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## THE CHURCH AND THE PRINCES OF EUROPE.

### A RETROSPECT.

*Aurelii Augustini De Civitate Dei.* Libri xxii. Parisiis, 1841.

*Histoire de la Papauté,* par Francis Lacombe. Paris: Adrien Le Clerc et Cie, 1867.

WHAT causes have chiefly contributed to bring about the visible decline of the Church's influence in this age? How is it that the rulers of Europe in our day have come to look on her with indifference, if not distrust? These are important questions, and in thoroughly studying them, we may detect the fallacy of the supposition, too often indulged in at this time, that it has been the fault of the chief pastors of the Church, in past ages and in our own. The beauty of the Bride of Christ is so dazzling, that, unable to bear its splendor, the eyes of her adversaries often drop down from her face to her feet; and their hearts rejoice if they can succeed in detecting on the hem of her garment any dust or stain, which, expanded by the power of a wicked imagination, seems to them to cover her whole person, and change the Heavenly Queen into a frail and faithless daughter of Eve.

This fallacy must be done away with. Consequently, this paper will offer a retrospect embracing a considerable part of the Church's history. A general outline of it, however, will be sufficient; and if it be accurately drawn the picture will be correct, though devoid of details and of color.

Two preliminary remarks will render the task easy, and avoid

the necessity of lengthy discussions. The first may be stated thus: The decline of the influence of the Church, and the unmistakable opposition of Christian princes, so called, had been foreseen long before, and predicted, independently of prophecy, by the anticipation of logical sequence from well-ascertained premises; all to the Church's honor, and constituting a complete justification before the fact. Yes, several great and holy men, ages ago, announced it; but particularly St. Augustine, whose most striking words will be quoted as much *in extenso* as a brief discussion permits. In the second place, the Catholic Church having been constituted by her Divine Founder so as to depend altogether on a visible and all-powerful centre—the Papacy—the only question to be examined reduces itself to an inquiry into the causes of the constant opposition between Rome and the secular rulers of Europe. This inquiry can be made within the limits assigned to a Review article.

I. St. Augustine, in his great work, *De Civitate Dei* (lib. xviii., c. 52), examines, first, the truth of the assertion of many Christian writers in his time, that there had been only ten persecutions of the Church from Nero to Diocletian; which had been typified, as they thought, by the ten plagues of Egypt; and that henceforth there would not be any other until the last persecution by Antichrist. The holy Doctor proves that this historic generalization, although plausible, and to many Catholics of that epoch satisfactory, is nevertheless untrue. No analogy, he says, can be drawn between the persecutions of the Christian Church by infidel princes and the plagues of Egypt, which were in fact directed, not against the people of God, but against its enemies. Later on in the volume, reasoning from the past and from what was taking place in his day, with regard to the propagation of the faith in infidel countries, he concludes that persecutions will continue until the end of time, at least in places not brought under the yoke of Christ; that at the end of the world only will all countries be evangelized. This, he thinks, is foreshadowed by the Gospel parable of the tares and the wheat growing together in the same field until the day of judgment.

This first remark, however, of the Bishop of Hippo, though it has some reference to our present question, is not altogether pertinent to it. We must examine the causes of the opposition to the Church, on the part not of infidels and idolaters, but of so-called Christian princes and believers. This St. Augustine attempts to do, after discussing for a moment the general question of good and evil in this world (lib. xx., c. 2). He there briefly observes, that "good men are sometimes miserable and bad men happy." Often, however, "*et malis mala eveniunt et bonis bona proveniunt.*" "From which it seems as if there were no uniform rule followed

in this world by Providence. Yet God is supreme virtue, wisdom, and justice, in whom there can be no weakness, no thoughtlessness, no iniquity. A wise man, consequently, will learn from it not to attach too much importance to the good and evil things which are common to good and bad men. But when the day of the final judgment shall come, not only the last decision will appear perfectly just, but whatever has been permitted to take place in this world, shall also be judged to have happened justly." This may not please modern atheists, and Mr. John S. Mill, were he living, would not, probably, be satisfied with this general answer. But the opinions of atheists are not worthy of much consideration. Those who are not atheists will undoubtedly find weighty matter for reflection in this doctrine of St. Augustine.

In the seventh chapter of the same book, however, a great step in advance is taken by the learned African Doctor. He begins by discussing a well-known passage of the Apocalypse (ch. 20), where it is said that an angel was sent to bind Satan, and cast him into the abyss, and leave him there a thousand years, during which the saints were to reign with Christ. At the end of this period of time the great Tempter was to be unbound, and left free during three years and a half. In this St. Augustine saw the future history of the Church, and conceived therefrom the great ideas which he afterwards developed.

It is known that several Fathers of the Church and ecclesiastical writers have attempted, many of them with small success, to interpret this sublime but very obscure book of St. John. It is useless to refer to the numberless essays of the kind, written within the last half century or previously. But whoever reads the explanation of this chapter by St. Augustine, will admire the simplicity, naturalness, and admirable adaptation of it to our age in particular. The object here, however, is not to examine how far his exegesis can be adopted. We merely look at the ideas of the author with regard to the future history of the Church; and no one will refuse to admit that he has admirably foretold what our ancestors have seen, and what we ourselves witness every day.

He thinks that, in speaking of a thousand years, during which "Satan was to be bound, and the saints were to reign on earth with Christ," St. John meant simply an indefinite period of time, extending from the first propagation of Christianity, when holiness began at last to dwell on earth—*regnum sanctorum cum Christo*—to the epoch of the unbinding of Satan previous to the coming of Antichrist. It is in fact the whole history of the Church except the last catastrophe. This present age is comprised in it. It is evident that St. Augustine entirely discards not only the harsh millenarianism condemned by the Church at its first appearance in the second

and third centuries, but also the milder opinion of a great number of good Christians whom the Church has not forbidden to expect that Christ will actually come and reign visibly on earth during a thousand years, previous to the last resurrection and judgment.

In the impossibility of giving the whole explanation of St. Augustine, we are obliged to confine ourselves to a mere sketch of his ideas. The simplest way of doing this is to develop briefly with him the short passage of St. John on which he comments, following strictly the order of the Scripture text.

First, therefore, what is the binding of Satan during those thousand years, if the time extends from the preaching of the Apostles to the last persecution of Antichrist? Is he bound now? Was he bound in the sixteenth century when Protestantism broke loose? Yes; because, says St. Augustine, when he is unbound at the end, he is let free to seduce all nations, *ut seduceret omnes gentes*; therefore, the great thing which really binds him is the impossibility of his accomplishing this universal seduction. He is thus bound, only because he is less powerful than he was before Christ came, and much less powerful than he will be at the end. But that in this state of bondage he seduces many, and thus he makes them partakers of his own eternal damnation, is known to all. And "those," declares St. Augustine, "who thus openly embrace his cause, though they appeared to belong to us at first, had, however, no real claim to that privilege." For as St. John says (1 Ep. ii. 19): *Ex nobis exierunt, sed non erant ex nobis; nam si fuissent ex nobis, mansissent utique nobiscum.*

The second thing to be considered is the meaning of the reign of Christ with His Saints during this indefinite millennium. It is in considering this in the light under which St. Augustine views it, that the reader will understand the right St. Augustine has to be considered as a revealer of futurity. He, certainly, is not an inspired prophet like David and Isaias; but he is a profound thinker, and, by the strength of his reason, supported by the text of Holy Scripture, can foresee future events. The reign of Christ, he says, is the strict keeping by many of the commandments of God, by which holiness comes to prevail in the hearts of a great number of people. Has not God chosen to Himself a peculiar people over whom He rules and who accept cheerfully His government? Do not we who live so long after St. Augustine, know that it has been so in all ages, even the most corrupt and degraded?

The *Saints*, as he explains in a remarkable passage, are those who succeed each other on earth; new ones being successively and constantly born, baptized, and moulded by the Church according to the great pattern of all virtues, Christ Himself. At every epoch there is a new generation of them to replace those who die and go

to their reward in heaven. The nature of this reign of Christ is more particularly explained in the ninth chapter of the twentieth book of *De Civitate Dei*. It consists in the observance of the commandments of God, the smallest as well as the greatest, so that "the justice of the Christian is above that of the Scribe and the Pharisee;" so that the Christian, according to St. Paul, "looks to the things on high where Christ sits at the right hand of His Father."

Whilst Christ reigns thus in all those who follow Him, that is, in the true members of the Church, the Church herself reigns with Christ; because, even on earth, according to Scripture *judicium datum est sibi*. The Saviour besides said to His Apostles, *quæ ligaveritis in terra ligata erunt in cælo*, etc. (Matt. xviii. 18). The Saints in heaven, also, form but one body with the Church on earth, who makes mention of them at the altar of God.

