholic chapel at Berlin.

The new Catholic world beyond the seas made more than one claim on the untiring Pope. Immediately after his election we find him sending a Vicar Apostolic to settle the troubles of the Maronites of Syria, and in 1744 he reconciled and regulated the affairs of the Greek Melchites of Antioch. In the farther East a fierce controversy still raged, both in China and India, regarding the heathen rites and practices which the Jesuit missionaries permitted their native converts to retain. Clement XI., Innocent XIII., and Benedict XIII. had successively employed him, when he was an official of the Curia, to prepare a verdict on these "Chinese and Malabar rites," but it was reported that the Jesuits still defied the orders of the Popes. In his private letters to Tencin, Benedict sternly condemns the

“tergiversations” of the Jesuit missionaries, but in his Papal pronouncements he is more cautious. His Bulls *Ex Quo Singulari*,<sup>1</sup> which puts an end to the trouble in China, and *Omnium Sollicitudinum*,<sup>2</sup> which condemns the practices in Malabar (India), are scholarly and severe treatises. They hardly mention the Jesuits, but they leave no loophole for those casuistic missionaries. From the other side of the globe Benedict received complaints that Christians were still enslaving the American natives, on the pretext of converting them, and he renewed the prohibition issued by Paul III. and Urban VIII.

From all quarters of the globe Benedict received heated complaints about the Jesuits. They permitted the worship of ancestors in China, and closed their eyes to Hindu charms and amulets in India. They conducted great commercial enterprises in North and South America, and struggled bitterly against the bishops in England. France accused them of intensifying the domestic strife of its Church, and Spain and Portugal brought grave charges against them. But Benedict XIV. seems to have dreaded the overweening and doomed Society. Even his private letters are singularly free from direct allusions to them, and more than one Jesuit scholar was employed by him on tasks of importance. His friend Cardinal Passionei, a worldly cardinal, of easy ways, who spent his days in luxurious ease at Frascati, often urged him to reform the Society, but it was not until the last year of his life that he took any step in that direction. Portugal was now approaching its great struggle with the Jesuits, and Benedict, on April 1, 1758, directed Cardinal Saldanha to inspect and report upon the condition of the Jesuit

<sup>1</sup> July 1, 1742.

<sup>2</sup> September 12, 1744.

houses and colleges in that country. He died a month later, unconscious of the great revolution which the Catholic Powers were preparing to force on the Papacy.

Of the isolated ecclesiastical acts of Benedict it is impossible to give here even a summary. No Pope since the great Pontiffs of the early Middle Ages had enriched his Church with so much (from the Papal point of view) sound legislation: none had had so scientific a command of ecclesiastical affairs or united with it so indefatigable an industry. His Bull *Magnæ Nobis Admirationis*<sup>1</sup> prescribes, in the case of mixed marriages, the rules which are enforced in the Church today. He forbade monks to practise surgery or dispense drugs; though Europe would have been more completely indebted to him in this respect if he had not made an exception in favour of the atrocious drug known as "theriac" and the foolish compound which went by the name of "apoplectic balsam." He condemned Freemasonry,<sup>2</sup> though his decree was not enforced. But one must glance over the thirteen volumes of his *Bullarium* and the seventeen volumes of his religious and liturgical works if one would realize his massive industry and devotion to his duties.

In the spring of 1758 his robust constitution yielded to the ravages of gout, labour, and anxiety, and he died on May 3d. He was not, as some say, "the idol of Rome." The cardinals felt the disdain of them which he often expresses in his letters, and many of the clergy regarded him as too severe on them and too pliant to the laity. Neither was he a genius. Clearness of mind, immense industry, and sober ways are the sources of his output. His works are not read today even by ecclesiastics, and it is ludicrous to represent them as his

<sup>1</sup> June 29, 1748.

<sup>2</sup> March 18, 1751.



title to immortality. Yet Benedict XIV. was a great Pope: a wise ruler of the Church at a time when once more, unconsciously, it approached a world-crisis. The magnitude of the change which was taking place in Europe he never perceived, but his policy was wise in the measure of his perception, and his geniality of temperament, united to so wholehearted a devotion to his duty, won some respect for the name of Pope in lands where it had been for two hundred years a thing of contempt.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### PIUS VII. AND THE REVOLUTION

**B**ENEDICT XIV. had maintained Papal power and prestige in his Catholic world by prudent concessions to a European spirit which he recognized as having definitely emerged from its mediæval phase. His successors for many decades lacked his penetration; though one may wonder if, without sacrificing essential principles of the Papal scheme, they could have advanced farther along the path of concession to a more and more exacting age. However that may be, they generally clung to the autocratic principles of the Papacy, and as a consequence they ceased to be the leaders of their age and became little more than corks tossed on heaving waters. Not until Leo XIII. do we find a Pope with a human quality of statesmanship. In the intervening Pontificates the barque of Peter drifted on the wild and swollen waters, pathetically bearing still a flag which bore the legend of ruler of the waves.

Clement XIII. (1758-1769) and Clement XIV. (1769-1774) were occupied with the problem of the Jesuits. One by one the Catholic Powers—Portugal, France, Naples, and Spain—swept the Jesuits from their territory, with a flood of obloquy, and then made a collective demand on the Pope for the suppression of the Society. Clement XIII. had made a futile effort

to assert the old dictatorial power; and Catholic nations had retorted by seizing part of the diminished Papal States. France had occupied Avignon and Vennaisin, and Naples had taken Benevento and Pontecorvo. The bewildered Pope found peace in the grave, and the Powers ensured the election of a man who did not regard the suppression of the Society as an impossibility. For four years Ganganelli, Clement XIV., resisted or restrained the pressure of the Catholic Powers, but in 1773 the famous Bull *Dominus ac Redemptor Noster* disbanded the most effective force of the Counter-Reformation, plainly endorsing the charge against it of corruption.<sup>1</sup>

Pius VI. (1775-1798) came vaguely to realize that there was some deep malady in the world which, in bewildering impotence, he contemplated. The hostility to the Jesuits had been a symptom; nor was the symptom more intelligible to so unskilful a physician when the Protestant rulers of Russia and Prussia protected the Jesuits, while the Catholic Powers sternly restrained his wish to restore the Society. Vaguely, also, he realized that there was a deeper infidelity in the world; that the "philosophers" of France and Spain and Italy and the "illuminated ones" of Germany were a new thing under the sun; and that the traditions of the Papacy did not help in dealing with such "Catholic" statesmen as Pombal, Aranda, Tanucci, and Choiseul. He had not even the traditional remedy of finding support in the "Roman Empire." Under Joseph II. and Kaunitz, Austria had developed a rebellious

<sup>1</sup> It is not true that Clement abstained from passing judgment on the Society; nor, on the other hand, need we regard seriously the statement that he was poisoned by the ex-Jesuits. See the author's *Candid History of the Jesuits*, pp. 355 and 368.

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spirit which rivalled the most defiant phases of Gallicanism.<sup>1</sup>

Pius visited Vienna, and trusted that his handsome and engaging presence would reconcile the Emperor to his large pretensions, but the visit was fruitless and the vanity of the Pope was bruised. At least the mass of the people were faithful, Pius thought. Then there came the terrible disillusion of the French Revolution, and resounding echoes of its fiery language in Italy and Spain. Pius made his last blunder—though the most natural course for him to take—by allying himself with Austria and England against the Revolution, and the shadow of Napoleon fell over Italy. Napoleon shattered the Austrian forces and compelled the Pope to sacrifice Avignon and Venaissin, to lose the three Legations (Bologna, Ferrara, and Romagna), and to pay out of his scanty income 30,000,000 lire. In the following year, 1798, the French inspired a rebellion at Rome. The Romans set up once more feeble images of their ancient "Consuls" and "Ædiles," and the aged Pope was dragged from point to point by the French dragoons until he expired at Valence on August 29, 1798. General Bonaparte had said, contemptuously, that the Papacy was breaking up. There were those who asked if Pius VI. was the last Pope.

But a new act of the strange European drama was opening. Bonaparte was in Egypt, brooding over iridescent dreams of empire, and the treaty of Campo Formio which he had concluded before leaving had

<sup>1</sup> In Austria the movement was called Febronianism, as it had begun with a work (*De Statu Ecclesiæ*) published in 1763 by Johann von Hontheim under the pseudonym of "Febronius." Hontheim had learned Gallican sentiments at Louvain. Joseph II. had wisely and firmly adopted the chief principles of the school: religious toleration, restriction of the interference of the Popes, and control of ecclesiastical property.

given Venice (as well as Istria and Dalmatia) to Austria. To Venice, accordingly, forty-six of the scattered and impoverished cardinals made their way, for the purpose of electing a new Pope, and the Conclave was lodged in the abbey of San Giorgio on November 30th. The history of the Papal Conclaves has inspired a romantic and caustic narrative,<sup>1</sup> and the account of the Conclave of 1798-1799 is not one of the least interesting. Austria, which had occupied the northern Papal provinces, and Naples, which had succeeded the French in the south and was now "guarding" Rome, did not desire the election of a Pope who would claim his full temporal dominion. Against them was the solid nucleus of conservative and rigid cardinals, and on the fringe of the struggle were the unattached cardinals, some of whom had a lively concern about this General Bonaparte who had just returned from Egypt. The statesman of the College was Cardinal Consalvi, a very able and accomplished son of a noble Pisan family. Consalvi, as a good noble and churchman, loathed the Revolution, but, when the struggle of voters had lasted three or four months and the two chief parties had reached a deadlock, he listened to the suggestion of Cardinal Maury that the mild "Jacobin" Cardinal Chiaramonti would be the best man to elect. Bonaparte had spoken well of Chiaramonti, and Austria would not resent the election of a lowly-minded Benedictine monk. Whether or no Consalvi suspected that Maury was (at least in part) working for a personal reward, he took up the intrigue, and on March 24th Chiaramonti became Pius VII. They had put an aged and timid monk at the helm on such a sea.

<sup>1</sup> Petrucelli della Gattina's *Histoire diplomatique des Conclaves*, 4 vols., 1864-6.

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Barnaba Luigi Chiaramonti was born at Cesena, of a small-noble family, on August 14, 1742. He entered the Benedictine Order at the age of sixteen and distinguished himself in his studies. As he was distantly related to Pius VI., who was a flagrant nepotist, he easily earned promotion at Rome. He taught theology and was titular abbot of San Callisto. In time he became Bishop of Tivoli, then Bishop of Imola and Cardinal. He was administering his diocese with due zeal, and more than ordinary gentleness, when the storm of the French invasion broke upon Italy. He was not a politician. He advised his people to submit to the Cisalpine Republic set up by the French, and mediated for them with General Augereau when some of them rebelled. But, when the Austrians came in turn, he advised the people to submit to their "liberators," and, when the French returned, the magistrates of Imola charged him with treachery and he had to plead on his own behalf. However, his colleagues affected to regard him as a Jacobin, and his easy attitude toward the French and the temporal power won him the tiara. He was crowned in San Giorgio on March 21st.

Austria had refused the use of San Marco for the ceremony, because it was nervously anxious to discourage ideas of royalty in the new Pope, and its representative in the Sacred College, Cardinal Hrzan, urged Pius to go from Venice to Vienna, and to make Cardinal Flangini (a Venetian) his Secretary of State. Pius quietly refused, and chose Consalvi. In quick succession the Austrian ambassador offered him the territory they had taken from Lombardy, without the Legations, and then two out of the three Legations (they keeping Romagna), but Consalvi prompted him

to refuse, and he set out for Rome. The Austrians would not suffer him to pass through the Papal territory they held, and he had to proceed by boat to Pesaro. But the news that the Neapolitans had retired from Rome, and that the Austrians (chastened by Napoleon) now offered him the three Legations they were unable to keep, cheered the Pontiff on his journey and he entered Rome in triumph.<sup>1</sup>

Consalvi, whose firm hand guides that of the Pope during most of his Pontificate, began at once to put in order the chaotic affairs of the Papacy. The treasury was empty, though the four resplendent tiaras had been stripped of their jewels, the taxes were insupportable, and the coinage was shamefully debased. Consalvi removed some of the taxes—though he was forced to restore them at a later date—and, at a cost of 1,500,000 scudi, called in the adulterated coin. He turned with vigour to the affairs of Germany, where the princes who were dispossessed of their territory on the left bank of

<sup>1</sup> The chief source of our knowledge of the earlier years of Pius is the sketch of his life by Artaud de Montor. Cardinal Wiseman (another eulogist) covers the ground in the early chapters of his *Recollections of the Last Four Popes* (1858). Dr. E. L. T. Henke's *Papst Pius VII.* (1860) is an excellent impartial study, while D. Bertolotti's *Vita di Papa Pio VII.* (1881) is less scholarly, and Mary Allies' *Pius the Seventh* is rather a tract than an historical study. The Pope's relations with Napoleon (after the coronation) are minutely, though far from impartially, studied in H. Welschinger's *Le Pape et l'Empereur* (1905) and Father Ilario Rinieri's *Napoleone e Pio VII.* (2 vols., 1906): both make some use of unpublished documents. See also F. Rinieri's *Il Concordato tra Pio VII. e il Primo Console* (1902). The Pope's Bulls are in the *Bullarii Romani Continuatio* (ed. Barberi, vols. xi.-xv). Contemporary documents abound, and one need mention only the Memoirs of Consalvi, Pacca, and Talleyrand, and the *Correspondance de Napoleon I.* Special studies will be quoted later. Dr. F. Nielsen's *History of the Papacy in the Nineteenth Century* (2 vols., 1906) is the best recent study of the period of Pius VII. to Pius IX.: it is scholarly and impartial.

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the Rhine by the Treaty of Lunéville<sup>1</sup> proposed to recoup themselves from the ecclesiastical estates on the right bank.<sup>2</sup> But every other interest was soon overshadowed by the relations of Napoleon to Rome, and the story of Pius VII. is almost entirely the story of those singular and tragic relations.