Seated, therefore, as a Queen, the Bride of Christ endeavors to establish in all men the reign of her Spouse. She does it in two ways, and, consequently, meets with two kinds of opposition, and these are to continue until the end of time. She has, first, the exterior mission of converting the world. This was begun originally by the Apostles; it has been going on from their time to ours, and is to continue until the end of time, when the Gospel shall have been preached *per totam terram*. This stupendous work of evangelization must constantly meet with fierce opposition from without, that is, from pagan and infidel princes and peoples. This kind of persecution is always open, above board, and employs the usual means of tyranny, namely, the sword, the rack, and other most cruel tortures ending always in death. The reader need not be reminded that this part of the prediction of St. Augustine has been fulfilled in all ages, and continues to be fulfilled to the letter in our day. It is now at the eastern edge of Asia that the process is going on under our eyes, and we have only to read the letters written by Catholic missionaries from China, Japan, Corea, Tongkin, Cochin China, and other places, to see that the work of evangelization is accompanied with open persecution by infidel rulers, as it was in the times of Decius, Severus, and Diocletian. But this is not exactly included in the present investigation, the object of which is to see how within the material kingdom of Christ, that is, the visible Church, persecution must always go on, stirred up by some of her own children. This is the main point we propose to consider.

How is it that the Church, all intent on establishing the reign of Christ in the hearts of her spiritual offspring, meets with opposition from them, finds enemies among them, so that her influence is curtailed by them, her power sought to be taken from her, and she is reduced at last to the condition of a captive in the hands of pretended friends, as is happening in our own day? Yes, the same

men who thus persecute her belong to her by baptism, even by belief to some extent, by exterior connection at least, though they can scarcely be said to belong to her by their works. St. Augustine tells us that they are represented in the Gospel by the tares, *zizania*, which Satan, *homo inimicus*, has sowed in the midst of the wheat, and which will continue to grow along with it until the time of the harvest, when God shall command his angels to winnow the wheat and cast the chaff into the fire.

This phenomenon—which existed already in the time of St. Augustine, as he often comments upon it, was to continue during the thousand years or indefinite millennium, and almost to the end of the world—is easily explained by the open refusal of a number of the children of the Church to have the reign of Christ established in their hearts. Consequently, they turn against their mother as against an enemy, and openly exclaim: “We do not want her to rule over us,” *nolumus hanc regnare super nos*. And to show that St. Augustine regarded this rebellion of unworthy Catholics as a perpetual feature of the Church in all ages to come, and considered the continual vexations of bad Christians as deadly an opposition as the open persecutions of infidels, we have only to quote a few words of his comment on this short passage of the Apocalypse: *Si qui non adoraverunt bestiam, nec imaginem ejus, nec acceperunt inscriptionem in fronte aut in manu sua*. “This,” he says, “must be understood *de vivis ac mortuis*, of men actually living in our time, and of those who have died before us.” . . . But what is this *bestia*? Although this is a question of importance and requires deep investigation, it can be said, without fear of going in the least against faith, that it is the city of the impious, the mass of unbelievers, always opposed to the faithful people, to “the City of God.” They are those who have never belonged to the Church by baptism. “Its *image*,” however, seems to me to be its *personation* on the part of those men who profess to believe, and yet live as if they did not. They pretend to be what they are not, and they are called Christians although they do not bear the true stamp of Christianity, but only a false image of it. For to the same *bestia* belong not only the open enemies of the name of Christ and of His most glorious city, but also the tares, *zizania*, which are to be gathered up at the end of time, and only then separated from the kingdom of Christ, which is the Church. Thus bad Christians often *personate* open infidels by persecuting the Church of Christ, and enlisting themselves in the ranks of her enemies, although by baptism they ought to be her friends.

Nothing can be clearer than these ideas of the holy Bishop of Hippo; and it is wonderful how in a few pages he has given to posterity a substantial abstract of a history which now has lasted nearly

nineteen hundred years. It is only because the Church is divine, and the general features of her future annals were pencilled by Christ himself and His Apostles, that any man, even with the deep mind of an Augustine, could tell us how it would be in a thousand years or more. It is in fact nearly fourteen centuries since he wrote, and a thoughtful man cannot but wonder when he reads those entrancing pages, replete with the thoughts of previous prophecy analyzed and elucidated by human genius.

These remarkable speculations are the best answer to the questions propounded at the very beginning of this paper; and, at the same time, they also contain a clear justification of the Church in regard to the matter under consideration. How can it be said that it is her fault that she has lost in our day some of her previous influence or power? Was there any accusation brought or intended to be brought against her in the predictions of St. Augustine? If he now lived among us, or could come back from heaven to hold converse with us, and supposing that God had not made him acquainted through the Beatific Vision with the successive vicissitudes of the Church, he would not feel any surprise at anything we know, and see, and daily grieve to experience from false brethren and pretended Christian rulers, lawgivers, and men of influence of every kind, but would, probably, only repeat a few sentences of what he has penned in another part of his *City of God*. "*In hoc ergo malo ligno sæculo,*" etc. We give the translation by Rev. M. Dods, in the Edinburgh edition 1871:

"In this wicked world, in these evil days, when the Church measures her future loftiness by her present humility, and is exercised by goading fears, tormenting sorrows, disquieting labors, and dangerous temptations, when she soberly rejoices, rejoicing only in hope, there are many reprobates mingled with the good; and both are gathered together by the Gospel, as in a drag-net. In this world, as in a sea, both swim inclosed without distinction in the net until it is brought ashore, where the wicked must be separated from the good, that in the good, as in His temple, God may be all in all."

II. The great Doctor of Hippo in various passages speaks constantly of the Church, but scarcely mentions her pastors. He likewise descants on the virtues or vices of nations and peoples, yet very seldom names their princes and kings. But for us it is evident that the expression now must be different, the sense remaining the same. In his time the nations appeared on the convulsed stage of the world simply as peoples, and the Church was uppermost in the mind of all, instead of the Papacy. Why so? St. Augustine lived and wrote in the precise epoch of the confused mingling of all tribes and races in an almost inextricable disorder. The barbarian invasions, it is true, had begun their ravages much earlier, and already at the time of Gallienus the Goths had invaded Western Asia, and Europe was at the mercy of numerous German tribes.

But these were then mostly in the service of Roman generals who disputed the empire against Valerian's son. There was still an empire, and there were only too many emperors. It was from 375 to 568 of our era that almost the whole population of the North and East swept like the waves of the sea over the West and South. It is now ascertained that all the northern tribes then living, from the frontiers of China to the Atlantic Ocean, were in constant motion, warring perpetually with each other and, one and all, were making incursions into the rich domain of Rome. During those two centuries the barbarian peoples did not move fitfully as they did before, returning after awhile to their former haunts. They meant to settle permanently on the plains of Europe, or wherever else fortune might offer them the opportunity of securing more desirable abodes. The whole life of St. Augustine was passed in the midst of those violent convulsions; and the Vandals were besieging Hippo, his Episcopal city, when he closed forever his eyes on a world apparently in ruins. Persons must then have been accustomed to speak oftener of peoples than of their rulers, who were mostly unknown. The destiny of the world was in fact trembling in the rough hands of numerous tribes rushing impetuously forward in their career, without an intelligent directing head. St. Augustine was thus naturally brought to look at the future fate of the Church as dependent more upon peoples than on their rulers.

He, also, could not but look on the Church as on a body already everywhere established, having received from Christ the mission of converting those infuriated savages, and keeping in the observance of the law of God her defenceless children, then in the throes of agony. The Popes had enough to do in Rome and the surrounding country. They could not exercise a universal power in the prevailing confusion, and it was designed, in the providence of God, to be at a much later period that peoples should look on them as the fathers of regenerated mankind and the arbiters of the whole world. This explains why St. Augustine speaks thus in general terms, and uses phraseology differing greatly from ours, yet carrying with it, after all, a like meaning.

As soon as peace and order succeeded to war and confusion; as soon as Europe became mapped, nearly as it has been ever since, and the various kingdoms and empires which we know, began to develop, each its own individual life; as soon as, at the same time, the Church could set in working order the divine constitution which Christ had given her, and the Papacy visibly arose to take the lead of Christendom; then the moral power of the Christian Church, whilst it continued to fulfil the predictions of St. Augustine, did so under vastly different circumstances, and presented to a thoughtless looker-on a very dissimilar scene, though it was in fact the same.



The nations came to be represented by their individual princes, chiefly after feudalism arose; and the Church also became, as was proper, identified with the Pope. Thus it came to pass that the words of St. Augustine had to be slightly altered, though their meaning remained the same. The wicked of whom he spoke as inclosed in the "net of the fisherman" were, most of the time, the emperors, or kings, or powerful barons, who, by persecuting the Church, caused her to lead a life of sorrow, and fear, and labor, and temptation, just as described in the last passage we have quoted from the work, *De Civitate Dei*.

• It is proper, consequently, to review briefly the secular contests between the Papacy and the empire, in order to come to a more exact understanding of the situation of the Church at the present day. From the very exposition of the subject just laid down, it is evident that whatever happened between the former Roman empire and the Christian Church previous to the final success of the barbarian invasions, is excluded from this present inquiry. The former Roman civilization was entirely destroyed by the barbarian invaders. Whatever came into existence afterwards was entirely independent of the anterior period; and the complexion of things at the present time will be sufficiently explained, when the principal facts which were evolved in the contest between the crosier and the sceptre, say from the time of Charlemagne down, will have been properly understood and stated. In this review even the Greek or Byzantine world scarcely enters; because the modern civilization of Europe, and the relations between the Popes and the kings have derived very few elements from the effete organization known as the Byzantine Empire. The fact is that the problem is reduced to the examination of its proper conditions as involved in Germany, England, France, and Spain. Italy forms a subject of itself, apart from the others, very important certainly, but which it will be more profitable and convenient to consider at the last.

It is impossible to enter into this discussion without indulging first in a general remark on the most important element of the problem, namely, the Papacy. But the Papacy placed here under our eyes is not that of the catacombs, however great, sublime, superhuman it may have been. It is neither the heavenly but hidden power wrestling in the dark with a corrupt and tyrannical paganism, nor the already manifest City of God confronting, in and around the Roman capitol, the undisguised city of Satan. This first struggle had long previously passed away. The victory had been won and paganism had ceased to exist. The Pontiffs had planted the cross on the summit of the Capitol. Rome and the world had become Christian. But the Papacy which at this moment stands before our gaze, is the majestic, and at the same time sweet and mild figure of

a high priest placed in antagonism to his own wayward spiritual children. It is the hand which has poured by proxy the regenerating waters of baptism on the heads of all those emperors and kings, constrained to ward off, nay, anathematize those whom it desires only to bless; it is the tongue proclaiming the saving precepts of true morality, which, strange to say, is not listened to with reverence, but is mocked by the open and unreasonable disobedience of those who have freely sworn to obey; it is the heart of a father, deeply wounded by those very sons whom he had engendered in Christ. For it ought never to be forgotten that from Rome had been sent the Apostles who converted originally the Germans, the Anglo-Saxons, the Franks, the Visigoths of Spain, the Ostrogoths of Italy, all those nations which afterwards formed Christendom. In their first enthusiasm they had gratefully acknowledged their allegiance to the Papal power. They had called the Supreme Pontiff their spiritual ruler; they had blessed his hand full of holy ministrations; they had recognized it as an instrument of untold blessings; they had heard his voice and called it the voice of Christ explaining to every Christian the same clear, strict, absolute duties; they had, finally, been folded to his heart, which they knew was that of a father prompted only by a true heavenly charity. This was, in fact, the Papacy which has been so often misrepresented and accused. Yet any impartial reader of the annals of those times is compelled to acknowledge that in all its contests with the powers of this world, the Papacy bore in fact either all the characters just described, or at least some of them unmistakably. We shall see this more satisfactorily in the details of these contests, in the various changes which resulted from them, and in the final consequences which we now explore and study.

*Germany.*—The natural and chronological order would seemingly require that the Italian politicians and princes should be considered first. For, during a part of the ninth century and the whole of the tenth, the margraves of Tuscany and the counts of Tusculum often intrigued at the Papal elections, with a view to introducing their detestable feudalism into the very organization of the Church, and perpetuating the abuses of simony and incontinency among the clergy of the whole peninsula. But Italy, for various reasons, ought to be studied apart, and will be deferred to the last.

The strongest proof that the subsequent deplorable antagonism between the German Empire and the Papacy did not result necessarily from the assumptions and pretensions of Rome, as the enemies of the Papacy allege, consists in the fact that with the restoration of imperial power in Germany, after the disappearance of the Carolingian dynasty, the greatest harmony prevailed for a long time between the temporal and the spiritual powers. The Carlovian-

gian era itself might be adduced in corroboration of this proof; but as the present discussion must date from the origin of the difficulty between the empire and the Papacy, there is no need of going farther back than to the Saxon line of emperors. When they first took up the sceptre which the progeny of Charlemagne were unable any longer to wield, they adopted the large views and Christian policy of the first Charles; and continued up to the end of their dynasty in perfect accord with the Popes. The single exception which will be mentioned does not affect the general result. When Otho I. went to Rome for the purpose of putting an end to the dissensions of contending factions, he recognized John XII. as Pope in spite of what he had heard against him from his German courtiers, and he took an oath as explicit as that of Charlemagne's could possibly have been, "to always exalt the Church of Rome and her Pastor." If later on he appeared to swerve from his purpose, if he went so far as to depose the Pope and have another elected, he was urged to it by unworthy bishops and cardinals, and thus an excuse, though an insufficient one, could be found for his conduct. But it must be said that this deplorable excess is the only one which can be alleged against the Saxon line. Otho II., surnamed the Great, was a still greater benefactor to the Roman Church than his father had been. Almost the same might be said of Otho III. But all other Saxon emperors were surpassed in this regard by Henry II., the last of them. This pious prince, the holy husband of the still holier Cunegunda, has been considered in all ages a pattern of all Christian virtues on the throne.

Had this policy been followed by all the German imperial dynasties, there would have been no conflict between the Tiara and the Sceptre. It is impossible to find room for such a conflict when we consider that those first emperors never took upon themselves to mix in the affairs of the Church or take part in the clerical elections, or grant the investiture of spiritual offices without the full consent of the Popes, which consent they knew, and acknowledged they knew, was necessary. Thus all the subsequent troubles with the Franconian line would have been avoided, had the emperors of that line adhered to the same principles. As to the unheard-of pretensions of the Hohenstaufen, it is not possible to imagine that the Saxon emperors would ever have originated them. What would have been, in consequence, the happiness of Europe and the world, had all the emperors of Germany followed the example of the Saxon emperors? When the two powers, the spiritual and the temporal, are in perfect accord, nations can advance in civilization without any inward hinderance. All the powers of the State are set forth either for the submission of exterior enemies or for the normal development of interior activity. In the case of Germany, at the

time we are speaking of, the exterior enemies were all pagan tribes which were successively to be subjected to the sweet yoke of Christianity, and consequently to be highly benefited by the process; the development of interior activity consisted in doing away with the last remnants of barbarism which had not yet disappeared, and in elevating the nations, in as short time as possible, to the highest pitch of true civilization, which all Christian peoples reach under the powerful sway of the sublime doctrine of the Saviour.

Many in our day will say, perhaps, that submission to Rome would have brought about an entirely different result; would have established servility, gradually leading on to degradation, etc., etc. We all have heard of these modern axioms of so-called philosophical historians, but have no room for discussing them at length. A general observation must suffice. Does history prove that such deleterious effect resulted when the temporal power submitted cheerfully to the Papacy? This was the case under Charlemagne and most of his dynasty; this was emphatically the case under the Saxon line of emperors which replaced the Carolingians; this was the case in Germany whenever a truly Christian prince ruled. Was not the country then more prosperous and powerful than under the majority of the Franconian, Hohenstaufen, and Hapsburg emperors? On this subject we must content ourselves with the remarks of Höfler in his admirable paper on the German Empire, in the *Dictionnaire de Theol. Cath.* (vol. vii.). He says:

“In spite of the insistence of many writers to regard as the most flourishing period of Germany that in which the two heads of Christendom were at war, when the energetic efforts of the two parties produced, no doubt, an extraordinary development of talent and institutions, history will always prove that the grandest period, and the one most productive of a natural and solid development was that during which a common principle animated the empire and the Papacy; when, as a consequence of this union, the Christian world—*orbis christianus*—going on from victory to victory, crushed the powers both of paganism and Islamism. It is dating from those memorable days that the country began to *Germanize* the surrounding regions, a remarkable operation, to which historians do not give the attention it deserves, and which was certainly the immediate result of the union of the temporal and the spiritual powers. North Germany became thenceforth Christian and German. The countries devastated by the Huns were soon teeming again with men and cities. Toward the East the Alemanni arrived,” etc.

The writer speaks here of the precise time when the Othos and the first two Henrys of the Saxon line carried the empire over which they ruled to such a pitch of glory. Did their constant union with the Popes bring on “servility and degradation” for their persons and those of their subjects? The same reflections might be indulged in with reference to France, and also to England in regard to its Anglo-Saxon kings. But this must suffice.

Germany had become so prosperous and great by the adoption of the policy of union with Rome under the Saxon princes, that the two first emperors of the subsequent, Franconian, line naturally followed the same course. They appeared only intent on leaving Rome free, and protecting the Pontiffs against the plots of Italian politicians and intermeddlers, of whom there will soon be occasion to speak. They allowed, in fact, Hildebrand who was not yet Pope, but had already acquired immense influence in Rome, to energetically oppose simony and incontinency among the clergy. Henry III., however, the second Franconian emperor, gave the first hint of a change of principle, when he publicly withdrew his friendship from Wasson, Bishop of Liege, who had declared that "he owed fealty to the emperor, but obedience only to the Pope." The germ of the contest on Investitures was contained in this declaration. It is known that open war on this subject broke out only under Henry IV., to continue with fury during almost the whole reign of Henry V. What was the real meaning of this war of Investitures? It was, in fact, at the beginning, when controversy and argument had not yet made clear the various points of the question, nothing else than the bold assumption on the part of the emperors of the spiritual power itself, through their claim of *investing* the chosen bishops and abbots, before their consecration, with the crosier and the ring. *Consecration* was supposed, by the lawyers of the crown, to add almost nothing to the ceremony of *investing*. The emperors pretended also to have thus the right of *electing* the future prelates, and becoming the real source of their authority by merely conferring upon them its emblems. There was, of course, on their part, the obligation to notify the Pope afterwards, and the Pope was expected to approve everything they did with cheerful assent. This was indeed to repress "the assumptions" of the court of Rome with a vengeance.