Napoleon had re-entered Italy, and won Marengo, before Pius reached Rome. But experience in the East and consideration of his growing ambition had made Voltaireanism seem to him impolitic, and he now sent a representative to treat with the new Pope as respectfully as if he commanded 200,000 men. They would co-operate in restoring religion in France. Pius timidly expressed some concern at the Mohammedan sentiments Bonaparte had so recently uttered in Egypt, but he and the cardinals assented to the proposal, and Archbishop Spina was sent to Paris in November (1800). In view of Napoleon's demands—that the old hierarchy of 158 bishops should be reduced to sixty, that a certain proportion of the Republican (constitutional) bishops should be elected together with a proportion of the emigrant royalists, that no alienated church-property should be restored, and that Christianity should not be established as "the religion of France"—Spina found that his powers were inadequate, and Napoleon sent Cacault to Rome with the draft of a Concordat (March, 1801). Pius and his cardinals shrank from so formidable a sacrifice, and would negotiate, in time-honoured Roman fashion. But ancient customs did not impress Bonaparte. Cacault reported in May that the Concordat was to be

<sup>1</sup> February 9, 1801.

<sup>2</sup> This Pius entirely failed to prevent. See Father Leo Koenig's *Pius VII.: Die Säkularisation und das Reichskonkordat* (1904).



signed in five days, whether it killed the bewildered Pope or no (as Consalvi said it would), or France would set up its Church without his aid. As a compromise, Cacault suggested that Consalvi should accompany him to Paris, and the Quirinal had faith in its great diplomatist. Even Consalvi, however, was nervous and almost powerless before the studied violence of Napoleon, and his diplomatic movements were constantly met with a brusque declaration that Napoleon would detach France, if not Catholic Europe, from the Papacy if the Concordat were not quickly signed.<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of Napoleon was not merely despotic. Although France was still overwhelmingly Catholic, as writers on the revolutionary excesses often forget, an important minority, including most of Napoleon's higher officers, were bitterly anti-clerical and opposed any attempt to restore the Church. Napoleon, who felt that the religious sentiment of the majority must be dissociated from the emigrants and bound up once more with a national Church, would have preferred to dispense with Rome and proceed on extreme Gallican principles. But Catholic sentiment would not acquiesce in so violent a procedure, and Napoleon realized the vast gain it would be to him to win the cosmopolitan influence of the Pope. This feeble and timid monk, he thought, needed intimidation, and of that art Napoleon was a master. After a final twenty-four hours' sitting on July 13th-14th, the draft was passed by Consalvi. After a further struggle, and some further modification, it satisfied both parties, and Consalvi sent it, with some satisfaction, to Rome for the Pope's signature.

<sup>1</sup> Consalvi's Memoirs are naturally prejudiced, and not reliable. Theiner's *Histoire des deux Concordats* (1869) and Séché's *Les Origines du Concordat* (1894) are carefully documented.

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The new bishops were to be nominated by Napoleon and instituted by the Pope, and the Catholic faith was to be declared "the religion of the majority." Free-thinkers resented the whole negotiation: Gallicans deplored that the power of the clergy had been divided between the Pope and the Consul: Royalists abroad protested bitterly against the required resignation of the old bishops. Pius felt that this miraculous restoration of the Church was worth the price. He signed the Concordat and blessed the restorer of the faith.

But the Pope and Consalvi obtained a further insight into Napoleon's character when the Concordat was made public on Easter Sunday (1802). With it were associated, as if they were part of the agreement, certain "Organic Articles" of the most Gallican description. No Bull or other document from Rome could be published in France, no Nuncio or Legate exercise his functions, and no Council be held, without the authorization of the secular authorities. All seminary-teachers were to subscribe to the famous principles of 1682, and in case the higher clergy violated those or the laws of the Republic the Council of State might sit in judgment on them. Pius made a futile protest, when he read the seventy-six lamentable articles, but Napoleon soon had the Pope smiling over a gift of two frigates to the Papal navy; and Pius laicised Talleyrand and raised five French bishops, including Napoleon's half-uncle Fesch, to the cardinalate. A similar Concordat was forced by Napoleon on the Cisalpine Republic in 1803, and Naples was compelled to return Benevento and Pontecorvo. The first phase ended in smiles.

Cardinal Caprara was sent as legate to Paris, and his experiences moderated the Pope's satisfaction. He was quite unable to resist the election of the constitu-

tional bishops (the clergy who had adhered to the Republican Constitution, which Rome severely and naturally condemned) and he could not wring from them a formal acknowledgment of their errors. But these matters were soon thrust out of mind by fresh events in France. On May 18, 1804, Napoleon was elected Emperor, and he invited Pius to come to Paris to crown him. There was a natural hesitation at Rome to flout the Bourbons and their allies by such a recognition of Napoleon, but the long delay was not in substance due to that political scruple; nor was it in any serious degree due, as some writers say, to the recent execution of the Duc d'Enghien, which appears little in Papal documents. Consalvi persuaded the Pope to bargain with Napoleon: to stipulate for the abolition of the Organic Articles, the punishment of the constitutional clergy, and the return of the three Legations. As before, the diplomacy of Consalvi was boisterously swept aside by Napoleon, and on November 2d the aged Pope set out for Paris. Not a single definite promise had been made, and it seems, from later language of the Pope, that either he or Consalvi regarded the journey with grave distrust. Pius left behind him a document authorizing the cardinals to choose a successor, in case Napoleon violently detained him in France. We may ascribe this foresight to Consalvi, as throughout these earlier years Pius appears to be merely the agent of the wishes of the cardinals.

Napoleon must have noted with satisfaction the ease with which his constant trickery escaped the Pope's eye. On November 25th he, in hunting dress, with studied casualness, met the Pope on the open road at Fontainebleau, arranged that he should himself sit on the right in their joint carriage, and drove him into

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Paris by night. Every detail had been carefully planned with a view to the avoidance of paying unnecessary honour to the Pope. Pius noticed nothing, and wrote enthusiastically to Italy of Napoleon's goodness and zeal for religion; and indeed the enthusiasm of the faithful Catholics of Paris, when they found a venerable Pope blessing them from the balconies of the Tuileries, might well seem to him to indicate a triumph after the dark decade that had passed. Disillusion came slowly. Josephine, who now knew that she was threatened with divorce, confided to the Pope that there had been no church-celebration of her marriage with Napoleon, and Pius refused to crown them until it took place. Napoleon thundered, but the Pope had a clear principle and the difficulty was met by trickery. Cardinal Fesch was permitted by the Pope to marry them without witnesses, and Napoleon pointed out to friends that he was taking part in the ceremony without internal consent. On the following day, December 2d, the coronation took place at Notre Dame, and Napoleon at one stroke annihilated the prestige of the Pope by crowning himself and Josephine with his own hands.

Another wave of disdain of the Pope passed through foreign lands: "A puppet of no importance," said even Joseph de Maistre. Pius remained gentle and patient. He had still to win the reward of his sacrifices: to induce the Emperor to restore the Papal States, to modify the Organic Articles, to abolish the law of divorce, enforce the observance of Sunday, and reintroduce the monastic orders. The cardinals had drawn up a pretty program. Napoleon suavely refused every proposition, and sent one of his officers to suggest that Pius would do well to settle at Avignon, and have a palace at Paris.

Pius, now thoroughly alarmed, refused emphatically to stay in France, and disclosed that he had arranged to give him a successor if he were detained. And Pius returned to give the cardinals a roseate account of the resurrection of religion in France and the goodness of the Emperor. When he refused, shortly afterwards, to crown Napoleon King of Italy at Milan, there were those who admired his firmness. It is more likely that he acted on the advice of the disappointed cardinals.

Up to this point Pius VII. had given no indication of personality. One must, of course, appreciate that the restoration of the Church in France would seem to him an achievement worth large sacrifices, yet his childlike joy in Napoleon's insincere caresses, his utter failure to detect the true aims and the trickery of the Emperor, and the entire lack of plan or efficacy in his protests, must have convinced Napoleon, as they convinced hostile Royalists, that he was a mere puppet. He cannot possibly have had the measure of ability with which Cardinal Wiseman would endow him. The same conclusion is forced on us by a consideration of the second part of his relations with Napoleon. Isolated from his abler cardinals, he, like a child, bemoans his inability to form his judgment, and stumbles from error to error. But ten years of defeat have taught him that he is dealing with an enemy of religion, and he reveals a certain greatness of character in his resistance.

In the spring of 1805 the Emperor asked the Pope to dissolve, or declare null, the marriage which his brother Jerome had contracted in America with a Miss Paterson, a Protestant. Pius was eager to do so, if ecclesiastical principles yielded the slightest ground for such an act, but, after a long examination, he was obliged to refuse. Napoleon began to speak of him as

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a fool. The summer brought war with Austria once more, and in October the French troops marched through the Papal States on their way to Naples, and occupied Ancona. When Pius protested (November 13, 1805), the Emperor scornfully replied—after an interval of two months—that if its Papal owners were not able or willing to fortify Ancona, he must occupy it: that the Pope and the cardinals prostituted religion by their friendly relations with English and Russian enemies of France: and that he would respect the Pope's spiritual sovereignty, and expected from him respect for the Emperor's political sovereignty.<sup>1</sup> On February 13, (1806) Napoleon wrote more explicitly. The Pope must close his harbours against the English, expel from Rome all representatives of the enemies of France, get rid of his bad counsellors (Consalvi), and remember that Napoleon is Emperor of Rome.<sup>2</sup> Pius, after consulting the cardinals, replied that the "Roman Emperor" was at Vienna, and that the Papacy would not be drawn into a war between France and England. To the French representative in Rome the Pope used a very firm language; he would die rather than yield on what he conceived as a matter of principle. When, some time afterwards, Napoleon annexed Naples, and the Papacy protested that it was a Papal fief, Napoleon rightly gave Consalvi the credit for the opposition and forced him to resign. He had in 1802 restored Benevento and Pontecorvo to Rome: he now gave the former to Talleyrand and the latter to Bernadotte.

It must seem an idle practice to seek apologies for Napoleon's conduct, but we do well to conceive that each man was justified in his procedure. Napoleon was wrong only in his pretexts and his methods. He

<sup>1</sup> *Correspondance de Napoleon I.*, xi., 642.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, xii., 477.

was no orthodox Catholic, and had no illusions about the sacred origin of the temporal power. If the Pope chose to be a king, he submitted to the laws of kings. The Papacy undoubtedly thwarted the work of the Emperor in Italy and aided his enemies. Cardinal Pacca says in his Memoirs that Pius wrote him that he "risked everything for the English."<sup>1</sup> Common opposition to Napoleon brought about a remarkable approach of Rome and England, and the Quirinal had hopes of advantage for the Church in England. The Papal ports were of great service to the English fleet, and therefore of great disservice to the French.

Pius VII. seems never to have realized the elementary fact that Napoleon was not a Christian. He relied too long on the orthodox fiction that, because the Pope was the successor of Peter in spiritual matters, any *temporal* power taken from him was taken from "The Blessed Peter." Napoleon did not share that illusion, and it is singular that he waited so long before consolidating his Italian kingdom by absorbing the Papal States. The year 1807, when Napoleon was busy with Prussia, passed in recriminations. Pius would, he said, show them that the substitution of Cardinal Casoni as his Secretary of State for Consalvi made no difference. He seemed to be finding his personality, but there were fiery cardinals like Pacca still with him.

In January, 1808, Napoleon ordered General Miollis to occupy Rome, and presently he expelled from Rome all cardinals who were not subjects of the Papal States. Pius, during the night, had a protesting poster fixed on the walls. On April 2d Napoleon annexed Urbino, Ancona, Macerata, and Camerino: on the foolish pretext (among others) that Charlemagne had bestowed

<sup>1</sup> *Memorie*, i., 68.

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those provinces on the Papacy for the good of Catholicism, not for the profit of its enemies. Pius sent a long and dignified protest to all bishops in his dominions and broke off diplomatic relations with France. Gabrielli had succeeded Casoni in counselling Pius, and the French now made the singular mistake of arresting Gabrielli and substituting Pacca—a fiery and inflexible opponent of Napoleon. In August Pacca came into violent collision with the French and they went to arrest him. He summoned the Pope, and Pius personally conducted him to the protection of the Quirinal. In the solitude of the Quirinal they prepared for the last step and drafted an excommunication of Napoleon.<sup>1</sup> At length on June 10, 1809, they received Napoleon's declaration that the Papal States were incorporated in his Empire, and the Bull of excommunication (*Quum Memoranda*) was issued. It did not name Napoleon, and it was at once suppressed by the French, but General Miollis considered that a conditional order for the arrest of the Pope, which Napoleon had sent, now came into force. At three in the morning of July 6th the troops broke into the Quirinal. When General Radet and his officers reached the Audience Chamber, they found the Pope sitting gravely at a table, with a group of cardinals on either side. For several minutes the two groups gazed on each other in tense silence, and at length Radet announced that the Pope must abdicate or go into exile. Taking only his breviary and crucifix, the Pope entered the carriage at four o'clock, and he and Pacca were swiftly driven through the silent streets, and on the long road to Savona. They found that

<sup>1</sup> Pacca relates that the English sent a friar to say that they had a frigate ready to take away the Pope and his secretary. Such were the relations of Rome and England.



they had between them only the sum of twenty-two cents, and they laughed.

Pius reached Savona on August 16th (1809), and was lodged in the episcopal palace. He refused the 50,000 francs a year and the carriages offered by Napoleon. He refused to walk in Savona, and spent the day in a little room overlooking the walls, or walking in the scanty garden of the house. He had no secretary and his aged hands trembled, but pious Catholics conspired to defeat his guardians (or corrupt his guardians) and his letters and directions went out stealthily over Europe. His cardinals were removed to Paris, and when Napoleon divorced Josephine and married Marie Louise (April 1, 1810), only thirteen out of the twenty-seven cardinals refused to attend the ceremony. Pius still declined to enter into Napoleon's plans. Metternich sent an Austrian representative to argue with him, but the Pope would not yield his temporal power, and he demanded his cardinals. Cardinals Spina and Caselli, of the moderate party, were sent to persuade him, but the mission was fruitless. Napoleon, who was sorely harassed by the Pope's refusal to institute the new bishops, tried to act without him, and made Maury Archbishop of Paris. Pius sent a secret letter to the Vicar Capitular of Paris, declaring that the appointment was null, and Napoleon angrily ordered a search of his rooms and the removal of books, ink, paper, and personal attendants.

At last, in June, 1811, the strategy of Napoleon succeeded. The Archbishop of Tours and three other bishops presented themselves at Savona with the terrible news that Napoleon had summoned a General Council at Paris and expected the bishops to remedy the desperate condition of the French Church—there

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were twenty-seven bishops awaiting institution— independently of the Pope. Pius still refused to submit, but day after day the prelates and the Count de Chabrol harrowed him with descriptions of the appalling results of his obstinacy, and on the tenth day they hastened to Paris with the news that Pius had consented on the main point: he would institute the bishops within six months, or, if he failed to do so, the Archbishop would have power to institute them.