In our age this must be acknowledged, even by Liberalists, to have been an outrageous pretension, since they seem at least to respect the spiritual initiative of the visible Head of the Church, and acknowledge that in spiritual matters he must be independent and perfectly free. Yet Gregory VII. has been for a long time abused, even by pretended Catholics, for having opposed the Franconian pretensions. If he had not, he would have openly prevaricated and been unfaithful to his most sacred duty. But the reader may wonder how such an abuse as this could possibly have crept unperceived into the Church, and then at once burst out openly so soon after the Christian Saxon line. This happened very simply through the development of feudalism, which was then beginning its career all over Europe, but particularly in Germany. Bishops, abbots, ecclesiastical officers of all degrees (for the ceremony of investiture ex-

tended to all) began, before the Franconian dynasty, to receive from the emperors, kings, and other sovereign princes, fiefs by which they were made dukes, counts, barons, etc. In this capacity they depended on the emperor or king, owed him feudal fealty, a well-known expression in those times, and became great dignitaries of the empire. Under the Saxon line the princes, all of them, had been so great benefactors to the Papacy, that extensive privileges were granted them by the Pontiffs with regard to the nomination and election of Church dignitaries. This was enough to lay the foundation for strange and pernicious abuses.

Imagine the position in which Gregory VII. was placed, when determining immediately after he had been elected and crowned Pope to eradicate incontinency and concubinage from among the clergy, and wipe away at once this foul blot from the garments of the Bride of Christ, he found the youthful Henry IV, just come of age after the regency of his mother Agnes, already a profligate, given over to all vices, chiefly to unbridled lust, established in state at Goslar in Germany, and acting in the following shameful and wicked manner:

At Goslar there was a collegiate church with Canons in it. These Canons were notoriously among the most immoral men in Germany. But His Majesty, the Emperor, who treated them as his boon companions, would not look beyond them, when a bishopric, a rich abbey, or a fat ecclesiastical benefice became vacant, for a person to fill it. Instantly the golden prize fell to the lot of one of those infamous men. They were not long in receiving the investiture of their new office by the crosier and the ring. The Pope, of course, would then be notified of the appointment by Henry IV., but could not prevent the unworthy candidate from receiving consecration at the hands of some worldly bishop. Was the reformation of the Church possible under such circumstances as these? Neander himself, though a Protestant writer of Church history, cannot refuse to acknowledge that the Pope was right in his conflict with Henry IV.

Other Protestant writers besides Neander have justified Gregory with respect to his claim of universal dominion in spiritual matters. There is no need, however, of discussing this point at present, since no one in the time of Hildebrand objected to it, and the Hohenstaufen were the first, subsequently, to controvert it. The claim being then admitted by all, it could not give rise to any contest. But is it not most painful to see such a man as Gregory spending all his Pontifical life in these arduous conflicts, dying at last in exile, to be subsequently abused by scribblers of every description? Is it not a disgraceful sight on the part of Germany to witness in such a plain, nay, self-evident question, all the strength of a large

empire arrayed against an unarmed Pontiff, after having deprived him of his natural allies by gaining over, through open corruption, the bishops themselves to the cause of Henry, so that there was a time when only six of them sided with the Pope? Worse yet! Henry having been able through his creatures, the corrupt bishops of his court, to have an antipope elected, there soon were in many dioceses two rival bishops, in order, we suppose, to compass the more quickly the total destruction of Christianity. Had St. Augustine come back to visit the earth at that epoch he could have said of Gregory what he had prophesied of the Church in general:

“ In this wicked world, in these evil days, the Church is exercised by goading fears, tormenting sorrows, disquieting labors, and dangerous temptations !”

The quarrel of Investitures appeared at last to have reached a settlement at Worms under Henry V. in 1122, and this settlement by a *concordat*, then made, was undoubtedly a rightful victory on the side of the Church, since the emperors of Germany gave up the privilege of election and investiture, by cross and ring, of the ecclesiastical prelates, who were thereby declared to owe to the prince feudal fealty only for their temporal possessions. But at the extinction of the Franconian line in 1137, when the Hohenstaufen came into power, a new pretension set up by this dynasty soon began to disclose itself. It was nothing else than the principle of universal dominion in all matters, in the strictest sense of the term. This could not be said to have been suggested by the anterior claim of Gregory VII. to spiritual rule all over the earth as Vicar of Christ, since the two claims had absolutely nothing in common. This new and most startling doctrine was first proclaimed on a most solemn occasion by Frederick I., or Barbarossa, the second Hohenstaufen emperor. After having humbled Milan, the head of the republican confederation of the Lombard cities, which was openly fostered later on by Innocent III. and other Popes, and from which originated the celebrated Italian republics, Barbarossa called a general assembly of German and Italian noblemen in the plain of Roncaglia in 1158. He there introduced four legists from Bologna, who were to open the legal era of Imperial Germany, and whose names ought to be preserved and remembered forever. These were Bulgarus, Martinus Gossia, Jacobus da Porta, and Hugo de Alberico. Hegel, in his *History of Municipal Corporations*, has, fortunately for us, extracted their names from some old and authentic MSS. The decision of these four men, learned in the law, was simple enough, but was also more than sufficiently comprehensive. The pith of the matter consisted merely in declaring,

“ That the German Empire being the continuation of the Roman, the former Roman

code must be that of Germany. Consequently, all the despotic powers of the renowned Roman Cæsars must essentially belong to the Cæsars of Germany."

This was solemnly proclaimed in the plain of Roncaglia, at the command of Frederick I. This is a fact which cannot be contested, and we find reason here to wonder that lawyers in general, at least in Germany and France, after this, have generally been so loud in their denunciations of "papal pretensions," yet have scarcely ever uttered a word against those of temporal rulers. This most extraordinary declaration was directly opposed to all German traditions which recognized in the sovereign, only the elected head of the nation, *primus inter pares* (Cantù, tom. 10, p. 404); and at the moment of its utterance it was emphatically denied by the then quite recent establishment of the Lombard municipal cities, founded on popular rights, or rather on strongly republican principles. The Hohenstaufen wished, on the contrary, to establish an absolute monarchy with all the forms of despotism, nay, with all the detestable features of former Roman Cæsarism, over the whole extent of Germany and Italy. It was in fact the resuscitation of paganism, at least as regards political doctrine and rule. For, in all pagan countries the harshest despotism of the State, or of the head of the State, has always been maintained in vigor, even in the case of pretended republics. The citizen was invariably regarded as having no conscience of his own, and was obliged to submit to the authority of the State, or of its ruler, in all things whatever.

The Popes had to firmly oppose this outrageous pretension, because they were the natural defenders of the people's rights, and their own temporal possessions would have been absorbed into the scheme of the new legists. Moreover, the principle set forth with such solemnity, involved the spiritual as well as the temporal supremacy; for who does not know that every Cæsar of Rome was *Pontifex Maximus* as well as *Imperator*? The great contest carried on between the emperors Frederick Barbarossa, Henry VI., and Frederick II., on the one side, and the Popes, from Alexander III. to Clement IV., including the great Innocent III., on the other, was waged chiefly on the principles involved in this great question. Had the Hohenstaufen succeeded, the people would have been crushed under the heel of these despots, religion would have been enslaved, and the Popes, deprived of their temporal States, would have become the mere tools of politicians. But, thank God, the victory again remained with the Papacy; and at the end of the contest the municipal republics of Italy were consolidated, chiefly by Innocent III., and immediately began that brilliant career which brought European civilization at once to the highest pitch of glory. This may be counted as one of the chief results of the Pontificate of



Innocent in particular. (Lacombe, *Histoire de la Papauté*, tom. 2, p. 298, § 9.) Thus disappeared in a short time the vaunted power of the new Cæsars, to the first of whom the Archbishop of Milan, a great supporter of the Roman code, did not scruple to say: "*Scias omne jus populi in condendis legibus tibi concessum. Tua voluntas jus est, sicuti dicitur. Quod principi placuit legis habet vigorem, cum populus ei et in eo omne suum imperium et potestatem concesserit.*" (Cantù, *Hist. Univ.*, tom. 10, p. 405, note.)

But although the Papacy triumphed gloriously over the Hohenstaufen, who could never carry a single one of their points, neither in Germany nor in Italy, the long-protracted contest between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines had commenced in earnest, and was to bear its baneful fruits during centuries. For the Hohenstaufen, who belonged to the Ghibelline family, continued as a party long after their dynasty had ceased to disgrace the throne, and the Saxon princes who remained constantly faithful to the Popes, were Guelphs. To whom, then, ought to be attributed the wars, devastations, and often the desolation of fair Italy, if not to the Hohenstaufen? Were not the Popes constrained by the strictest duty to oppose a policy which would have trampled on the rights of the Church and of humanity itself? Were they not appointed by Christ to fight for justice against might? Could they stand mute when the old pagan principles, which Christianity in fact had buried long before, were again asserted as living and true, and attempted to be re-established in full vigor? What the first Popes had obtained by their austere life in the catacombs and by the shedding of their blood, namely, the downfall of paganism and of the most outrageous despotism on earth—was it to be lost by yielding to the pretensions of princes who by baptism were the spiritual children of the successors of Peter? For it was nothing else but the re-establishment of pure paganism in politics and law, that the Hohenstaufen attempted to achieve by the help of their lawyers and the power of their armies. And the state of open war declared by the clear enunciation of these principles was to continue for a long time under the banner of the Ghibellines, against which was justly raised that of the Guelphs. Meanwhile the Popes had "to be exercised by goading fears, tormenting sorrows, and disquieting labors, inflicted upon them by their own wayward spiritual children." So Augustine had foretold it, and so it must continue to the end. And, instead of wondering that the Church in our age has seen her influence decline, and of searching around for the causes of it, as though they were obscure, we might rather ask ourselves how it is that the Church still exists and was not destroyed ages ago.

Our want of space compels us to conclude this branch of the subject by merely remarking that the contests between the Papacy

and the empire in Germany, had the fatal tendency to establish a constant antagonism between both, and to increase, consequently, the animosity of the secular power against the Church. This continued, more or less, under the dynasties subsequent to that of the Hohenstaufen, until the time when the rebellion of Luther, enlisting on its side a great number of German princes, resulted in the division of Christendom. The actual situation of the Church in Germany is thus sufficiently well explained; and if any one has to blush on account of it, it is undoubtedly not to the Popes that the shame of it is due.

*England.*—The struggle which brought the Church in Great Britain to the state to which it has been reduced for the last three centuries, began directly after the conquest of England by the Normans. Our short sketch, which we must necessarily make brief, will prove this assertion, which many, owing to a want of serious reflection, may be inclined to doubt. The first kings of the Norman line introduced *customs* thoroughly opposed to the former relations between Church and State under the Anglo-Saxon dynasties; and it may be said, without fear of great error, that in these so-called customs lay the germ of future Protestantism. Mr. Freeman in his celebrated *History of the Norman Conquest of England*, pretends, it is true, and brings many facts to prove, that the policy pursued from the beginning by the Conqueror and followed out by his successors, consisted mainly in changing nothing in the customs of the nation. This general thesis cannot be examined here; but, supposing even that it is thoroughly proved, and must be henceforth admitted as historically demonstrated, the notorious *consuetudines regie* with respect to Church affairs, which soon began to be spoken of, must certainly be regarded as forming a remarkable exception to the general policy of the new princes. These *customs*, certainly, had no existence under the old Anglo-Saxon kings. They were so evidently new that at first nobody could say precisely in what they consisted. The people and the clergy were kept for some time in the dark as to the meaning of these ominous words. It must, certainly, have been with great surprise that their purport became finally somewhat better known. The fact is that their object was: 1st. To interfere on the part of the State in the ecclesiastical elections, by requiring the presence, on those occasions, of officers, from the king. 2d. To prevent free communication between English Church dignitaries and the Pope. 3d. To introduce gradually in many cases the civil jurisdiction, instead of the ecclesiastical which the people always preferred. 4th. To limit the right of excommunication, a right purely spiritual, by requiring the consent of the king for its exercise. How is it that these *customs*, openly declared at last in the pretended Council of Clarendon, came into force? No one in

England had ever heard of them before the invasion of William the Conqueror; and there was no positive mention of them, neither under his reign nor under those of his immediate successors, until Henry II. If any fact known to history during that first period of Norman rule could have any reference to such customs as these, it ought to be looked for during the reigns of these first Norman kings, and a short discussion of the subject is required.

William the Conqueror, William Rufus, and Henry I., the only Norman kings, predecessors of Henry II., who can deserve attention, Stephen's reign being short and unimportant, tried, undoubtedly, to establish in England *royal customs* in cases between Church and State. But they did not succeed, owing chiefly to the noble opposition of Lanfranc and Anselm. Moreover, those attempts at introducing ecclesiastical customs were very different from that of Henry II., whose programme at Clarendon may be called altogether new, and was stamped with a character *sui generis*. The efforts of the three first Norman kings were bold, but, at least, honest in their violence. Had they succeeded, Christianity would soon have been altogether subverted in Great Britain, and a savage supremacy in spiritual things and temporal on the part of the kings, worse yet than the long subsequent one of Henry VIII., would have been established as early as the twelfth century. The attempt of Henry II. had, on the contrary, all the characteristics of the cunning attributed by French Bretons to his race. It was a dishonest attempt. But it did not deceive Thomas a'Becket who knew his master well, and could immediately perceive *in cauda venenum*. Let us look at this a little more in detail.

William the Conqueror was a bold soldier, as is well known, and by no means gentle in his manners or moderate in his aims. But, at least, he spoke out and expressed himself with a kind of blunt frankness. It seems that his first wish after the conquest was to reform the clergy, and for this he prevailed on Lanfranc that he should accept the archiepiscopal dignity in Canterbury. In this he undoubtedly rendered a great service to religion; but it was strangely qualified by the care he took to appoint only Normans to the sees, abbeys, and other important benefices; and the Norman clergy of that epoch had scarcely had time to imbibe all the mildness and virtue prescribed in the Gospel to the ministers of God. But what was still worse was the stubbornness of the king, who could scarcely imagine that any one could be above him in any capacity whatever, and consequently he refused to yield, even to the Pope, the proper tokens of filial submission. This amounted, in fact, to the declaration that he was supreme in all things. Lanfranc, who knew how easily an open schism, with all its deplorable consequences, could be brought about, did not dare to use in this case the

severe measures of ecclesiastical censures, and for this he was reprimanded by Gregory VII., who then was Pope. This is the first attempt tending to the establishment of "royal" ecclesiastical "customs" we can find in the history of Norman England.

With William Rufus the state of affairs became much worse, and the position of the king was unambiguously announced. He boldly announced from the first that he alone was master of State and Church; that no *foreign* influence in his dominions could be tolerated. What could he possibly have to do with a Pope to whom he had not given the proper investiture, etc.? Henry VIII. never went further in his assumptions, and there is, consequently, nothing rash in the assertion already made, that the struggle which ended in securing the ascendancy of Protestantism in England began with the Norman conquest. What amount of prudence, forbearance, mildness, joined to a firmness which never surrendered the essential rights of Christian truth, did not Anselm, the successor of Lanfranc, give constant proof of during a long life of anxiety and trouble? His biography should be read by all those who wish to know what is the true spirit of the Catholic Church in her conflict with the wicked powers of this world. Any one who comes to this knowledge will be able to form a correct judgment on the important question, whether false pretensions, inordinate ambition, and glaring encroachments are chargeable against the Church, or the State?

In the impossibility of going more into detail, we can only state, as an incontrovertible conclusion, that a bold attempt had been made by Rufus to establish in England customs which could not prevail, owing to the sublime virtues of the greatest Archbishop of Canterbury that ever lived, Anselm of Piedmont. The same conclusion will be reached on investigation with regard to Henry I., who, like his predecessor, fostered simony among the clergy, and wished to assume to himself the right of investiture. These few words must suffice on the subject. If the question is studied thoroughly the odious violence of all those Norman kings will come out in such bold relief, that the reader, however prejudiced against the Popes he may at first have been, will be compelled to confess that the resistance of the secular powers by such Pontiffs as Gregory VII. and Alexander III., and by such prelates as Lanfranc and Anselm, was inspired by a profound sense of right, and saved, in fact, Christianity from destruction.

It is now in place to examine the celebrated *consuetudines regie*, of Clarendon, and see how far they differed from the pretensions of the first three Norman kings. The reader is referred back to the statement of their object as given above. It is taken from Lingard's *History of England*, and is unquestionably a correct state-

ment. It is important here, for many reasons, to keep in mind the date of the pretended Council of Clarendon. It was held in 1161. This was just two years after the proclamation of pure Cæsarism at Roncaglia by Frederick I. of Germany. The long quarrel of the Popes with the Franconian emperors terminated in a victory for the Church. The pretended right of investiture had been given up very reluctantly by the secular power in Germany, though it was afterwards claimed on several occasions. The question raised now by Barbarossa was of a very different character, and had it been decided in his favor it would have resuscitated the long-dead despotism of the ancient Cæsars. It may be presumed that Henry II. knew this. He was far better educated than the rude conqueror, William I., and the still ruder William Rufus. His predecessor, Henry I., with all his natural violence, cultivated the fine arts and received the surname of *Beauclerc*. Henry II. did not live constantly in the retired island of Great Britain; he resided often in Normandy and other parts of France, where the great questions, agitated between the empire and the Papacy, were daily discussed, at least by the cultivated part of mankind. He knew, therefore, that the pretensions of kings in regard to investitures had passed away; still he hankered after them and would certainly have greatly rejoiced could he have revived them under another name. The articles of Clarendon, therefore, never mention this name; but the first and the second, evidently, aim at a return to the substance of these pretensions by requiring the presence of some officers of the king at the election of prelates, and by preventing the free communication of English ecclesiastics with the Pope. These first two articles once secured, it would not have been difficult to usurp again into the hand of the king the bestowing of spiritual offices. The last two articles of this fine schedule, by substituting civil jurisdiction for ecclesiastical, and placing the king, in fact, above the reach of ecclesiastical censures and excommunication, might have gradually paved the way to a future assumption by his majesty of all power, civil and religious. Does it not look as if this really was the intention of Henry II. in claiming so loudly his precious *consuetudines regie*? To aspire directly and simply, as in Germany, to supremacy in spirituals and temporals, that is, to an undisguised Cæsarism, would have been too bold a thing for a simple king of England. Moreover, he was not supported by the arguments brought out by the four celebrated lawyers of Bologna, whose system required a certain line of descent, moral or otherwise, from the Roman Cæsars. Again, the French bishops he had to deal with—a great part of his possessions were then in France—could not be as easily managed at that time, as those of Germany or England. Motives of prudence, therefore, led him to the course he adopted. He was, indeed, a

cunning Norman, with the savage, crafty, and cruel character of his wild Scandinavian ancestors.