What really happened at Savona is the only serious controversy in the life of Pius VII., and this controversy is based entirely on the reluctance of Catholic writers to admit that the Pope erred. The usual theory, based on the work of D'Haussonville,<sup>1</sup> is that Pius fell into so grave a condition, mentally and physically, that he can hardly be regarded as responsible. Recent and authoritative Catholic writers have given a different defence. H. Welschinger<sup>2</sup> seems to suggest that Pius was drugged by his medical attendant, but he goes on to make this fantastic suggestion superfluous by claiming that Pius did not consent at all, either orally or in writing. Father Rinieri, on the other hand, scorns the theory of temporary insanity, holds that the Pope deliberately assented, and claims that the consent was perfectly justified because it was conditional; the Pope agreed *if*, as the bishops said, his concession would lead to peace and his restoration to liberty. These theories destroy each other, and are severally inadmissible. Welschinger, to exonerate the Pope from weakness, assumes that the Archbishop of Tours lied; for that prelate wrote at once to Paris that they had "drawn up a note in His Holiness's room, and he had accepted

<sup>1</sup> *L'Église Romaine et le Premier Empire*, 5 vols., 1868-1870.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Pape et l'Empereur* (1905), pp. 177-196.

it," and on his duplicate of the note he wrote: "This note, drawn up in His Holiness's room, and in a sense under his directions, was approved and agreed to."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, when Welschinger himself quotes the Pope saying, in his fit of repentance, "Luckily I *signed* nothing," we gather that Pius *orally* assented. Rinieri, on the other hand, is wrong in making the Pope's assent strictly conditional; the last clause of the note merely states that the Pope is assured that good results will follow. And both writers are at fault when they lay stress on the fact that the note was a mere draft of an agreement. Unless the four bishops lied, Pius VII., under great importunity and predictions of disaster, and in a very poor state of health, consented to a principle which was utterly inconsistent with Papal teaching.

Later events put this beyond question, and make all these speculations ridiculous. It is unquestioned that when, on the following morning, Pius asked for the bishops and learned that they had gone, he fell into a fit of remorse and despair which brought him near to the brink of madness. It is equally unquestioned that Napoleon's council drew up a decree in the sense of the famous Savona note and that on September 20th Pius signed it. Napoleon had been dissatisfied with the Pope's *oral* consent and his retraction (which the Emperor concealed), and had tried to bully the council into a declaration independently of the Papacy. When he failed, he assured them of the Pope's consent and they passed the decree. Eight bishops and five cardinals took it to Savona, and the Pope subscribed to it. The only plausible defence of Pius is that he *granted* or delegated the power to the archbishops, instead of merely declaring that the archbishops possessed it.

<sup>1</sup> See Rinieri, pp. 165 and 166.

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But the Pope's acute remorse shows that he had not deliberately meant this.

Napoleon, however, saw that his scheme had failed in this respect, and he kept the Pope at Savona while he set out on the Russian campaign. After a time the Emperor, alleging that British ships hovered about Savona, ordered the removal of the Pope to Fontainebleau, and he was transferred with such secrecy and discomfort that he almost died in crossing Mont Cenis. At Fontainebleau he maintained his quiet, ascetic life: even afforded the spectacle of a Pope mending his own shirts. The thirteen "black" cardinals—the men who opposed Napoleon and were stripped of their red robes and sent into exile—could not approach him, and he paid little attention to Napoleon's courtiers. In December (1812) Napoleon was back from his terrible failure, but he still sought to bluff the aged Pope. In a genial New-Year letter he proposed that Pius should settle at Paris and have two million francs a year: that he would in future permit the Catholic rulers to nominate two thirds of the cardinals: and that the thirteen black cardinals should be censured by the Pope and gracefully pardoned by the Emperor. Pius hesitated; and on the evening of January 18th, when Napoleon suddenly burst into his room and embraced him, the old tears of childlike joy stood in his eyes once more. Napoleon remained and put before him a new Concordat, sacrificing the demands he had made in his letter, but demanding the abdication of the temporal power and six months' limit for the Papal institution of bishops. Harrowing pictures of the Pope's condition and the pressure put on him by Napoleonic prelates are drawn by pious pens. But the fact is not disputed that on January 25th the

“martyr-Pope” signed the Concordat and sacrificed the temporal power.

When Pacca and Consalvi and the black cardinals, who were now set at liberty, arrived at Fontainebleau, they shuddered at his surrender, but they could not upbraid the pale, worn, distracted Pontiff. He acknowledged his “sin,” as he called it, and asked their advice. By one vote—fourteen against thirteen—the stalwarts decided that he must retract and defy Napoleon, and a remarkable week followed. They drafted a new Concordat, and the Pope wrote a few lines each day, which were taken away in Pacca’s pocket to the rooms of Cardinal Pignatelli, who lived outside. The Emperor’s spies were defeated, and he had a last burst of rage when the new Concordat was put before him. But the Allies were closing round the doomed adventurer. As they approached, he offered Pius half the Papal States, and made other futile proposals. In January, 1814, Pius was conveyed to Savona: on March 17th he was informed that he was free. Napoleon had fallen.

Consalvi was dispatched to join in the counsels of the Allies, and Pacca, who took his place, set himself joyously to obliterate every trace of the Revolution and Napoleon. Monasteries were reopened, schools and administrative offices restored to the clergy, the Inquisition re-established, the Jews thrust back into the Ghetto: even these new French practices of lighting streets at night and vaccinating people were abolished. Above all things the Society of Jesus must be restored. Pius had in 1801 recognised the Society in Russia<sup>1</sup> and in 1804 he granted it canonical existence in the two Sicilies. The appalling experience of the last twenty-five years had now swept the last trace of

<sup>1</sup> By the Brief *Catholicæ Fidei*, March 7, 1801.

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liberalism out of the minds of Catholic monarchs, and on August 17, 1814, the Bull *Sollicitudo Omnium* restored the Society throughout the world; though Portugal rejected it and France dared not carry it out. A few months later Rome trembled anew, when it heard that Napoleon had left Elba and Murat marched across the Papal States to support him. Pius fled from Rome, rejecting all the overtures of Napoleon and Murat, but the Hundred Days were soon over and reaction reigned supreme. Pius never lost his quaint appreciation of Napoleon. Mme. Letitia, the brothers Lucien and Louis, and Fesch lived in honour at Rome, and, when the mother complained that the English were killing her son at St. Helena, Pius earnestly begged Consalvi to intercede for him. At Napoleon's death in 1821 he directed Fesch to conduct a memorial service.

Meantime Consalvi had won back the Papal States (except Avignon and Venaissin and a strip of Ferrara) at the Vienna Congress, and had returned to moderate the excesses of the reactionary Pacca. Consalvi had no liberal sentiments, but he had intelligence. At least half of the educated Italians were Freethinkers, and the secret society of the *Carbonari* spread over the country, ferociously combated by the orthodox *Sanfedisti*. Italy entered on what the wits called the long struggle of the "cats" and the "dogs": a rife period for brigands. Consalvi, in spite of Pacca and the *Zelanti*, compromised. He retained many of the Napoleonic reforms, though, when the Spanish revolution of 1820 had its revolutionary echoes all over Italy, he drew nearer to the Holy Alliance for the bloody extirpation of liberalism. Rome prospered once more, and artists and princes flocked to it, but Pius VII. must have felt in his last years that the soil of Europe still heaved and shuddered.

The relations of the Quirinal<sup>1</sup> with other countries were restored in some measure, in face of stern opposition. A new Concordat with France was signed in 1817, but the Legislative Assembly refused to pass it and it did not come into force before the death of Pius. Spain set up a régime of truculent orthodoxy under the sanguinary rule of Ferdinand, and the Revolution of 1820 was crushed for him by the French. Austria made no new Concordat and retained much of the Febronian temper. Prussia signed a favourable Concordat in 1821. Bavaria came to an agreement in 1817, but the liberals defeated it; and Naples and Sardinia were ruled in the spirit of the Holy Alliance. William I. sought a Concordat for the Netherlands, though without result: England endeavoured to bring about an agreement in regard to the Irish bishops, which was defeated by the Irish: and the dioceses of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, Richmond, and Cincinnati were set up in America.

I do not enter into closer detail, as we recognize in all this work the hand of Consalvi rather than of Pius. The aged Pope continued to rejoice over every symptom, or apparent symptom, of religious recovery, and to miscalculate his age. Even the revolution of 1820 failed to shake orthodox security and led only to a more truculent persecution of the new spirit. Pius had now passed his eightieth year and could not be expected to see what neither Metternich nor Consalvi could see. In the summer of 1823 he fell into his last illness. As he sank, men noticed that he was murmuring "Savona, Fontainebleau," but he died praying quietly on August 17th. It was a strange fate that Barnaba Luigi Chiara-

<sup>1</sup> Almost the only mention of the Vatican at this period is that in 1807 Pius had it prepared for the reception of Napoleon!

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monti on a throne in such an age. Whatever churchlore he may have had, he confronted the problems of his age with dim and feeble intelligence, and he was at times, when there was no Pacca or Consalvi to guide him, induced to make concessions which are not consistent with the fond title of "martyr-Pope." He was a good Bishop of Imola.



## CHAPTER XIX

### PIUS IX.

**I**N spite of the grave condition of the Catholic world, the ill-concealed spread of liberal ideas among the educated, and the spurts of rebellion throughout Europe, the cardinals met the new danger with as little wisdom as their predecessors had confronted the Reformation. The three Conclaves which were held within eight years of the death of Pius VII. were marred by the old wrangles of parties and ambitions of individuals, and they issued in the election of entirely unsuitable Popes. The Papacy allied itself with the monarchs in an effort to stifle the growing modern spirit, and imitated their unscrupulous methods. Leo XII. and Gregory XVI., at least, left behind them records at which modern sentiment shudders. Yet they showed as little appreciation as Louis XVIII. or Charles X. of the irresistible development through which Europe was passing, and there seem to be whole centuries of evolution between their acts and announcements and those of Leo XIII.

Cardinal della Ganga, who became Leo XII. at the death of Pius, was a deeply religious and narrow-minded man who achieved much moral and social reform in his dominions, yet his death in 1829 was, says Baron Bunsen, hailed at Rome "with indecent joy." His despotic Puritan measures angered his subjects, and his gross

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injustice to the Jews and fierce persecution of the Carbonari and Liberals fed the growing Italian hatred of the Papacy. Pius VIII (1829-30) was a milder *Zelante* and had won—a singular distinction for a Pope in such a crisis—some repute in canon law and numismatics. He was nearly seventy years old, and his Secretary of State, the disreputable Albani, was over eighty. The revolutionary movement of 1830 completed his afflictions, and a Roman wag proposed as his epitaph: "He was born: he wept: he died."<sup>1</sup> Then came the longer Pontificate of Gregory XVI., the chief events of which will pass before us as we review the earlier career of Pius IX. Gregory was a pious, narrow-minded Camaldulense monk. Like his predecessor, he was well versed in canon law and as ill fitted as a man could be to rule in the nineteenth century. He left the repression of the rebels to his Secretary of State Lambruschini, and said his beads, and ate sweetmeats at merry little gatherings of cardinals, while Young Italy marched nobly to the scaffold and its brilliant writers opened the eyes of the world to the foul condition of the Papal States.

Gregory died on June 1, 1846, dimly foreseeing an age of revolution, and reform was now the great issue before the Conclave. The late Pope's supporters put forward the truculent Lambruschini, but from the first Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti was conspicuous in the voting, and on the second day of the Conclave he was elected by thirty-seven out of fifty votes. It was useless any longer to ignore that appalling indictment of abuses,

<sup>1</sup> During his twenty-months' Pontificate, in 1829, Catholic Emancipation was carried in England. But the Quirinal's share was confined to rejoicing. Consalvi, however, had "worked incessantly" for it, and had been much aided by the Duchess of Devonshire. See his words in Artaud's *Histoire du Pape Léon XII.*, i., 171.

corruption, and incompetence which the Italian writers were circulating throughout Europe. The cardinals chose a reformer: a man who was at times described even as a Liberal.

Giovanni Maria Gianbattista Pietro Pellegrino Isidoro Mastai-Ferretti—the name reflects the piety of his mother—was then fifty-four years old. He had been born at Sinigaglia on May 13, 1792, of parents who belonged to the small provincial nobility. He was sent to school at Volterra, and he is variously described by fellow-pupils who took opposite sides in the fierce conflict of his later years as a pale, pure little angel of marvellous industry, and as a sickly, epileptic little idler with the reputation, Trollope says, of being “the biggest liar in the school.”<sup>1</sup> He seems to have been a delicate, handsome, undistinguished pupil of proper character. His virtuous mother wished him to become a priest, and he received the tonsure at Volterra in 1809. In October he was sent to continue his studies at Rome,

<sup>1</sup> The contradiction is characteristic of the literature on Pius IX. Most of it was written before or just after his death and is fiercely partisan. Petruccelli della Gattina's *Pie IX.* (1866) is the chief and least reliable of the hostile biographies: T. A. Trollope's *Story of the Life of Pius IX.* (2 vols., 1877) is one of the most temperate of the anti-Papal works and still has some use: F. Hitchman's *Pius the Ninth* (1878) is slighter but equally moderate. Such studies as those of Shea, Maguire, Dawson, Wappmannsperger (2 vols.), Stepischnegg (2 vols.), Pougeois (6 vols.), and Freiherr von Helfert are equally prejudiced on the Catholic side. The best study of the character and work of Pius is Dr. F. Nielsen's *Papacy in the Nineteenth Century* (2 vols., 1906), a temperate (perhaps not sufficiently critical) and scholarly work. Bishop G. S. Pelczar's *Pio IX. e il suo Pontificato* (3 vols., Italian translation 1909) is learned but fulsome and indiscriminating. Father R. Ballerini's incomplete study (published as *Les premières pages du Pontificat du Pape Pie IX.*, 1909) has no distinction. For special aspects see D. Silvagni, *La Corte e la Società Romana* (1885), and Count von Hoensbroech's *Rom und das Zentrum* (1910), and works quoted hereafter.