But he had to meet Thomas a'Becket; and he did not fare as well with him as he at first expected. The reader knows the rest. By the murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury at the foot of the altar, which Henry II. had certainly provoked, if not positively directed, he raised against himself the indignation of Christendom. How he had to atone for it is well known. Not drawing back even from the public penance imposed upon him by an assembly of bishops, he could not claim either the right of investitures or of unlimited authority; and the *consuetudines regie* were, for the time being, hidden out of sight.

They were not, however, altogether dead, though apparently buried. They manifested occasionally strong signs of life; and one or another of the four articles of the Clarendon creed appear but too often in the annals of ecclesiastical England, besides several other heavy grievances against the Holy See, such as the refusal to pay Peter-pence and the denial of the obligation to receive from time to time the visit of Papal legates. The consideration of these in detail would greatly exceed the limits assigned to this paper. There is, however, a compendious way of reaching a proper conclusion. It is known that the real encroachments of the civil power over the prerogatives of the Holy See went on, gradually increasing, with or without the help of parliaments and courtly prelates, until the *Reformation* capped the climax, by placing in the hands of the king all spiritual as well as temporal authority. On the restoration of Catholicity in England, under Mary Tudor, the Papal jurisdiction was, of course, re-established; and it is known how poets and historians have represented the heaviness of the yoke placed by this act on the neck of the English people. Now Lingard, a moderate Roman Catholic writer, to say the least, thus expresses himself in the first chapter of Queen Mary's reign, in a remarkable note which must strike every thoughtful reader. The occasion for publishing this note is the act of Parliament by which Catholicity was restored, and which Lingard states "deserves the attention of the reader, from the accuracy with which it distinguishes between the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the care with which it guards against any encroachment on the part of the latter."

"Most readers," says Lingard in his note, "have very confused and incorrect notions of the jurisdiction which the Pontiff, in virtue of his supremacy, claimed to exercise within the realm. From this act of Parliament and the statutes which it repeals, it follows that that jurisdiction was comprised under the following heads: 1st. He was acknowledged as Chief Bishop of the Christian Church, with authority to reform and redress heresies, errors, and abuses within the same. 2d. To him belonged the institution or confirmation of Bishops elect. 3d. He could grant to clergymen licenses of

non-residence, and permission to hold more than one benefice, with care of souls. 4th. He dispensed in the canonical impediments of matrimony. 5th. He received appeals from the Spiritual or Ecclesiastical Courts."

All persons acquainted with Church history and Catholic theology will readily acknowledge that it was not only on this occasion, of framing a bill in the English Parliament, that the Pontiff "claimed to exercise only this jurisdiction within the realm." These are the only necessary conditions required at all times by the Popes. If any other prerogatives were granted them by some Catholic States, the Pontiffs did not refuse to surrender them when the circumstances of the times required it. It is very doubtful if at any time the Popes ever claimed anything more from England, except once owing to the extraordinary act of John, who, in order to save himself, felt compelled to place his kingdom at the feet of the Pontiff. Let the history of England be read carefully, and it will be found that in all the difficulties raised between Rome and the English kings, some one or other of these five specifications was the subject-matter of dispute. The first article especially was the one which had created most trouble during previous conflicts. Yet every candid man, having a just notion of the Christian Church and of its Chief Pastor, must admit that it is absolutely necessary for the spiritual welfare of Christians. A like remark may be made respecting the others, except perhaps the third. It is not to be doubted, however, that nearly all the controversies which had previously convulsed England with respect to *Papal pretensions*, were carried on, on the part of the Church, only to obtain these necessary liberties; and that, consequently, she had never done anything more than oppose the encroachments of the State in matters which were absolutely necessary to the welfare of her spiritual children. And the men guilty of those encroachments, though the highest and most influential in England, were not less her spiritual children than the poorest and lowliest of the English people. There is no need of again repeating here the text of St. Augustine, which the reader by this time ought to know by heart. And this must suffice for Great Britain.

*France.*—Of all the countries on the continent of Europe, France undoubtedly is the one which imbibed more thoroughly from the very start the true Catholic spirit. This commences with Clovis, her first king. All the other new nationalities on the Continent, at that time, Vandals, Goths, Ostrogoths in Italy, Visigoths in Spain, were Arians. But the strict union of France with Rome dates from her cradle. As the Bishop of Poitiers eloquently said in the Cathedral of Rheims, the 1st of October, 1876:

"Dating from this day," the baptism of Clovis, "a great nation, another tribe of Judah under the New Dispensation, was just starting on its career in the world. The

Roman Pontiffs recognized this fact as well as the bishops of Gaul. . . . From that moment faithfulness to orthodoxy, the indissoluble alliance of the priesthood with the civil power, the Apostleship and Catholic protectorate all over the world, became the three distinguishing marks of the religious vocation of the French."

But to Charlemagne principally was France indebted for her deep spirit of faith. She, however, followed his lead most cheerfully, and in a better and more constant disposition of mind than the other Germanic nations subject to the sceptre of the great Charles. For France remained, more than any of them, faithful to the policy of the head of the Carolingians. Should any one feel disposed to controvert these assertions, he needs only to throw a glance on the Capitularies of French kings of this dynasty to be convinced that our position is unassailable. These Capitularies are, at this day, accessible to all in Migne's edition (vols. 97, 98, of *Lat. Fath.*). No one, even if he merely looks over them, will deny that the whole essence of the Ages of Faith is contained in those strange but singularly beautiful enactments; and it is in them that France found the food which nourished her infancy and her youth up to manhood.

The Carolingian race, without a single exception, were faithful to what may be called the traditions of the greatest exponent of their line. The Capetians even, who followed, entered largely into the same religious path. This may be said to have continued until the time of Philip the Fair at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries. For the troubles which arose between the Popes and both the first and the second Philips, regarded merely the personal affairs of those kings, and had no reference to any of the great principles of Church and State. Both successively tried to divorce their legitimate queens and to contract new alliances contrary to divine and human law. . In these contests no question arose regarding the temporal and the spiritual powers. It was only after Germany had been fiercely agitated for a long time by the pretensions of her emperors that the first storm of a like nature arose in France. And in extenuation of the crime of Philip the Fair, it may be said that although he was inexcusable in his assumptions, carried on the contest in bad faith and with duplicity, placed himself unreservedly in the hands of legists more unprincipled still than those of Henry IV. and Frederick II. in Germany, yet Boniface VIII., unfortunately, had not the equable temper of Gregory VII. and Innocent III., and on some occasions may have been rather harsh during the long series of events which ended in open and revolting outrages against his sacred person. Yet justice was certainly on the side of the Pope, and the cause of Philip was as wrong, as it was disgracefully carried on.

And what, after all, was the first cause of this long quarrel?



Simply the obstinacy of the French king in refusing to submit to the decision of the Pope, after having requested his arbitration between himself and the king of England. All Europe was then a bloody field of battle. It was the duty of the Pontiff, as the recognized arbitrator between rival princes, to restore peace by his kind offices. He succeeded in bringing to an end the interminable dispute of the kings of Aragon against the dukes of Anjou, for the possession of Sicily. He likewise settled, for a time at least, the differences between Adolph of Nassau and Albert of Austria for the Imperial crown. He was most anxious to re-establish peace between Philip of France and Edward of England; and, had his endeavors not failed on this occasion, the fierce war of a hundred years which soon after broke out between the two nations might have been averted. Philip had recognized the Pope as arbitrator; but the decision, which he wanted to be all in his favor, did not please him, as it involved a compromise. It was simply that "things should remain as they were at the breaking out of the dispute." This disappointed and enraged the king of France, who henceforth considered the Pope as his enemy.

Boniface thought it was his duty to complain shortly after, in the Bull, *Clericis laicos*, of the universal abuse then prevalent, by which ecclesiastical property, bestowed originally for merely pious or charitable objects, was unjustly and heavily taxed for mere secular purposes. Philip looked upon the Bull as though it were addressed to himself alone, although there was no intimation of the kind in the document. It was an encyclical and a universal circular; and it applied more to the king of England than to that of France, because the abuse was greater in the former country than in the latter. But Philip alone appeared to resent it; and he retaliated on the Pope by issuing a decree against the exportation of coin from France to any foreign country, not excluding the Papal States, thus aiming a blow at the Papal exchequer, which relied upon its dues from France as well as from other Catholic countries. The Bull *Clericis laicos* was explained unreservedly in three other documents, but the king would not hear of explanation.