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and for some months he lived in the Quirinal, in charge of an uncle who was a canon of St. Peter's. They were related to Pius VII. and were favoured. The French invasion of 1810 drove them back to Sinigaglia, and Giovanni was summoned for service in the Noble Guard of the Viceroy of Italy. His epileptic tendency was successfully pleaded for exemption, and he returned to Rome in 1814. It seems, however, that he was not deeply religious, and he applied for service in the Papal Guard rather than for orders.<sup>1</sup> His fits closed the military service of the Pope against him, and, on the letter of the law, should equally exclude him from the clergy. He became very depressed and morose, but Pius VII. strained the regulations in favour of his young relative. He was to receive ordination on condition that he never said mass without an assistant. In 1819 he became a priest, and made the small progress which a distant relative of the Pope might expect. In 1823 he accompanied a Papal representative to Chile, and the voyage probably strengthened his constitution. Pius VII. died during his absence from Rome, but as Giovanni's protector, Cardinal della Ganga, became Pope, he returned to favour at Rome. He received a canonry, the administration of the Hospital of St. Michael, and (in 1827) the archbishopric of Spoleto.

It is clear that the young Archbishop did excellent work at Spoleto, and we must read with discretion the statements of his less temperate critics. His predecessor had been idle and worthless, and Mastai-Ferretti applied himself with zeal, judgment, and success to the reform of clergy and laity. In 1829 Leo XII., his

<sup>1</sup> Ballerini and Helfert deny this but Pelczar and Nielsen make it clear. The graver statement of the hostile biographers—that he spent his youth in dissipation—rests on no respectable evidence.

patron, died, and Pius VIII. entered upon his short and futile Pontificate. Gregory XVI., who succeeded him, at once met the blasts of the Revolution of 1830. The outbreak at Rome was suppressed, but the revolutionaries captured Bologna and brought about a dangerous agitation throughout Italy. Mastai-Ferretti is said to have been compelled to fly from Spoleto, but his actions and attitude at this time are not wholly clear. Austrian troops suppressed the Revolution, and Gregory entered upon that truculent crusade against the Liberals and their claims which diverted England from its new alliance with the Papacy and even shocked Metternich. When the Austrians compelled him to take the Secretaryship of State from Cardinal Bernetti, he bestowed it on the more intemperate Cardinal Lambruschini, and the struggle with the Carbonari and the Young Italians continued. In his Encyclical *Mirari Vos* (August 15, 1832) Gregory pledged the Papacy to a stern refusal of the democratic reforms which the new Europe demanded.

Mastai-Ferretti had meantime (February 16, 1832) been removed to the bishopric of Imola: a more profitable see and a recognized path to higher honours. His amiable and conciliatory character inclined him to meet the more moderate Liberals with ease, though he does not seem to have made any profound study of the political development of his time. When Cardinal Lambruschini condemned scientific associations, the Bishop of Imola is reported to have commented that he saw no inconsistency between science and religion. On these safe and innocuous expressions the Bishop won a repute for "Liberalism" among the more reactionary members of the Curia, and Gregory XVI. long hesitated to raise him to the cardinalate. He was an exemplary

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bishop, and in the reform of education and of philanthropic institutions he performed no slight social service, which may have attracted the esteem of the more moderate Liberals. He was admitted to the Sacred College on December 14, 1840, and continued for six years to direct his diocese and encourage those temperate reforms which most of his colleagues were too indolent or too prejudiced to favour. The condition of the Church was again becoming critical. The Carbonari were weakened and dispersed in Italy, but Mazzini had begun to lead "the Youth of Italy" to a more open and more heretical attack on Austria and the Papacy, while high-minded and humanitarian priests like Gioberti, Ventura, and Rosmini in Italy, and Lamennais in France, were, in varying degrees, looking to a Catholic Liberalism to ease the pressure of the growing popular revolt. Gregory XVI. and his advisers regarded the entire Liberal movement, in every shade, as a sinful and temporary aberration. They passed the most drastic laws for its suppression: the prisons of Italy were distended with their victims: yet their orthodox militia, the Sanfedisti, had to wage a perpetual and bitter struggle against the spreading revolt.

We who look back on this painful travail of the birth of democracy are at times unduly impatient with idealists who failed to recognize its promise at the time. Not merely ecclesiastical statesmen, but heterodox observers and sons of the people like Carlyle, looked upon the new movement as an emanation from the pit, a menace to society. But most biographers pass to the opposite extreme when they conceive Pius IX. as judiciously studying the demands of the age, realizing that a moderate measure of democracy and liberty was just and inevitable, and then renouncing his Liberal

faith when he saw the excesses of the democrats. For this there is no documentary support. Pius was amiable, accessible, and anxious to please all: he was neither a statesman nor an economist, and had not a firm judgment of the European situation. He was disposed to see justice in the semi-Liberalism of Gioberti or Ventura, and disposed the next day to listen to the Mephistophelean counsels of Metternich. Europe was to him a world in which a large number of thoughtful people demanded reforms which were consistent with the political and religious supremacy of the Papacy, and he was disposed to favour and indulge them. He failed to realize, until 1848, that the firm and consistent demands of the new age were inconsistent with Papal supremacy. But he clearly disliked the mediæval policy of the Curia and he was regarded with hope by the reformers within the fold. It was they who greeted his election in June, 1846. The more radical Italians did not want a reforming Pope, because they did not want a Papacy.

Pius was crowned on June 21st, and at once turned to what he would regard as "democratic" measures. He gave dowries to a thousand poor girls, and decreed that all pledges in the Monte di Pietà which were less in value than two lire should be returned to their owners. On July 16th he declared a general amnesty of political prisoners, and the Romans flocked to the Quirinal to cheer their handsome and courageous Pope, and demonstrations of joy resounded throughout Italy. The amnesty was in reality conditional: the released prisoners and returning exiles were to promise not again to "disturb the public order." However, there was at the time no severe application of the condition, and Pius continued in his reforming mood. That he had no

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serious leaning to Liberalism he made abundantly clear to the more thoughtful before the end of the year. On November 9th he issued an Encyclical in which he condemned Bible Societies, secret political societies, critics of the Church, license of the press, and so on.<sup>1</sup> The Radicals still mingled with the crowds below his balcony and flattered him. Some, no doubt, had the idea that he might be induced to go farther; but Mazzini and others have revealed that they astutely used these demonstrations to educate the people in larger demands and provoke a more serious revolt. Pius threw open his garden to the public on certain days, opened night schools and Sunday schools, re-opened the Accademia dei Lincei (for the promotion of science), and discussed plans of railways for Italy. He was in a patriarchal mood which came near to social idealism. Journals multiplied, and clubs became active: especially the Circolo Romano, which gradually came under the influence of a prosperous and very radical publican from the Trastevere, Angelo Brunetti, nicknamed "little Cicero" (Ciceruacchio) for his demagogic eloquence. The dreamy Christian Liberals, Gioberti and Ventura, gave the not very penetrating Pope the idea that he was going to make a model State of Papal Italy and, through it, to lead the world on the new upward path.

The Radicals encouraged the clouds of incense which obscured the Pope's vision, and he listened gravely to the requests for representative government. On April 19, 1847, he proposed a *Consulta di Stato*: a council composed of laymen from the various provinces—all carefully selected by the clergy and gravely reminded that their business was merely to offer suggestions. In July he formed a Civic Guard for Rome: in Novem-

<sup>1</sup> *Lettres Apostoliques de Pie IX.*, p. 177.



ber he inaugurated a scheme of municipal administration for Rome: and at the close of December he formed a ministry—of cardinals and other clerical dignitaries. By this time, however, Pius had become perplexed and suspicious. Cardinal Gizzi, his Secretary of State, resigned, the Gregorian cardinals frowned, and the Austrians complained of his concessions. There was a banquet in Rome to Cobden, and there was a very noisy and triumphant banquet to Ciceruacchio. The Pope forbade popular demonstrations, yet he perceived daily that his concessions did nothing to appease the popular appetite. The Italians demanded elected, lay officers.

To make matters worse for the Pope the Austrians advanced against the Papal States. The difference was adjusted, but from the summer of 1847 hostility to Austria increased rapidly, and the people demanded an efficient Papal army to resist them. When, on February 8th, the news came of the third French Revolution, the agitators, who had now complete influence, became bolder. Ciceruacchio himself, supported by the Liberal Princes Corsini and Borghese, saw the Pope, and demanded war on Austria and democratic institutions. At sight of the massive and resolute crowds which supported them, the Pope promised a lay ministry and a more efficient army; but on the following day he, addressing the crowd in patriarchal terms, complained of the excessive demands of a "minority" among them and protested that the Papacy needed no war on Austria, as the Catholic Powers would protect it. The Radical leaders saw his weakness, and under their steady pressure he began to make his famous concessions to democracy. A new ministry, with lay nobles in most of the positions, was formed in March, the Jesuits were advised to leave Rome, the ancient

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walls and restrictions of the Ghetto were abolished, and a constitution was granted. The members of the Lower Chamber were to be elected, but the College of Cardinals would have a veto on the proceedings of both houses, and they could not discuss ecclesiastical or "mixed" affairs: a very grave restriction in a theocratic State.

The Radicals now concentrated the people on the cry of war with Austria, and on that issue the Pope fell. The Papal troops had crossed the frontier in support of the Sardinians, and, as Pius refused to declare war, the Austrians treated them as brigands. The meetings in Rome became more and more violent, the new ministry resigned, and, as Pius still refused to declare war, a second ministry handed in its resignation. The summer and autumn of 1848 passed in this struggle. Pius insisted that war was not consistent with his religious character, and all Rome united in opposing him. In November, at the suggestion of Rosmini, the Pope ordered Pellegrino Rossi to form a new ministry. Rossi, a friend of Napoleon III., was hated by the Radicals, and his dream of a union of Italian princes under the Pope's direction conflicted with their plan of a united and free Italy. He was assassinated on November 15th, and on the following day a vast crowd, partly armed, marched to the Quirinal and peremptorily laid down their claims. In the confusion a prelate at one of the windows was shot, and the Pope, seeing the Roman Guard mingling with the crowd, abjectly surrendered, and retired to disavow his concession and prepare for flight. The situation was very grave, and the action of the Pope was far from heroic. It is not a maxim of the higher morality that you may evade an angry crowd by making promises that you do not intend to

fulfil, or that you may afterwards discover that such promises were void.

The sequel is well-known. With the assistance of the foreign ambassadors the Pope, disguised as a simple priest, fled to Gaeta. So great was his concern that when the King of Naples, warned of his flight, came the next day and inquired for the Pope, the officials at Gaeta were quite unaware that Pius had been amongst them for twenty-four hours. The cardinals gathered about him, and he appealed to the Catholic Powers to restore his authority and suppress the rebels. It is not an entirely accurate analysis to say that the Pope's "Liberalism" now ended, and he became a reactionary. He had been duped by the Radicals and had never understood his subjects. A feeble and carefully controlled lay representation, with neither legislative nor executive power, was not a part of the Liberal creed. Pius IX. was never a Liberal. He was from the first unwilling to surrender the absolute authority of the clergy, to grant freedom of discussion, to abolish the monstrous growth of clerical officialdom, or to apply a fitting proportion of the income of the Papal States to their effective military defence. When he saw that even moderate Liberals demanded these things, he recognized that he had never been in agreement with them, and that his own half-measures were of no value. He now further recognized that the advanced Liberals had captured his people, and he turned, quite logically, to a policy of oppression. There was no material change of his political faith.

From Gaeta he appointed a "governing commission" (under a cardinal) for Rome, and, when the people refused it and set up a Republic, he placidly entrusted his case to France, Spain, Naples, and Sardinia, and

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devoted himself to the preparation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. Rosmini was still with him, urging compromise with the democrats, but the somewhat unscrupulous Cardinal Antonelli, who now became Secretary of State, astutely destroyed the influence of the reformer, and confirmed Pius in his attitude of defiance and repression. Even when the French troops—apparently thinking that they could seduce the Romans to admit them in peace and could then compel the Pope to adopt a conciliatory policy—crushed the Roman Republic, and reopened the gates to the Pope, Pius did not hasten to return. On September 4th he left Gaeta for Portici, and it was not until April 12, 1850, that he returned to the Quirinal. The crowd ironically applauded *Pio Nono Secondo*.

The Pope had replied to the French appeals for a promise of reform that it was not consistent with his dignity to make promises under apparent pressure, but he had consented to the creation of new political institutions. From Portici he promised a new Consiglio di Stato, a Consiglio dei Ministri, and a Consulta di Stato. These were wholly under clerical control, and the elections for the District Councils, the only bodies which were to have free popular representatives, were soon suppressed. But there is little need to dwell on the second phase of Papal government under Pius IX. Cardinal Antonelli and the Jesuits had a paramount influence, and the dream of enlightenment and self-government was roughly dissipated. Between 1850 and 1855 the Roman Council alone passed ninety sentences of death, and the prisons were again thickly populated; while the disorders of finance and administration, and the appalling illiteracy of the people in an age of advancing education, were scrupulously main-

tained. The scandal which in later years followed the death of Antonelli—the spectacle of his natural daughter struggling for his vast fortune, though he was a son of the people—sufficiently disclosed the character of that able and indelicate minister, while the Jesuits were not unmindful that the first act of the revolution had been to expel them. They had sent some of their abler representatives to Gaeta, and from that time they had a deep influence on the ecclesiastical policy of the Pope, while Antonelli ruled the Papal States and offered what Lord Clarendon called a “scandal to Europe.” Within little over a year of the Pope’s return there were more than 8000 political prisoners in the Papal jails, while the ignorant people were oppressed by heavy taxes and an army of clerical officials.

It is probable that Pius IX. had no clearer perception of the state of Europe and Italy after the revolution of 1849 than he had had in the earlier years. He devoted his attention to spiritual matters and listened, in temporal concerns, to the suave assurances of Antonelli. This pacified Europe was to be weaned from its bad dreams by a cult of the Sacred Heart, devotion to the Immaculate Conception of Mary, and so on. His first important act (September 29, 1850) was to re-establish the hierarchy in England, to the great alarm and anger of the English Protestants. England had quickly lost its passing sympathy with the Papacy, and English travellers took home dreadful accounts of the condition of the Papal States. The Pope does not seem to have been acquainted either with the disgust of the English at the state of his dominion or with the fact that the apparent restoration of the old faith in England meant little more than a vast immigration from famine-stricken Ireland.

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He then applied himself to securing the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. From Gaeta in 1849, while Mazzini and his colleagues ruled Rome and Antonelli struggled with the representatives of the rival Catholic Powers for his restoration, Pius had sent out some five hundred letters to the bishops of the world, inviting their opinion on the doctrine. It had long passed the stage of being a disputed academic thesis, and most of the replies were favourable. The Jesuits, who had become the special protagonists of the doctrine, fostered the native piety of the Pope, and on December 8, 1854, it became a dogma of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

In 1857 Pius made a tour of the Italian provinces. His chief purpose was to visit the Holy House of Loretto, but the intriguers of the Quirinal used the opportunity to enhance the Pope's illusion that only a few negligible fanatics quarrelled with the Papal government. In the previous year the diplomatists assembled at the Congress of Paris had censured that government in the most violent terms and demanded reform. It is hardly likely that their comments were put before the Pope, and care was taken that his reception in the provinces should flatter his genial love of popularity. Inconvenient petitioners were refused access to him, and the clergy and more devout laity greeted him with applause. Gregorovius, who was then in Rome, notes in his *Diary* that Pius returned to the Quirinal full of joy; and a few years later the inhabitants of these provinces would vote, by an overwhelming majority, for the abolition of the Papal government.

In the following year the graver development of

<sup>1</sup> The original documents relating to the Pope's actions will be found in the *Acta Pii Noni*, *Acta Sanctæ Sedis*, and *Discorsi del Summo Pontefice Pio IX.* (1872-8).

Italian politics began. Napoleon III., whose protection of the corrupt Papal system had infuriated the Liberals, met Cavour secretly at Plombières and agreed, in case of attack by Austria, to help the King of Sardinia in his ambition; his reward would be the provinces of Nice and Savoy. The attempt by Orsini in the following January to assassinate Napoleon did not help the diplomats of the Vatican, as Cavour plausibly urged that the tyranny of the Papal States was responsible for the rebels who were scattered over Europe, and the struggle for the unity of Italy went on from year to year. The war between Sardinia and Austria broke out in the spring of 1859, and Austria was defeated at Magenta and retired from the Legations. These provinces were resolutely opposed to a return of clerical government, and Cavour, whose monarch was not yet prepared for war on the Papacy, sent one representative after another to persuade the Pope to permit the appointment of lay rulers of Parma, Modena, Tuscany, and Romagna, under his suzerainty. Antonelli and Pius refused to make the least concession to the rebels, nor were the provincials disposed to assent to such a settlement. After some months of insurgence and bloody repression, a plebiscite was organized in the Legations (March 11, 1860) and an overwhelming majority voted for incorporation in the kingdom of Sardinia. In spite of the Pope's fulminations, Sardinia accepted the vote, and Napoleon received Nice and Savoy as the price of his acquiescence.

Dismayed and perplexed by the futility of his appeals to the Catholic Powers and of the spiritual censures at his disposal, the Pope now invited volunteers, and crowds of undisciplined Irish and French Catholics came to swell the little Papal army and fall with truculent piety on the rebellious districts. Garibaldi, on the other

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hand, forced the halting designs of Cavour, and, with the cry of "Rome or Death," flung his irregular troops into the struggle. After a vain effort at peaceful settlement, Cavour, "in the interest of humanity," sent the Sardinian regulars into the Papal States, and the Pope's forces were destroyed in September at Castel Fidardo (in sight of the Holy House of Loretto) and Ancona. A plebiscite was organized in Umbria and the Marches, and there is no serious ground to question that the figures published express the sentiment of the provinces. In Umbria 99,075 voted for Victor Emmanuel and 380 for the Pope: in the Marches 133,783 voted for Sardinia and 1212 for Rome. A large allowance for abstentions does not alter the significance of these figures.

Pius still protected, by a conviction that the plebiscite had been fraudulent, his illusion that only a disreputable minority resented his beneficent government, and the diplomacy of the Quirinal during the next ten years was the least enlightened that could have been devised for securing the slender remaining territory. Many cardinals, and even Antonelli, came to see that a recognition of Victor Emmanuel as King of Italy would be the wiser course, but Pius, supported by the Jesuits (who had founded their *Civiltà Cattolica*, as an organ of Papal sentiment, in 1850), obstinately refused to temporize. He would have no negotiation with "the robbers," the excommunicated rebels against God. He retained—or the French troops still retained for him—only Rome and the Roman district, and proclaimed that he relied on Catholic Europe to restore his full rights. Years were spent in vain efforts to induce him to surrender his temporal power, or to recognize Victor Emmanuel as his "Vicar" in the kingdom of Italy, and



in the meantime the Italian aspiration for Rome as a capital grew stronger, and the Pope's obstinate retention of his temporal possessions was easily represented in an unfavourable light throughout Europe. The cardinals were not indifferent to the offer of 10,000 scudi a year and seats in the Italian Senate; and Antonelli was won by a promise of 3,000,000 scudi and rich gifts for his family. There can be little doubt that the rapid development of anti-clericalism in Italy during the sixties, and the growing disdain of Rome in England and France, would have been materially checked if the Pope had been more sagacious. He dreamed that the Catholic world still shared the crusading fervour of the Middle Ages, and he was insensible of the selfish motives of France, Naples, and Austria.

In the midst of the negotiations he committed the grave blunder of issuing his Encyclical *Quanta Cura* (December 8, 1864) with the famous accompanying Syllabus, or list of eighty condemned propositions. There is no need to analyze here that mediæval indictment of the modern spirit. Many of the propositions are now commonplaces in the mind of every educated Catholic, and it is precisely their boast that—to use some of the condemned words—the Catholic Church may be reconciled with “progress, liberty, and the new civilization.” The pages of the *Civiltà Cattolica* sufficiently indicate who were the Pope's unhappy inspirers. In brief, the document convinced Europe that Rome insisted on being driven off the path of progress at the point of the bayonet, and in 1866 the French evacuated Rome, leaving the Pope only 2000 mercenary soldiers, who were to don his uniform. When Garibaldi made his third impulsive inroad—the second, in 1862, had been arrested by the Piedmontese—

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in October, 1867, the French arrested him, but the war of 1870 gave Italy its opportunity. On September 20, 1870, the Italian troops entered the breach in the Roman walls, and the long and romantic story of the temporal power of the Popes was over. By the Law of Guarantees (May 15, 1871) Italy granted the Pope sovereign rights, with an annual income of 3,250,000 lire and an extension of extraterritorial rights to certain Roman palaces. By a final error Pius refused to acknowledge his position, set up the melodramatic fiction of "the Prisoner of the Vatican," and, by forbidding Catholics to take part in the elections of the new kingdom, allowed Italy to drift farther and farther away from his spiritual control.<sup>1</sup>

Meantime the famous Vatican Council had crowned his more purely ecclesiastical work. The idea of summoning the whole Christian world to a second and greater Trent, of healing religious dissensions and uniting religious forces against modernism, had dazzled the imagination of the Pope at Gaeta. His advisers encouraged him, and in 1865 he appointed a commission to discuss the subject. In 1867, when his heart was uplifted by the great gathering at Rome for the celebration of the (supposed) eighteenth centenary of the martyrdom of St. Peter, he announced the council, and in the following year (June 28, 1868) the Bull *Æterni Patris* invited all Christians—heretic and schismatic, as well as orthodox—to the Vatican Council of 1869. It was opened on December 8th, when 719 members assembled from the Catholic world.

<sup>1</sup> In the plebiscite which was taken in the city of Rome 40,785 voted for incorporation and forty-six for the Pope: in the city and province 133,681 voted for incorporation and 1507 against. Naturally, the minority is not fully represented, as many refused to vote.

The great issue—the one issue that may be discussed here—was the question of defining the infallibility of the Pope. Here again the Jesuits ardently supported the wish of Pius IX., and a struggle had taken place in the Catholic world for some years. It was known that such devout and influential priests as Newman in England, Bishop Dupanloup and Archbishop Darboy in France, and Bishop Ketteler and Cardinal Schwarzenberg and Döllinger in Germany, opposed the definition, and the greatest care was taken in selecting members of the council whose position did not make them entitled to sit in it. When Newman was proposed from England, Manning (an enthusiastic supporter of the Papal policy) and the Jesuits defeated the project, as Purcell has since established in his life of Manning. When, however, the seven hundred members of the council had assembled, it was realized that between one hundred and fifty and two hundred voters regarded a definition of infallibility as inopportune, and the procedure and control of the council were diplomatically arranged. What Newman called “the aggressive, insolent faction” of the Infallibilists strained every nerve to destroy the opposition. They drew up a petition to the Pope, and Pius was deeply annoyed to find that little over four hundred names appeared at its foot; and of the signatories the majority were prelates who lived at Rome in dependence on the Quirinal.

But the familiar story need not be told again in detail. The debates were prolonged into the broiling summer, in spite of the remonstrances of the northerners, and the Pope’s indignation at the minority was freely expressed. When, on July 13th, the vote was taken, 451 voted “Aye,” 62 voted a qualified “Aye” (*Placet juxta modum*), and 88 voted in opposi-

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tion. Pius wavered, and was disposed to listen to counsels of compromise, but the majority pressed, and the stormy debate continued. The Inopportunistes were reduced to silence, and at the final vote, on July 18th, only two voted against the project; though many abstained from voting. Time has thrown a strange light on that historic struggle. On the one hand, it has transpired that the definition was drawn up in such terms that the controversialist could plausibly accommodate it with the known blunders of earlier Popes, and few followed the spirited revolt of Döllinger: on the other hand, the Papacy has from that day to this made no use of its infallibility, in an age of perplexing doubts, and the ardour of the Infallibilists has cooled.

During the following years the Pope sank once more into depression as the situation in Italy engendered grave troubles. Bible Societies and Protestant churches appeared in Italy, even in Rome, and Pius vainly denounced the monstrosity. Bishops dare not apply to the Italian government for their appointments, and had to remain without incomes and palaces. The Jesuits were expelled, and in 1872 a law of dissolution menaced the 8151 members of religious houses in Rome and the provinces. Bavaria refused to publish the Bull *Pastor Æternus*, and its struggle with the Church extended to Prussia and culminated in the long and bitter Kulturkampf (1872-1887). In France the anti-clerical Liberals gained from year to year on the Catholic reaction which had followed the Commune of 1871, and Gambetta's battle-cry rallied the old forces in alarming numbers. In 1876 (November 6th) Antonelli died, and the grave scandal which disclosed his irregularities gave joy to the enemies of the Papacy. A last gleam of consolation came to the Pope in 1877,

when the Catholic world held a magnificent celebration, on June 3d, of his episcopal jubilee. But the aged Pope saw no retreat of the disastrous forces he had encountered, and, after the longest and most calamitous rule in Papal history, he died on February 7, 1878.

Little need be added in regard to his relations with other countries than France and Italy. The record is one of both successes and failures which were misunderstood at Rome: to the modern historian it is the record of the lapse of millions from the Roman allegiance. In the United States forty-four new dioceses were established between 1847 and 1877, yet the American prelates of the time bitterly lament the loss of hundreds of thousands of scattered Catholic immigrants. In England the Romeward movement within the English Church came to an end long before the death of Pius, and the Church made no numerical progress in excess of births and immigration. In Holland the hierarchy was peacefully restored, but in Switzerland there was such tension that the Internuncio was expelled in 1874. Russia severed relations with Rome in 1860: Würtemberg (1861) and Baden (1859) signed Concordats with Rome, but found it impossible to maintain them: and the new German Empire was, as I said previously, involved by Bismarck and Falk in a bitter struggle with Rome.

The relations with Catholic countries were little more satisfactory. Sardinia had mortally offended the Quirinal long before the struggle for Italian unity began: by a long series of anti-clerical measures it abolished tithes, laicised education and marriage, expelled the religious orders and confiscated their property, gave freedom of worship to Protestants, and dealt summarily with hostile bishops. Austria had signed in 1855

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(August 18th) a Concordat which was favourable to the Church, but the young Francis Joseph, whose education had been carefully directed in the clerical interest, was forced by the storm of opposition to deviate from it. It was abolished in 1870, and four years later laws were passed which the Vatican regarded as anti-clerical. Spain maintained, through its various revolutions, a consistent docility, and was the only country on which the dying eyes of the Pope could dwell with satisfaction. It contracted a favourable Concordat on March 16, 1851, which was supplemented in 1859. Portugal signed a favourable Concordat in 1857. In Latin America on the other hand, the Church suffered grave reverses. Costa Rica and Guatemala (1852), Haiti (1860), Nicaragua (1861), and San Salvador, Honduras, Venezuela, and Ecuador (1862) signed satisfactory Concordats, but Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina entered upon anti-clerical ways, and the spirit of revolt against the clergy was spreading throughout Southern and Central America. Not since the days of Leo X. had the Church suffered such grave and widespread defection.

In estimating the character of Pius IX. and his relation to these losses the modern historian has little difficulty. The exaggerations of both his critics and his panegyrists are patent. He was a sincerely religious and zealous man, but the hope once entertained of his canonization (or, at least, beatification) was as absurd as the malevolent attacks on his character from the other side. His intellectual quality must be similarly judged: he had little penetration, no breadth of mind, no power to read aright the symptoms of his age. In considering the fatal obstinacy with which he refused all accommodation in regard to his temporal power, we

must carefully bear in mind his religious views, and not merely dwell on his slight capacity for diplomacy or statesmanship. So grave a surrender could not be commended by a few years of revolution except to a man of greater insight and foresight than Pius IX. In sum, he would in years of peace and piety have made an excellent and undistinguished steward of the Papal heritage, but he was very far from having the greatness of mind which the circumstances of the Church required, and the vast organization over which he so long presided emerged still further weakened from its second historical crisis. It had fought Protestantism and lost: it had fought Democracy and Progress and lost. It remained for a wiser Pope to initiate the policy of accommodation.

## CHAPTER XX

### LEO XIII

WHEN Leo XIII. mounted the Pontifical throne, the Papacy had had three quarters of a century of disastrous experience of the reactionary policy. The Restoration of 1815 had seemed to inaugurate for Rome a new period of prosperity. The touching experiences of Pius VII. and the widely recognized need of combating by religious influence the new spirit of revolt disposed the monarchs of Europe, and a large part of their subjects, to regard the successor of Peter with respect. He had been their ally in resisting Napoleon: he was their ally in restoring feudalism. England moderated its rude tradition of "the Scarlet Woman." The Tsar of the Russias felt that Romanism was a large element in the spiritual renaissance he contemplated. Louis XVIII. remembered how altar and throne had fallen together. Ferdinand of Spain drowned the revolt in blood. Austria reconsidered its Febronianism. Italy seemed incapable of rebellion.