The details of the whole affair cannot be given in these pages; but a general statement of what immediately followed is important. The king of France saw that the strength of his antagonist lay in the principles of the canon law, which then was the law of all Europe. He was acquainted with the details of the previous contests of the Franconian and Hohenstaufen Emperors of Germany against the Papacy. He had, no doubt, remarked that in these conflicts the Emperors had derived great advantages from the employment of legists skilled in canon law. The fact has already been mentioned that Barbarossa brought out on one occasion four able Doc-

tors *utriusque juris* from Bologna, to sustain his cause. Later on, but before Philip's time, Frederick II. used very successfully his "dear Doctor," Petrus de Vineis, whom he rewarded afterwards with perpetual imprisonment. The poor Doctor, it is known, broke his skull in a fit of madness against the walls of his prison, to put an end to his misery. Enlightened by these very remarkable precedents, Philip called to his aid two learned men of this kind, Peter Flotte and William Nogaret; Nogaret in particular, "whom the king," says Alzog with great justice, "called to Court in order to avail himself of his knowledge and ability in cloaking royal usurpations under the legal forms and appearances of justice." This is admirably said, and explains the success which later on crowned the efforts of numerous Doctors of Law in the councils of Constance and Basle, in the first outbreak of Protestantism—for instance in the case of the divorce of Henry VIII., and his assumption of spiritual supremacy,—in the whole history of Gallicanism in France, and in the antics of Jansenism afterwards, finally in our own days in the frantic efforts of the Anti-Vaticanists in England, and the "Old Catholics" in Germany. On all those occasions, law, and particularly canon law, has been the constant outcry of the enemies of the Church. The reader, however, will understand that this outcry has always aimed at setting up a pretended canon law advocated by these men, not the noble creation of the Church herself, bearing the same name, but having a very different object.

The use the first asserters of the so-called canon law in France made of it, was simply to falsify abominably the Bulls of the Pope. Boniface, obliged at last to assert the rights of the spiritual authority, had issued his celebrated Bull, *Ausculda fili*. Peter Flotte got a copy of it, and by erasing a few lines, and writing others in their place, he made the Pope say that "there was no civil or temporal power in existence, and everything was absorbed in the spiritual authority." Boniface, however, had merely reasserted the principles previously declared by Gregory VII. and Innocent III. He recognized everywhere in his Bull the *two swords*, namely, the two distinct powers, temporal and spiritual. If he placed the papal over the kingly power, it was only in the sense that the king was a Christian, and as such subject to his pastor in spiritual matters.

"If Philip," says Alzog, "was subject to the Pope, it was not as a temporal prince, *ratione dominii*, but in a spiritual sense and as a Christian. In temporal matters he was subject to him only when and in so far as there was question of sin and injustice, *ratione peccati*. The Holy See, far from denying, recognized the fact that there was a difference between the two powers established by God." (Alzog, vol. ii., p. 623, and note, p. 624.)

The simple meaning of this is, that according to Boniface VIII.

every king or civil sovereign has full power to rule his dominion, and exercise his office ; but if he openly violates the rules of justice, and becomes a tyrant, he is subject to the authority of the Pope as his spiritual superior, who can call him to order, or depose him in the end, leaving to the people the election of his successor. This was the public law of Europe at the time.

The reader knows what followed. Two successive States-General were convened by the king in France. The three orders, persuaded of the genuineness of the copy of the Bull produced by Peter Flotte, took the side of Philip against Boniface. The Pope was declared deposed as a heretic. Nogaret was sent to Anagni with a troop of soldiers. There is no need of narrating the atrocious proceedings of Nogaret and his satellites, which a few years later on brought from the heart of Ghibelline Dante the well-known agonizing cry, *Veggio in Alagna entrar lo fiordaliso*, etc.

Thus from her French children, as early as the fourteenth century, the Church experienced all the terrors, sorrows, etc., predicted to her by St. Augustine. And more strange than all is the fact that the prevailing public opinion during succeeding ages, from the time of Philip the Fair to our own, has been that Boniface VIII. was a most ambitious and overbearing Pontiff, justly punished for his pretensions, though, in fact, he merely demanded the acknowledgment by Christian princes of the most elementary Christian truths, namely, that every member of the flock ought to obey his spiritual superior, listen to his advice, and reform his conduct. Thus has public opinion continued for ages to mislead people, and has gradually prepared what we witness in our day, a widespread hostility to the Church of God, and an eager emulation on the part of secular rulers of nations to spurn her, neglect her, if not to conspire for her utter destruction.

*Spain.*—There is nothing to say of Spain on this subject, thanks be to God! During all the time we have been speaking of, she was fighting nobly for Christianity against Islam ; and it was not from her that the Popes could expect any persecution. If in our age a different spirit has infected many of the rulers of that noble country, it was not so during the times we have been considering. Spain has not contributed, in any great measure at least, to prepare the way for the decline of the influence of the Church in Europe.

*Italy.*—If an exception could be supposed to have been intended in the predictions of St. Augustine, it surely, one might suppose, would have been Italy. The seat of the Papacy brought to that favored country advantages which no other enjoyed, and the Italians ought to have been the most submissive children of the Popes. Yet the very reverse is the fact, and the Church, in the persons of the

Supreme Pontiffs, has suffered more from her Italian subjects than from any others.

Look at the whole series of Popes from Peter down to his successors at the beginning of the tenth century—this is about the epoch from which our investigations began—and say if Italy ought not to have been proud of such an array of illustrious men. In the first three ages who can withhold admiration for the heroism displayed by the founders of Christianity in Rome? In their arduous and obscure labors, so fruitful, however, since they finally conquered paganism in its stronghold; in the extraordinary purity of their lives shining steadily as a bright luminary in the midst of unprecedented corruption; in the prudence and wisdom of their administration as they laid the foundation of a spiritual empire which was never to disappear; finally, in their fortitude and unflinching constancy when led before the pagan judges who condemned nearly all of them to cruel deaths, they showed themselves true heroes, so that even the enemies of the Catholic Church are either compelled openly to admire them, or endeavor to escape from expressing their admiration under the pretext that their biographies are only legends, and that their lives cannot be truly said to be known.

When the storm of persecution finally abated, we see a second line of Supreme Pastors, worthy of the first, in the great men placed at the head of the Church, who fought so bravely against Arianism and its kindred heresies. The names of Sylvester, Julius, Liberius, Damasus, Siricius, and Anastasius must forever be illustrious in the annals of mankind. Directly after, the barbarian invasions began, and the Papacy was often the only bulwark able to stand against the violence of the shock. During this period the Popes had to contend against both the rudeness and barbarism of foreign invaders, and the intrigues and violence which attended the attempted intrusion into Christianity of Nestorianism and Monophysism. Can anything grander at that epoch be presented to the admiration of the world than the lives of such men as Innocent I., Bonifacius, Celestinus, Sixtus III., and Leo I.? The conversion of the barbarians, which began from the very first day of their irruptions, and the settlement of many questions between Italy and Greece, that is, between Rome and Constantinople, present afterwards to our gaze the noble figures of Felix II., Gelasius, Symmachus, John I., Agapetus, Sylverius, Vigilius, Pelagius, and at last Gregory the Great! Finally, the continuation of the struggle between the Pontiffs on the one side, and the Eastern Emperors and the Patriarchs of Constantinople on the other; the new relations, also, just beginning to exist between the Papacy and the Frankish kings, both of the Merovingian and Carolingian lines, continue to add to the list of Popes names of which Italy ought to have been forever proud.

For, the successors of Peter were evidently laboring not alone for the Church of God, but for the general good of mankind, particularly of Italy. And here it is needless to recall to the memory of the reader the long list of distinguished Popes, since it would be an insult to suppose him altogether ignorant of the lives of Zacharias, Stephen III., Hadrian I., Leo III., and the Pontiffs who immediately followed them. Who among men of culture has not read of the epoch of Charles Martel, Pepin, and Charlemagne?

But here begins, precisely, the period which is to be examined more closely. It has been already anteriorly remarked that the vexations the Church experienced from the old Roman empire, and consequently from the Byzantine also (which was only a continuation of the first), do not enter into our subject, because they did not influence, except very slightly, subsequent European history. On this account the ancient Europe which prepared the way for and produced the modern Europe of our day, dates only from what is called the beginning of the middle ages. In Italy it immediately followed the Carolingian epoch, and grew out of the troubled state of affairs consequent on the establishment of feudalism.

But it is proper to insist briefly on the fact that during more than nine hundred years after St. Peter's time, nearly all the Pontiffs who ruled over the Church at Rome were conspicuous for their noble deeds, and that all of them, without a single exception, were distinguished for the purity of their lives. They were elected by the Clergy and the people; and although the elective system has invariably proved, in all large countries where such a means of choosing civil rulers obtained, a source of confusion ending often in anarchy, it worked well for nearly a thousand years in the Church; so as to present the historic spectacle of more than one hundred successive spiritual rulers worthy of the respect of all mankind. The reader will soon perceive why the system of election by the people had to be discontinued, without any probability of its being ever revived. But compare this array of Pontiffs with any series of kings who ruled over nations of whatever race you select, and say if anything of the kind has ever been reproduced in the annals of mankind. Yet Italian rulers who had witnessed it, or who lived at least at the close of this grand period, were among the first opponents of it, and vied with Germany in the contest, or rather gave the first hint to future adversaries. The Church in the persons of the Popes was to find henceforth arrayed against her not pagan emperors of the cast of Decius or Diocletian, not fosterers of heresies like the immediate successors of Constantine, not barbarous half-Christian kings like the Lombard dynasty, but full-fledged Catholics, recognizing the Popes professedly as the Vicars of Christ, but bent on making them their tools, and introducing, as early as the

tenth century, all the deadly resources of hypocrisy, violence, hatred, which good men of our time are too apt to record as the exclusive character of this nineteenth century.