But the revolutionary wave had retired only to come back with greater effect, and from 1830 to 1850 the face of Europe was transformed. The Popes almost alone defied the spirit to which monarchs bowed, and they stood almost alone amid their ruins. England returned to its disdain: Russia and Switzerland angrily broke off



relations with the Vatican: Germany was engaged in what the Vatican regarded as a formidable effort to crush Catholicism in the new Empire. Austria was sullen and weakened. France was rapidly passing into its third and final revolt against Catholicism. Spain was forced into an alliance with the growing Liberals against the Carlists. Italy was overwhelmingly opposed to the Papacy on what the Papacy declared to be a sacred and vital issue, and was honeycombed with Rationalism. Belgium was almost dominated by a Liberal middle class. The South American republics were falling away in succession. The two most profoundly Catholic peoples, Ireland and Poland, were ruined, and their children were scattered and seduced. Thus would any penetrating cardinal have interpreted the situation of the Church in 1878; yet, if his penetration were great enough, he would see that there was a tendency among this Liberal middle class, which now dominated Europe, to seek once more an alliance with religion against the deeper social heresies which were appearing. Would the new Pope prove subtle enough to grasp that opportunity and save the Church? His "infallibility" would avail little: he would be unwise to emphasize it. He must be a diplomatist and a rhetorician.

The new Pope, Leo XIII., was nearly sixty-eight years old, and had had a better education in the history of the nineteenth century than most of the Italian cardinals had. Gioacchino Vincenzo Raffaele Luigi Pecci was born on March 2, 1810, at Carpineto. His first lesson, in the country mansion, would be to hear his father, Colonel Pecci, and his very pious mother, a Tertiary of the Franciscan Order, talk of the Napoleonic nightmare that had just passed away. From the age

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of eight to fourteen he was under the care of the Jesuits at Viterbo, and, as it was represented to him that the younger sons in so large a family had to look to the Church for their income, after some hesitation, he allowed them to tonsure him, at the age of eleven.<sup>1</sup> In 1824 his mother died, and he went to study, still under the Jesuits, at the Collegio Romano at Rome. He had conspicuous ability and high character, and besides improving his Latin—he already wrote Latin poems—he studied philosophy, mathematics, chemistry, and astronomy. He attracted attention, as clever boys attract the attention of the clergy, and was directed toward the clerical career. He must enter the “Academy for Noble Ecclesiastics,” said one prelate; and, with the aid of his brothers, he drew up a genealogical tree to prove that his father, the easy-going colonel of Carpineto, was descended from the mediæval Pecci of Siena. The Academy did not pronounce his proof valid—the connexion is probable enough—but, on his merits, and in view of his important patrons, admitted him among the nobles of Anagni (1831).

Joachim—he had called himself Vincenzo until 1832—took a degree in theology, and told his brothers that he

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to his brother Charles, July 3, 1837, he remarks that he has entered the clergy “in order to carry out the wishes of his father.” Catholic lives of Leo XIII., which abound, must be read with discretion. They are even more tendentious than lives of Pius IX., and the best of them—by Mgr. de T'Serclaes (2 vols., 1894), L. K. Goetz (1899), J. de Narfon (1899), Mgr. B. O'Reilly (1903), and P. J. O'Byrne (1903)—are very unreliable. Mr. Justin McCarthy's short *Pope Leo XIII.* (1896) is a summary of these, and shares their defects. With them should be read *Joachim Pecci* (1900) by Henri des Houx, for the period before his election, and *Le Conclave de Léon XIII.* (1887) by Raphael de Cesare: both Catholic writers, but more candid and discriminating. See also Boyer d'Agen, *La Jeunesse de Léon XIII.* (1896) and *Monsignor Joachim Pecci* (1910) and works to be mentioned hereafter.

was going to illumine their ancient family. He still loved to take a flintlock musket over the hills during his holidays, but he indulged in no dissipations and became pale and thin over the books which were to help his ambition. His father died in 1836, and it is in his naïve letters to his brothers that we discover the human elements ignored by his eloquent biographers.<sup>1</sup> He begins to follow politics, in the most ardent Papal spirit. Cardinal Pacca, the intransigent, recommended the pale, slim young cleric to Gregory XVI., and in 1837 he was appointed domestic prelate. Cardinal Sala also befriended the young Monsignore, and he went from one small office to another. Sala pointed out that for further advancement he must become a priest, and he became a priest (December 31, 1837); but his letters make it clear that he entered the priesthood in a mood of such exalted piety that Sala feared he was about to quit the world and become a Jesuit.

About a month after his ordination (February 2, 1838) he was appointed Apostolic Delegate (Civil Governor) of Benevento, where the brigandage which disgraced the Papal States was particularly rabid. In three years, with the aid of a skilful chief of police, he almost suppressed brigandage and smuggling, and did much for the province. His progress was not so heroically triumphant as the biographers represent. In his letters to his brothers he complains that his predecessor has robbed the treasury and they must help him: that his ninety-seven ducats a month do not enable him to have the fine horses and carriage he needs: and, later (in 1839), that the clerics at Rome are plotting to cheat him of the higher promotion which he deserves. In 1841 the Pope transferred him to Perugia, and he

<sup>1</sup> These are chiefly reproduced in the works of Boyer d'Agen.

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did good work in reforming education, founding a bank for small traders, and so on.

In January, 1843, his real education began. He was appointed Nuncio at Brussels and was made titular Archbishop of Damietta. Able as he was, the promotion to so important an office was premature. Of French (or any languages but Latin and Italian) he knew not a syllable until he set out, and with the modern thought which was then current in Brussels he was acquainted only by means of the version of it given by Pius IX. in the Syllabus, of which he fully approved. His handsome presence and amiable ways carried him far. There is an almost boyish expression on his face at this period: on the long, thin, smiling face and bright eyes and soft sensuous mouth. King Leopold, a Protestant, liked him, and allowed the young archbishop to attract him to religious functions and persuade him of the importance of religion in appeasing social ambitions. Pecci, in turn, could not contemplate the gas-lit streets, the railways, the postal system, etc., of Belgium, without realizing that the Papal States would have to admit *something* of this modern thought. But he was for a safe modernism, consistent with the *Quanta Cura* and the Syllabus. He was suave to all: even to the rebellious Gioberti, who was then giving Italian lessons in Brussels. To this period of his career belongs the good story of a naughty Liberal marquis, who ventured to offer him a pinch of snuff from a box which was adorned with a nude Venus, and the Archbishop is said to have taken it and asked: "Madame la marquise?" Secretly, however, he urged the Catholics to organize a struggle against the Liberals. The Liberals wanted a compromise on the school-question, and, when the Nuncio assisted in defeating it, the Premier Deschamps

wrote contemptuously to Rome that they would like a Nuncio who was "a statesman." As, about the same time, the bishopric of Perugia fell vacant and the Perugians asked for their former Delegate, Gregory recalled Pecci. His disappointment—which he plainly expresses in his letters—was softened only by the Pope's assurance that the transfer would be regarded as "equal to promotion to a nunciature of the first class"; in other words, he remained on the path to the cardinalate, as he desired.<sup>1</sup>

From Brussels he brought a warm testimonial written by King Leopold, and he spent a month in London (where he had an interview with the Queen) and some weeks in Paris. He reached Rome in May (1846), to find Gregory dying, and he witnessed the election of Pius IX., and, at Perugia, applauded the early "liberalism" of the Pope. Perugia had a large share of the advanced thinkers who now overran Italy, and the Bishop would assuredly become more closely acquainted with their ideas. From his later encyclicals, however, one must suppose that he never made a profound study of their claims, either on the intellectual or the social side. Of philosophy he had only the mediæval version given him in the Collegio Romano and the Sapienza, and of economics or sociology he knew nothing. Such science as he knew—the elements of chemistry and astronomy—was easily reconcilable with religion, and this gave him an apparently liberal attitude toward science. On the other hand, he had genuine sympathies and he felt that the new aspirations of the working class

<sup>1</sup> See the documents in Henri des Houx, pp. 166-7, and Mgr. de T'Serclaes, vol. i., pp. 127-132. Most biographers grossly misrepresent his "promotion." Rome plainly decided that he was not suitable for a nunciature.

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were not to be met with a sheer rebuff.<sup>1</sup> The ideas of Gioberti and Ventura appealed to him. Even when Gioberti had fallen out of favour at the Quirinal, Archbishop Pecci, when he passed through Perugia in 1848, gave him hospitality in his palace. Henri des Houx affirms that he heard on good authority that for this Pius IX. suspended the Archbishop from pontifical duties for several weeks. Later, he incurred suspicion by permitting a memorial service at the death of Cavour. It is admitted by the leading Catholic biographers that he was in bad odour at the Quirinal. The promised cardinal's hat was withheld for eight years<sup>2</sup> and his great ability was wasted on a provincial bishopric. The slight is ascribed to the jealousy of Cardinal Antonelli, and his advance after the Secretary's death confirms the suspicion.

It is, however, plain that Pecci was a most excellent Bishop, and that he was no more "Liberal" than Pius IX. in his first year. He strictly organized the work and education of the clergy, restored the seminary and built a College of St. Thomas, founded many schools, churches, and hospitals, brought Brothers of Mercy and nuns from Belgium, and opened a branch of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. He left a fine record of religious-social work, and the orthodox poor loved him. Yet we must set aside the exaggerations of biographers. Pecci cherished the purely Papal ideal and was out of touch with the majority of his people. In 1859, when a group of rebels set up a "Provisional Government" at Perugia, he nervously shut himself in his palace for two days and, without a protest, allowed the ferocious

<sup>1</sup> His episcopal pronouncements are given in *Scelta di Atti episcopali del Cardinale G. Pecci* (1879).

<sup>2</sup> He was made cardinal on December 19, 1853.

Swiss Guard sent by Antonelli to wear themselves out in an orgy of slaughter and pillage. A few months later Sardinia expelled the Papal troops, and, when a plebiscite was taken, 97,000 voted for incorporation in the kingdom of Sardinia, and only 386 voted against. The Archbishop protested emphatically and consistently against the seizure of the Pope's temporal power, and, when the hated laws of Sardinia were successively applied to Perugia (on civil marriage, the suppression of the religious orders, military service for clerics, etc.), he continued to protest in the warmest language. In 1862 he suspended three priests who adopted the Italian cause, and was cited before the civil tribunal; but the case was allowed to lapse. We know that he was carefully watched from the Quirinal, and that he had an informant of his own at the Curia,<sup>1</sup> but his pronouncements and letters make it abundantly clear that he never swerved from the strict Papal conception of contemporary thought and politics.

Antonelli died in December, 1876, and (as is ignored by most of his biographers) Pecci very shortly went to live at Rome—long before he was appointed Chamberlain. He had an able coadjutor in the bishopric, and he pleaded his age and increasing weakness. He lived in the modest Falconieri Palace, and trusted to get a suburbicarian bishopric. To his annoyance, two which fell vacant in the next few weeks were given by Pius to others, but at length, in August, the Pope appointed him Camerlengo (Chamberlain). In that capacity he had, the following February, to tap the dead Pope on the forehead with a hammer and to arrange the

<sup>1</sup> Mgr. Cataldi, whom he afterwards made his master of ceremonies. H. des Houx (p. 329) observes that, when Cataldi died, his papers were put under seal by Leo's orders and his letters have never been published.

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Conclave. He was not widely known at Rome, and few foresaw his elevation to the throne. It is, in fact, probable that Pius IX. had made him Camerlengo, not in order to exclude him from the Papacy, but because he was not likely to be required for it. Since Alexander VI. no Chamberlain had been elected Pope. There were, however, shrewd observers who predicted his rise, and little surprise was expressed when, after the third scrutiny, on February 20th, he secured forty-four out of the sixty-one votes. We may set aside romantic speculations about the Conclave. A few cardinals perceived that the Church needed in its ruler just such a combination of clear intelligence, broad knowledge, and diplomatic temper as Cardinal Pecci possessed, and he was sufficiently sound on Papal politics to disarm the more conservative. It is not impossible that waverers reflected as they gazed on the worn white frame of the cardinal, that, whatever policy he adopted, Leo XIII. would not long rule the Church.

The Liberal press had recalled his friendship with Gioberti and his permission of a service in memory of Cavour, but Leo quickly reassured the more rigid cardinals. The crowd gathered in the great square to receive the blessing of the new Pope, yet hour followed hour without his making an appearance. R. de Cesare shows that the Italian Government was prepared, not only to preserve order, but to render military honours if he appeared on the balcony. The intransigent cardinals opposed it, and four hours later he gave the blessing inside St. Peter's. Similarly with his coronation. It is untrue that the Italian Government refused to take measures to preserve order if he were, as was usual, crowned in St. Peter's. On the advice of the more conservative cardinals he chose to be crowned in



semi-privacy in the Sistine Chapel on March 3d.<sup>2</sup> Indeed when, on February 22d, he had been compelled to go to his late palace for his papers, he crossed Rome in the utmost secrecy. He would, like Pius, have "no truck with the robbers." To the Kaiser, the Tsar, and the Swiss President he had written on the day of his election to say that he looked forward to more friendly relations, but in his first Consistory, on March 28th, he assured the cardinals that there would be no reconciliation with Italy, and on April 28th he issued his first Encyclical, *Inscrutable*, in which, besides asserting the claim of the temporal power, he described Europe, in more graceful terms than Pius, yet in the same spirit, as filled with a "pestilential virus" and nearing death unless it speedily took the antidote of Papal obedience. There was to be no truck with "the new civilization" also.

Yet Leo XIII. has passed into contemporary history as the great "reconciler of differences," in Carlyle's phrase: the man who, by a superb diplomacy and a fortunate conjunction of character and genius, rescued the Church from the dangerous position in which Pius IX. had left it and raised it to a higher level of prestige and power. The historian must make allowance for contemporary enthusiasm. Probably most rulers of ability and character have left that impression among the generation which witnessed their death. Leo, moreover, as befitted a temperate and high-minded man, excited no bitter opposition. All the current biographies of him are from Catholic pens: few of them even pretend to have the candour and balance of historical writers. Leo's story is still to be written. It suffices here to remark that the forces he most fiercely com-

<sup>2</sup> See de Cesare, pp. 138-144.

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bated—Socialism and Rationalism—made during his Pontificate a progress out of all proportion to the increase of population: that the Church of Rome actually decreased, if we take account of the growth of population: and that “modernism” within the Church became the customary attitude of cultivated Catholics. Among the most potent facts of his Pontificate are the facts that France, to retain which he made grave sacrifices, was entirely lost to the Church: that Italy, which he defied, has established its position with absolute security and abandoned its creed to a remarkable extent: that Portugal, Spain, and Spanish-America have witnessed a similar spread of revolt: that in England, Germany, and America there has been no progress other than increase by births and immigration: that Leo’s effort to check Socialism by a Christian social zeal failed and was almost abandoned by him in his later years: and that his attempt to impose St. Thomas of Aquin on modern thought and his design of directing modern Scriptural research have only embarrassed the scholars of his Church. He was one of the great men of his great age, the ablest Pope in three hundred years: but he failed. He made no impression whatever on what he called the “diseases” of modern thought and life, and he left his Church numerically weaker—in proportion to the increase of population—than he found it.<sup>1</sup>

His policy in Italy is almost invariably described as being conciliatory without sacrificing the Papal claim.

<sup>1</sup> The losses of the Church are analyzed by the author, and Catholic authority is quoted in most cases, in *The Decay of the Church of Rome* (2d ed. 1910). In France alone the loss was about 25,000,000. His Papal pronouncements are collected in *Leonis XIII. P. M. Acta* (17 vols., 1881–1898), *SS. D. N. Leonis XIII. allocutiones*, etc. (8 vols., 1887–1910), and *Discorsi del Summo Pontefice Leone XIII.* (1882).

We cannot regard as entirely amiable a policy of reminding the Italian monarchy and statesmen, every few years, that they are sacrilegious and excommunicated thieves, and it is surely now clear that Leo erred in maintaining the attitude of Pius and forbidding Catholics to take part in the elections. The *Catholic Encyclopædia* imputes to him the remarkable expectation that the revolutionary elements in Italy would, if not checked by the Catholic vote, win power at the polls and the government would seek the aid of the Vatican; and the writer describes this as a miscalculation which Pius X. was obliged to correct.<sup>1</sup> Indeed the one wise move on the part of Leo XIII. in regard to Italy is either suppressed or discussed with strained scepticism by Catholic writers. During the first few years after his coronation Leo continued to protest against the wickedness of the world in general and of Italy in particular. In 1881 he had a singular and unpleasant proof of the resentment of Rome. On July 13th the remains of Pius IX. were transferred to the Church of St. Lawrence, where he wished to be buried, and, the government feeling that a public ceremony would lead to disorder, the translation was to be secret and nocturnal. But the "secret" was carefully divulged before the hour, and a vast crowd of the faithful assembled to do homage to the Papa-Re. The rougher anti-clericals were thus stimulated to make an unseemly protest, and Leo took occasion again to protest to the Catholic Powers that his position was intolerable.

On April 24, 1881, the Pope urged the Catholic Associations to enter the field of municipal politics, and in the following year he, in the Encyclical *Etsi nos*

<sup>1</sup> Article "Leo XIII."

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(February 5th), and on the occasion of the death of Garibaldi (June 2d), again made severe attacks upon Italy. The friction increased. In July (1882) Leo had to protest that bishops, not recognizing the government, received no incomes or palaces, and that monks and nuns who endeavoured to evade the law of suppression were hardly treated. Then a dismissed employee of the Vatican brought an action against the Pope in the Italian court, and though the action was dismissed, the court claimed jurisdiction, and Leo made a heated protest to France and Austria. In 1884 the Propaganda was compelled to invest its money in Italian funds, and the Pope, after the customary protest, set up a number of procurators in foreign countries to whom the faithful might send their offerings. In 1886 the anti-clerical campaign became more violent; tithes were abolished, and many Italian Catholics began to desire reconciliation. Italy entered into the Triple Alliance with Austria and Germany, and henceforward appeals to the "Catholic" Powers were obviously futile. France itself had by this time an anti-clerical government and majority, and German and Austrian Catholics bitterly resented the Italian attack on the Triple Alliance.

In February, 1887, Cardinal Jacobini, the Secretary of State, died, and Cardinal Rampolla entered upon his famous career. Leo openly directed the new Secretary to insist on the restoration of the temporal power, and ordered that the Rosary be recited nightly in the churches of Rome. But in the course of that year there was a change in the Vatican policy, though, since it was unsuccessful, it is usually concealed or called into question. Crispi himself revealed, a few years later, that there were negotiations for a settlement

between the Vatican and the Quirinal, and that France, irritated by the Triple Alliance, threatened to put greater pressure on its Church unless the Pope withdrew from the negotiations.<sup>1</sup> Mgr. de T'Serclaes virtually admits the fact, and conjectures that Crispi wanted Italy to have a share in the approaching celebration of the Pope's Jubilee. We have no right to question Crispi's assurance that France intervened, and that the Vatican was willing to hear of compromise. The Papal authorities, however, concealed the unsuccessful offer and returned to the earlier attitude. The Pope's sacerdotal Jubilee was celebrated in 1888 with immense rejoicings, and the anti-clericals retorted with fresh legislation. In 1889 a statue of Giordano Bruno was erected at Rome. It is said that Leo XIII. spent the hours of the demonstration in tears at the foot of the altar, and that he had some idea of leaving Rome. The gates of the Vatican were carefully watched, and there was great excitement in Rome when it was announced that he had actually passed over a few yards of Roman territory—to visit the studio of a sculptor near the Vatican. But the Pope clung to his theory of being imprisoned in the Vatican, and the remaining years were like the earlier: anathema on one side, disdain and defiance on the other. When he died, the laity of Rome itself had become so largely anti-clerical that Catholic Deputies to the Chamber did not care to be seen going to mass, and in the north Socialism was advancing at a remarkable pace.

In Germany, on the other hand, Leo won considerable success, though his biographers describe it inaccurately. The *Kulturkampf* was at its height when Leo was elected, and he at once wrote a firm and courteous

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Review*, 1891 (vol. lx., 161).

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letter to the Emperor, trusting that peace would be restored. In his cold and ironical reply (evidently written by Bismarck) the Emperor observed that there would be peace when the Pope directed the clergy to obey the laws, and Leo retorted (April 17, 1878) that the laws were inconsistent with the Catholic conscience. But circumstances favoured the Pope. Two attempts were made to assassinate the Emperor, and he directed Bismarck to see that rebellious impulses in the young were checked by religious education. It seems clear that the Emperor had begun to dislike the struggle with the Church, and by this time Bismarck himself must have seen that persecution had led only to the better organization and greater energy of the Catholics, while his policy was threatened from another side by the rapid advance of Social Democracy. The Papal Nuncio at Munich, Mgr. Aloisi-Masella, was invited to Berlin. He was instructed from Rome to decline the invitation, and Bismarck arranged a "wayside inn" meeting at Kissingen. As Bismarck insisted on the government retaining a veto on all ecclesiastical appointments, the negotiations broke down, and little progress was made when they were resumed by the Vienna Nuncio and Prince von Reuss.

In the following year Falk, the framer of the famous May Laws, resigned, and the Vatican resumed its efforts. On February 24, 1880, the Pope informed the Archbishop of Cologne that the government might have a restricted veto on the ordinations of priests if it would grant an amnesty—eight out of twelve bishops were still in exile or prison—and modify the laws. Bismarck refused, but there was some relaxation of the laws. In 1881 several bishops were appointed, and in 1882 Bismarck voted funds for a German representa-

tive at the Vatican. It was, however, at once discovered that the bargain put the Pope in a dilemma. Bismarck demanded that Leo should direct the Alsatian clergy to submit, but, though the Pope promised that he would "see to it," he dared not interfere. In 1884 diplomatic relations were formally restored. Several bishops returned from exile, and episcopal incomes were restored; but the amnesty was not extended to the Archbishop of Cologne and the Archbishop of Gnesen and Posen, and Catholic students were not allowed to go to Louvain, Rome, or Innsbruck.

In 1885 Bismarck made a further step by inviting the Pope to mediate between Germany and Spain in their quarrel for the possession of the Caroline Islands. It is said that Bismarck was entrapped into this by a Catholic journalist announcing that Spain was about to make the invitation. However that may be, the invitation flattered the Vatican, and the two rebellious archbishops were "persuaded" by the Pope to resign. The German Catholics were now beginning to murmur against the Pope, and the negotiations proceeded slowly, but in 1886 Bismarck bluntly denounced the May Laws, and it was proposed to modify them. Shortly afterwards, however, it appeared that the Pope had conveyed an impression that he would pay a high price (besides the veto on priests) for the surrender. The Centre Party opposed Bismarck's new law of military service, and he appealed to Rome. Rampolla, through the Bavarian Nuncio, directed the Catholic members to desist, but, to the equal dismay of the Chancellor and the Pope, they refused to obey and caused a dissolution of the Reichstag. Their leader, Baron Frankenstein, replied to the Bavarian Nuncio that they took orders

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from Rome only in ecclesiastical matters.<sup>1</sup> Bismarck, in his anger, got copies of the letters and published them. What followed we can only gather from the sequel. The Centre withdrew its opposition, the military law was passed, and the May Laws were modified. German Liberals beheld the strange spectacle of the Iron Chancellor, in the Reichstag, indignantly denying that the Pope was a "foreign power," who ought not to intervene in German affairs.

No further concessions were won from Germany—the Jesuits are still excluded—but since 1887 the Church in that country has enjoyed comparative peace and prosperity. William II. acceded to the throne in 1888, and from the first he insisted on friendly relations with Rome. On three occasions (1888, 1893, and 1903) he visited Leo at the Vatican. Bismarck retired in 1890, after a final defeat by the Centre Party. The money due to the bishops (whose incomes had been suspended) now amounted to more than £400,000, and Bismarck invited the Pope to compromise in regard to it. Leo refused; the government must settle the matter with the Catholics of Germany, he said. In the later debate in the Reichstag the Minister of Worship heatedly denounced the Pope for duplicity, but the Centre had its way and the whole sum was restored to the bishops. It is further claimed, though without documentary evidence, that the Emperor's visit to the Vatican in 1893 was for the purpose of urging the Pope to order the members of the Centre to support the new military laws. In the sequel the Catholic members were divided and the laws passed. But documents on these recent events will not reach the eye of this generation, and we cannot be sure how far the *Kulturkampf* was abandoned

<sup>1</sup> See the documents relating to the episode in T'Serclaes, i., 425.



as a reward for Papal support of Germany's military policy. On the other hand, the alliance in hostility to Socialism has proved a failure. The Catholic vote at the polls fell, during Leo's Pontificate, from 27.9 per cent. of the total vote to 19.7 (in 1903): the Social Democratic vote increased nearly tenfold.<sup>1</sup>

In France the policy of the Pope was correct and particularly unsuccessful. A few years after the fall of the Papal States the number of professing Catholics in France arose to about thirty millions in a nation of thirty-six millions; and the sincerity of a very large proportion may be judged from the fact that nearly two thirds of the Papal income from Peter's Pence (which rose to nearly half a million sterling a year) came from French Catholics. Yet when Leo died, the professing Catholics had fallen to about six millions in a population of thirty-nine millions. We must beware of ascribing this failure to Leo XIII., though undoubtedly he never exhibited a sound knowledge or statesmanlike grasp of the situation in France. That country was developing along anti-clerical lines, and no Pope or prelate could have diverted it. Leo was absorbed in the superficial struggle of royalists and republicans until the serious development had proceeded too far. In the later seventies the anti-clericals began to assert their rapidly growing power and influence legislation. The Jesuits were again expelled, and education further withdrawn from Catholic control. The Pope followed the development in helpless concern until October 22, 1880, when, at the demand of the French faithful, he passed his censure. The Republican authorities

<sup>1</sup> On the relations of Rome and the Centre compare Count von Hoensbroech's *Rom und das Zentrum* (1910). There are also curious details in the same writer's *Fourteen Years a Jesuit* (Engl. trans. 1911).

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paid no heed and in 1883 Leo sent a protest to President Grévy. In a cold and indifferent reply the President pointed out that the Catholic clergy could expect little favour from a Republican institution which they constantly attacked, and the Pope's attention was forcibly drawn to the royalist agitation which divided the Church and fed the anti-clerical campaign against it. We must conclude that Leo, like so many Catholics, miscalculated the recuperating power of royalism, besides fearing to offend a powerful section of the clergy and laity, as he still hesitated to direct Catholics to submit to the Republic. For a time he trusted that the democratic movement headed by the Comte de Mun would bring relief, but it increased the confusion, and on February 16, 1892, Leo issued his famous Encyclical, urging the French Catholics to submit to the Republic and assail only its anti-clerical laws. The royalists sulked: in one diocese the Peter's Pence offerings fell from £60,000 to £35,000. Even the Panama Scandal in 1893 failed to yield any advantage, and the Church completed its series of blunders by adopting the crusade against Dreyfus. In his later years Leo could but helplessly look on while Waldeck-Rousseau and Combes disestablished and debilitated the Church. Even within the Church he was compelled to witness an immense advance of the "Americanism" which he detested.<sup>1</sup>

In Belgium the political circumstances were more favourable to the plans of the Vatican. In the summer of 1879 the Liberals passed a law for the secularization of the elementary schools, and the Catholics complained that the Pope, who blamed the violence of their lan-

<sup>1</sup> See E. Barbier, *Le Progrès du libéralisme Catholique en France sous le Pape Léon XIII.* (1907) and A. Houtin, *Histoire du Modernisme Catholique* (1913).

guage, failed to discharge his office with due severity. In point of fact, Leo was working so diplomatically, assuring the King that the clergy must respect the civil authority and separately encouraging the clergy to resist "iniquitous" laws, that the government at length publicly taxed him with duplicity and withdrew its representative from Rome. In 1885, however, the Catholics returned to power, and, enjoying the advantage of a division of the hostile forces (Liberals and Socialists), established a lasting influence in the country.

Austria, on the other hand, proved unsatisfactory to the Vatican. From the day of its alliance with Italy the Roman officials looked with annoyance on Austria, and the consistent tone of Mgr. de T'Serclaes' references to it reflect the Vatican attitude. A letter which the Pope wrote to the bishops of Hungary in 1886, urging them to resist the new and unecclesiastical laws in regard to marriage and education, was construed as a wish to cause trouble in Austria, or between Austria and Italy, and the same murmurs arose when Leo urged the Austrian clergy to resist further Liberal laws in 1890. The laws were carried, and the protests of the Pope were disregarded. In Spain the Pope was more fortunate, as he curbed the disposition of the clergy to adopt the ill-fated Carlist cause.<sup>1</sup> Portugal remained outwardly faithful, and a Concordat granted by the King in 1886 permitted the Pope to effect a much needed reform in the ecclesiastical administration of India. Some advantages were won, also, in Switzerland, where the older hostility was checked, and the Church prospered.