Feudalism, introduced chiefly by the Northmen, in spite of what many writers assert of its Roman or purely German origin, never had so firm a foothold in Italy as in the other European States. It flourished, however, during a few hundred years in the north of the peninsula, brought down thither probably by the Scandinavian Lombards, and in the southern half of it in the wake of the Normans. Tuscany was soon invaded by it, and from this beautiful country it naturally passed to the "Patrimony of St. Peter." It is proved beyond all cavil that Charles Martel, Pepin, and Charlemagne had successively granted this territory to the Popes as a means of supporting their dignity and preserving their independence of all civil rulers. Louis the Pious confirmed these grants and added to them.<sup>1</sup> The Popes of that age did not think that armies were required to guard their temporal authority. They relied on the Carolingian emperors to protect and preserve it as defenders of the Holy See. But at the breaking down of the Carolingian dynasty, the Pontiffs found themselves at the mercy of the feudal chieftains of Tuscany and of their own States. This is the simple truth, and it fully explains what followed.

The new state of things naturally brought disturbances into the Papal elections. At the death of every Pope factions arose. It is impossible to give in detail an account of these events. The only reasonable way of treating them, is to consider the chief causes of the popular commotions which constantly existed in the Papal States. The German emperors, degenerate successors of Charlemagne, always had a party in Rome. The Margraves of Tuscany were at the head of an opposite party. This last faction represented feudalism, pure and simple; and, unfortunately, the chiefs of it resided mainly in Rome. Adalbert was the first of those Margraves who openly proposed to himself to make the Papacy a kind of heirloom in his family, and the Popes themselves the vassals and tools of the secular ruler for the time being. He did it easily by controlling the Pontifical elections. One of his female relatives, Theodora, a known courtesan, but a brilliant one, obtained through Adalbert the chief power in the city; and her two daughters, worse than herself, Marozia and Theodora the younger, successively replaced her, and continued, like a dynasty of three Furies, a long reign of scandalous horrors and revolting crimes. On this subject, Cardinal Mathieu, in his *Pouvoir Temporel des Papes*, justly remarks:

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<sup>1</sup> See F. Lacombe's *Histoire de la Papauté*, t. 1, p. 472.

“No one ought to be surprised that in such circumstances as these, there have been bad Popes, but that there have been so few of them. God’s providence thought proper to try his Church by scandals, but scandals have always been a rare exception in the Chair of St. Peter, and virtue has constantly been the rule.”

The fact is, that in the numerous list of Pontiffs who are acknowledged to have been real Popes during the greater part of the tenth century—when their reigns were so short under the sway of Theodora and her daughters—only two or three have been really bad men. Some of those who, until lately, have been considered as among the worst, are now believed to have been calumniated by Luitprand, the sycophant of the German Emperors. John X. is undoubtedly one of them. Octavian even, the son of Alberic, known under the name of John XII., and regarded for a long time as the most profligate, appears almost like a great ruler when the slanders of Luitprand are set aside. Mr. F. Lacombe, in his *Histoire de la Papauté*, ought to be consulted on the subject. He speaks more plainly and consistently than Alzog.

But whatever view of the subject is taken, it is evident that the Church cannot be held responsible for these scandals. She was merely the victim of infamous princes who bore the name of Catholic, but were, in fact, worse foes to her than the most undisguised persecutors; and thus again we have in Italy the realization of the prediction of St. Augustine.

When the Margraves of Tuscany disappeared, after more than fifty years of abominable domination, the counts of Tusculum replaced them as disturbers of the peace. But, adopting a line of policy just the reverse of that of the former Margraves, they advocated the interests of the German Emperors. In order, however, that there should be two parties in the field, with a view, we suppose, to a continuation of the strife, Crescentius, Count of Sabina, the pretended first advocate of Italian nationality, rose in opposition to the Tusculan chieftains. The Papacy continued, therefore, a prey to faction and anarchy. The temporal power of the Popes, in fact, was lost, although they alone, among the contending factions, had on their side the real power, *de jure*. But it must be again insisted upon, that no reproach whatever can be cast upon the Church in all these disorganizing broils. It all came from the fact that in receiving their temporal authority from the Carolingians, the Popes gratefully accepted civil authority in Rome and the Papal States, but refused even to touch the sword, and take rank among the military powers of Europe. Who can blame them for it? Did they not act prudently in leaving the sword in the hand of Charlemagne and his successors? In the end they appeared to have leaned upon a reed which broke and pierced their hand. Whose fault was it?

Nevertheless God—as it was meet—took pity on his defenceless Church. As the first ray of the sun shining at last through the drifting clouds, seems speedily to allay the fury of the storm, so only at the appearance of a man of genius and piety, Sylvester II., the factions were lulled to rest, and the holy Emperor of Germany, Henry II., coming soon after, the great era of Gregory VII. was prepared to heal the bleeding wounds of the prostrate Church.

Strange to say, however, in that glorious epoch of Hildebrand, Alexander III., Innocent III., when the Papacy was acknowledged in Europe as the leading power, when Christendom appeared as a unit under the guiding hand of the Pontiffs, the petty factions of feudal chieftains still existed in Rome. The quarrels of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines continued to disturb the peace, and often obliged the Popes to leave the city. The opposite parties of the Emperors of Germany, of the kings of France, of various other rulers, went on, making of Rome occasionally a bloody battle-field; keeping the Popes often in prison, either in the Vatican, or in the Castle St. Angelo, or in some other fortress; giving, in fine, to the world the wonderful spectacle of the most powerful sovereign of Europe scarcely able to enjoy or command the peaceful submission of his immediate subjects.

This state of things became at last intolerable, especially during the violent resistance of Philip the Fair to the authority of the Church, so that the successor of Boniface VIII., Benedict XI., had to retire with his court to Perugia, where he could at least find rest. Rome was thus left at the mercy of two Roman families, the Orsini and the Colonna, who, not satisfied with ruling alternately by main force in the city of the Pontiffs, wished, by intriguing in the Pontifical elections, to become the real owners of the Popedom. It is said that Benedict XI. was poisoned to secure the success of some scheme or other. It is certain that when he died at Perugia, the Roman factions were directly transferred to that town of Umbria, in order to influence the election of his successor. Intrigues of every kind became so unscrupulous and violent that the Perugian people rose at last in opposition to the outrageous partisanship which threatened to render an election impossible. A French prelate was at last chosen, De Got, Archbishop of Bordeaux, principally to please Philip the Fair; and Clement V.—that was the name he took after being crowned Pope in Lyons—on being urged by the Cardinals to go to Rome, could easily convince them that it was impossible under the then present circumstances. The Papacy was then transferred to Avignon, and thus was produced the chief cause of the deplorable schism which followed.

From a study of this lamentable period of Church history, the causes which led to the so-called Reformation are clearly evident



to the reader of its annals. There is no doubt that among the bishops, the cardinals, the Popes even, of that epoch, there were unworthy dignitaries and rulers. But can their guilty conduct be attributed to the principles of the religion they professed to believe, and of which they ought to have been the guides by their virtues, as well as the teachers by their doctrine? Who can say that the Church was responsible for them? They were, in fact, her greatest enemies, worse than former persecutors; and St. Augustine, had he known them, would have placed them at the head of the City of Satan. But no sensible man can imagine that there were not at the same time in the Church virtuous and holy men, powerful preachers of the word of God, leading after them the multitude of the people for the reformation of their morals and the practice of the highest virtues. Any one who does not know this has only to read a detailed life of Vincent Ferrer, and from the powerful encouragement which he will perceive this holy man received from Popes, bishops, cardinals, princes, also dukes and kings, he will be led to the conclusion that the true Church of God possessed at that time a countless multitude of children worthy of her in all ranks of society, and that there was no need of such men as Luther, Calvin, Zwinglius, and their associates, to restore to the Bride of Christ her former beauty and loveliness.

They came, however, and by this time the most unintelligent reader of history must know what kind of faith and holiness the *Reformers* have introduced into Christianity. They have been the most powerful agents to give birth to the spirit of unbelief and lawlessness, so prevalent at this time, and which agrees so well with the position which secular rulers of nations have striven to give to the Church. Thus the object of this paper has been fully attained. The causes of the condition of things which we now witness are patent, and, instead of being attributable to Catholicity, they are for her a just subject of glory and honor. By her war of nineteen hundred years against the spirit of evil, she has saved the principles of the Gospel which would have perished ages ago if it had not been for the imperishable strength which God gave her, when he built her on the Rock against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