The relations of the Vatican with Russia were singu-

<sup>1</sup> See M. Tirado y Rojas, *Leon XIII. y España* (1903), for details in regard to Spain.

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lar, and gave rise to bitter complaint among the Catholic subjects of the Tsar. To the amiable letter in which Leo announced his election the Tsar gave a cold and discouraging reply. In 1879, however, the attempt on the Tsar's life gave Leo an opportunity to insinuate his belief that only Catholic influence could curb these criminal impulses; and when Alexander II. was assassinated in 1883, he approached his successor with more success. In the succeeding years of diplomatic intercourse the repression of the Catholic Poles was partly relieved; but no concession was made when the Pope presented to the Tsar the petition of the Ruthenian Catholics in 1884, or when he deprecated the exile of the Bishop of Wilna in 1885. In 1888, however, Russia approached the Vatican through Vienna, and the negotiations have given rise to acute controversy. The Poles murmured that the Pope was disposed to betray their national interests in order to please France by obliging its virtual ally, Russia. How far the Pope was preparing to enforce on the Poles the Russian demands—for a more extensive use of the Russian language in Poland and for a surrender of the offspring of mixed marriages—and to what extent he realized the true designs of Russia, cannot be confidently determined. It is clear only that he meditated concession, and the suspicion that he thus sought a political advantage in France is not implausible.

A similar complaint arose among that other shattered Catholic nation, the Irish. The Parnellite movement of the eighties, it was said, was used by him as a means of accommodating and conciliating England; and there is little room for doubt that this design influenced his policy. It was one of the general lines of his campaign in Europe to persuade rulers that the power of his

Church would be their greatest guarantee of docility. In 1881 he warned Archbishop McCabe that the disturbances of public order in Ireland were not to be favoured, and he made the hint more explicit in the following year. In 1883 he gravely disturbed the Irish Catholics by issuing a drastic condemnation of the Parnell Testimonial Fund and forbidding the clergy to work for it; while Errington was amiably received at the Vatican. The disturbance became graver, and in 1885 Leo summoned the Irish bishops to Rome. Even their representations failed to disturb his policy, and on April 13, 1888 (after a Roman envoy, Mgr. Persico, had been sent on the quaint mission of studying the situation in Ireland), a decree of the Holy Office condemned the "Plan of Campaign." So loud were the murmurs at this invasion of the political rights of the Irish that an Encyclical (*Sæpe Nos*) had to be dispatched on June 24 to secure the submission of the bishops. We may at least discover some penetration in the Pope's confidence that Ireland would not permanently resent the abuse of his authority.

The advantage gained in England was slight. The broad stream of immigration from Ireland since 1840, which had given the illusion of a rapid growth of Catholicism, and the more slender stream which is associated with the Oxford Movement, had materially lessened, and a period of loss had begun (in proportion to the increase of population). For nearly two decades the Pope was content with domestic measures like the regulation of the conflicts between monks and bishops (May 8, 1881) and the establishment of an hierarchy in India. On April 20, 1895, he took a bolder step, and in the Encyclical *Ad Anglos* invited the English people to renew their ancient allegiance to Rome.

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Undismayed by the absence of a response, he, on September 13, 1896, issued the famous Encyclical *Apostolicæ Curæ*, in which he assailed the validity of orders in the English Church. The brisk controversy which ensued does not concern us; but we may assume that, from the figures at the disposal of the Vatican, the Pope would sadly realize, when the century drew to a close, that the Catholic Church in England had not increased, beyond the natural growth by births and immigration, during his long and laborious Pontificate.

In the United States Leo had a thorny task. With his keen scent for Socialistic insurgence against constituted authority, he proposed, in 1887, to condemn the 730,000 American Catholic workers who were incorporated in the "Knights of Labour." Cardinal Gibbon defended them, and a grudging toleration was issued from Rome. In 1893 the Pope sought to improve his relations with the Republic by taking a handsome part in the fourth centenary of the discovery of America, but by that time a grave struggle had begun to rend the cosmopolitan Church in the States. Americans naturally resented the Germanism of the German Catholic schools, and in 1892 Archbishop Ireland consented to hand over to the School Board some of these elementary schools, on condition that the Catholic teachers were retained and hours were assigned for religious instruction. The Germans and the Ultramontanes raised the cry that Ireland and Gibbon were favouring the "godless schools" of the Republic, and denounced the plan to Rome. Again the Cardinal and the Archbishop won a grudging *tolerari posse* ("may be tolerated in the circumstances") but a fierce agitation went on in the American Church, and the Pope's

representative, Mgr. Satolli, was vigorously opposed by the more American prelates.

In 1896 it was believed that Satolli was instrumental in securing the removal of Mgr. Keane from the rectorship of the Catholic University at Washington, and when an intriguing German professor was dismissed by the University authorities and Rome demanded his restoration, Cardinal Gibbon forced the Pope to withdraw the demand. The ultras then—with the persistent aid of the Jesuits and their *Civiltà Cattolica* at Rome—attacked a biography of Father Hecker, of which an American translation had been published with warm recommendations from Ireland and Gibbon. A Roman prelate authorized the printing of a scathing attack on the book, and, although Rampolla protested that neither he nor the Pope was involved in the authorization, the American prelates took up a menacing attitude. At this juncture Leo, whose repeated counsels to lay the strife had been disregarded, wrote his famous letter on Americanism to Cardinal Gibbon (January 22d, 1899). Piquant stories are told of the sentiments expressed by the American prelates, but these the historian cannot as yet control. The struggle ended in a compromise. The book was not condemned, but quietly withdrawn, and the American prelates generally disavowed the principles to which the Pope gave the name of Americanism.

These are but feeble summaries of the vast diplomatic activity which absorbed the long days of the venerable Pontiff, and one must leave almost unnoticed other important actions. In 1885 he negotiated with the Chinese government for the representative of the Celestial Empire at Rome, but the French, rightly suspecting an intrigue on the part of Germany to strengthen its in-

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fluence in the Far East, forced him to desist. He had the satisfaction of closing a schism in the Armenian Church (1878), and secured favourable measures in some of the Balkan States and a few of the South American republics. He restored the Borgia Rooms in the Vatican (1897), created a modern observatory out of the old Gregorian observatory of the sixteenth century (1888), formed a Reference Library of 30,000 volumes at the Vatican, and opened the Vatican archives to scholars (1883).<sup>1</sup> Frail, worn to a pale shade of his former self, the devoted Pope maintained to the end his formidable struggle against a seceding world. Rising at six in the morning—often having summoned his secretary to the bedside during the night—he said his mass and heard a mass said by his chaplain. Then after a cup of chocolate or goat's milk, he began the long day's work with Rampolla, or impressed his innumerable visitors with his piercing dark eyes and translucent features. At two he dined—soup, eggs (rarely meat), and a little claret—and then, after a nap or a drive in the gardens, returned to work until his simple supper at ten. After that the journals of the world, carefully marked, were read to him; and the burning lamp told of his ceaseless thinking and praying until after midnight. Fortunately he did not, like so many Popes, lack financial resources. The Papal income before 1870 had been about £130,000, and the Italian government had offered to pay this. When Pius IX. refused the offer, his income was swollen by voluntary gifts to £400,000

<sup>1</sup> We have on earlier pages seen that parts of the archives are still reserved, even from ecclesiastics. On the general question see G. Buschdell, *Das Vatikanische Archiv und die Bedeutung seiner Erschließung durch Papst Leo XIII.* (1903).



a year, and he left nearly a million and a quarter sterling to his successor. In addition to this large income Leo received vast sums on the occasion of his Sacerdotal Jubilee in 1888 and his Episcopal Jubilee in 1893: the presents (besides Peter's Pence) in 1888 were valued at £2,000,000 by the Vatican authorities, and in 1893 the money offered amounted to £1,600,000.

The chief means by which the Pope created in his followers the illusion of triumphant statesmanship was the Encyclical. A most assiduous student of Latin from his boyhood, he raised the ecclesiastical tongue to a level it had rarely touched and impressed the world with his literary scholarship. A Roman prelate once described to me how he would linger over the composition, toying with his pen and saying to his secretary: "What *is* that word that Sallust uses?" His style was an attempt to combine the graceful lucidity of Sallust and the opulence of Cicero. The literary merit of his Encyclicals was so great that even generally informed men at times overlooked the inadequacy of their content: an inadequacy which is seen at once when we reflect that the great Encyclicals which dealt with the socio-political questions of the hour are not consulted by any non-Catholic authority on such questions. The attack upon Socialism which runs through his writings provoked only the smiles of his opponents and did not check the large secessions of French, German, and Italian Catholics to Socialism. A second principal theme was the duty of submission to authority, and the Pope's analysis of authority, on the basis of St. Thomas, belongs to the pre-scientific stage of sociology. A third general theme is that Catholicism made the civilization of Europe, and that that civilization is perishing because of its apostasy. In this argument the Pope

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not only gravely misunderstood the age in which he lived, but betrayed an historical conception of the social evolution of Europe which belongs essentially to the more backward seminaries.<sup>1</sup>

The chief Encyclicals, which were at one time claimed as masterly expositions of eternal principles, have already passed out of even Catholic circulation. *Quod Apostolici* (December 28, 1878) is a vigorous attack on Socialism, on familiar lines. *Æterni Patris* (August 4, 1879) imposed the philosophy of St. Thomas, the opportunist character of which the Pope never perceived, on the modern Catholic world.<sup>2</sup> *Arcaenum* (February 14, 1880) asserted the strict Catholic ideal of indissoluble marriage, and had no influence on the increasing concession of divorce. *Diuturnum* (June 29, 1881), written after the assassination of the Tsar, argued that these outrages naturally followed the abandonment of the true faith; it did not include an examination of the cruelties of the Russian authorities. *Humanum Genus* (April 20, 1884) condemned Freemasonry. *Immortale Dei* (November 19, 1885) dealt, in Scholastic vein, with the constitution of States and the foundations of authority, and is a fine exposition of mediæval thought on the subject. *In Plurimis* (May 8, 1888) condemned slavery in Europe. *Libertas* (June 20, 1888) is another Scholastic dissertation on liberty, leading to an attack on the modern

<sup>1</sup> An English translation of the chief Encyclicals has been issued by Wynne in America (1902). For other work see *Poems, Charades, Inscriptions of Leo XIII.* (1902, ed. Henry).

<sup>2</sup> The injunction was not, of course, literally obeyed. At Louvain University, where Leo believed that he had established Thomism in its purest form, Mgr. (now Cardinal) Mercier gave us little of St. Thomas, and not one priest in a thousand ever opens the pages of Aquinas. At Rome Leo set up a Thomist Academy at a cost of £12,000 to himself.

claims of freedom of thought, worship, and expression. *Rerum Novarum* (May 15, 1891) is the most famous of the Pope's utterances on social questions. The organization of the Catholic workers in Italy, France, and America, and the concern about the condition of the workers (really about the growth of Socialism) which Bismarck and William II. had hypocritically conveyed to the Pope, moved him to formulate his views on social questions. The only points of relative importance are that a Pope at last consented to bless the efforts of the workers to obtain better conditions (with strict regard to private property and submission to authority), and that he pleaded for a "sufficient wage"; but the seeming boldness of this latter truism was undone a few weeks later, when the Archbishop of Malines wrote to ask if an employer sinned against justice in giving a wage which would support the worker but not his family, and the Pope nervously directed Cardinal Zigliara to reply (anonymously) that such an employer would not sin against justice, though "possibly against charity and natural equity."<sup>1</sup> *Providentissimus Deus* (November 18, 1893), which sought to promote biblical studies, caused Catholic scholars to groan in despair; it proclaimed the inerrancy of the Old Testament.<sup>2</sup> *Apostolicæ Curæ* (September 13, 1896) condemned Anglican orders, and led to a prolonged controversy in England. *Graves de communi* (January

<sup>1</sup> See Mgr. de T'Serclaes, ii., 107-111.

<sup>2</sup> I speak from personal recollection, being a professor in a seminary at the time. Leo went on to form a Biblical Commission, of which my liberal professor, Fr. David Fleming, became secretary. The first decision it was his duty to sign was that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch! For the later doubts and despair of Leo see the very interesting details in A. Houtin's *La Question Biblique au XIX. siècle* (2d ed., 1902) and *La Question Biblique au XX. siècle* (2d ed., 1906).

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18, 1901) shows the later enfeeblement of the Pope's social zeal. He still approves Christian democracy, and demands justice in the industrial world, but he stresses alms-giving as a social solution and urges particular concentration on religious effort.<sup>1</sup>

The great Pope struggled on until his ninth decade of life had opened. He died on July 20, 1903, leaving his sternly contested inheritance to less skilful hands, marking, with his dying eyes, the onward progress of all the forces he had hailed as disastrous and the advance of "Americanism" (or Modernism) within the Church. His failure must not blind us to the greatness of his personality. He united intellectual breadth and penetration with a high character and a lofty devotion to his work. His weakness was the antiquated and restricted nature of his knowledge and his inheritance of an untenable position. The concessions he made to his age were too tardy, too grudging, and often too obviously opportunist. With equal readiness he wrote a letter of recommendation of a work of canon law (by Marianus de Luca) which advocated the execution of heretics, and he blessed the republics of France and America. But the great theme of his life was that civilization was perishing because it had shaken off the allegiance of Rome, and he lived to see the world "rounding onward to the light" and departing ever farther from its old traditions.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Encyclopædia Britannica* ("Leo XIII.") it is said that the Pope in 1902 advises the workers to turn aside from social zeal and concentrate on the interests of the Papacy. This seems to be inaccurate. His pronouncements of that year are of the same tenor as the Encyclical *Graves de communi*. See *Sanctissimi D. N. Leonis XIII. Allocutiones*, etc., vol. viii., pp. 65-78 and 181-2. The Americans have issued an English translation of the chief Encyclicals.

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<sup>1</sup> I include Peter, as is usual, though it must be recalled that no writer calls him "bishop" of Rome until the third century, and it cannot be regarded as *proved* that he ever visited Rome. The date of his death, and the succeeding dates until the third century, and many later, are conjectural and disputed.

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<sup>1</sup>On account of some confusion in mediæval chronicles, a spurious "John XV." was inserted in the list of Popes. Hence John XXI really John XX., but the names of the later Popes are so fixed that it seems better, as is usually the case, to skip from John XIX to John XX.

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