SAINT ENNODIUS AND THE PAPAL SUPREMACY.

Gloomy and ill-boding were the auguries, poignant and desolating the scenes of grief amid which the year 500 was ushered in at the capital of the Christian world. Often before, no doubt, had the impious hands of ruthless persecutors placed a crown of sorrows on the fair brow of Christ's Church; but such cruelties and insults had mostly her avowed and detested enemies for their authors. Now she is wounded close to her very heart by professing friends, and the gaping rupture threatens her divinely-assured existence. A saintly and cultured Pontiff has been duly installed in the chair of St. Peter, and he is intensely loved by the great majority of his spiritual children. But that disrupting and paralyzing curse of Christendom, an Antipope, has fallen heavily, with all its pestiferous accompaniments, on the clergy and the people of the Sacred City, and has spread its abominations of intrigue, distrust, hatred and even murder everywhere, from the hallowed precincts of the churches and the renowned assembly of the Senate, to the lowest dens of infamy and the resorts of perjured slaves. Schism, in all conditions, is an evil of measureless mischief and malice; it saps the foundations of charity and makes wicked or deluded minds insensible to the ennobling influences of religion; it is an unnatural rebellion of selfish and stubborn children against a loving mother. Heaven stamps its progress with the unmistakable brand of reprobation, in the enormities that never fail to follow in its wake, and frequently visits its authors and fomentors with summary and shocking chastisement. But schism undisguised and foully aggressive, pacing the very sanctuaries and mounting the altar steps of the apostolic basilicas and threatening even to seize upon the Papal throne; schism, the outcome of an infamous bargain between the Eutychian Emperor Anastasius and the intriguing courtier Festus, to have the insidious and heretical Henotikon foisted on the acceptance of the bishops, priests and faithful by the purchased efforts of a pliable Pope; schism which bespattered the pavements of Rome with the blood of holy priests and devout laymen—such a schism, lasting for four years, was the direst culmination of all the indignities and terrors that the Church had yet been subjected to. True, even if the Almighty, in His inscrutable wisdom, had permitted the designing and unscrupulous pretender to establish himself in the chair of the Supreme Pontiff, Christ's promise would have still safeguarded the
See of Peter and the utterances of his successor against the contamina-
tion of heresy, however unworthy that successor might be of the exalted office and terrible responsibility thus recklessly undertaken. A signal example of such manifestly miraculous intervention of the divine power is presented in the somewhat analogous case of Vigilius, who is alleged to have secured the favor of the court of Con-
stantinople by a nefarious compact with the Empress Theodora, to have received and dealt out enormous money bribes in order to gain support in his disreputable candidature for the Papacy, and to have been a guilty accomplice in the imprisonment and starvation of Pope Silverius. Yet from the first moment when he was recognized as Bishop of Rome and Supreme Pontiff all his pronouncements were rigidly orthodox, and his stand in defense of the true doctrine was staunch and fearless. But when the faith and the flock are threat-
ened the pastors must recognize the stern necessity of obeying their Divine Master’s command—*Vigilate*. The guardians of the price-
less deposit of faith could not fold their arms and look idly on while a dastardly and corrupt combination was being organized to tamper with that heavenly treasure, to dislodge the divinely constituted Vicar of Christ, and to plant the false oracle of heresy in the chair of incorruptible truth. “The good shepherd giveth his life for his flock;” the wolves have entered into the sheepfold and must be ex-
pelled at any sacrifice. Nor is it bishops alone that are bound to defend the faith from injury and alloy. “He that will confess Me before men, him shall I confess before My Father who is in heaven” embraces every individual believing in Christ.

That the clouds of error and the storms of fierce conflict were soon put to flight, and that the spotless Spouse of the Redeemer emerged from the cruel ordeal with undiminished vigor and in all her pris-
tine lustre, was the unfailing effect of the divine promise: “Behold I am with you all days even unto the consummation of the world.” “Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” To meet such terrific crises God Almighty ever raises up some indomitable defender of truth, some intrepid champion of the rights and discipline of our holy religion, who carries the standard of the true faith unsullied through the stormiest struggles until a sweeping and decided victory restores peace and gives a new impulse to the activity of the Church. In the overwhelming troubles that darkened the dawn of the sixth century the hero of the strife and the triumphant upholder of the Papal prerogatives was Ennodius, to whose enlightened and noble champion-
ship history has accorded but a tardy and inadequate acknowledg-
ment. Thirteen centuries and a half had rolled by, from the death of this illustrious scholar and saint, before full and well merited promi-
nence, in the view of the whole Christian world for all time, was con-
ceded to him by the Ecumenical Council of the Vatican. There his
teaching and his theses on the supremacy of the Holy See received
the highest conceivable sanction of infallible approval, and his name
was bracketed with those of Leo the Great, Athanasius, Cyril,
Gregory the Great, Avitus and, in modern times, Alphonsus Liguori
as a brilliant defender of this revealed and no longer debatable
truth. The learned Baronius is enthusiastic in his just praise of the
author of the "Apologia:" "His words deserve to be engrossed in
letters of gold on that dark page in the Church's history."

Pope Anastasius, in the year 498, deputed two cultured and trust-
worthy bishops to accompany to Constantinople Festus the Patri-
cian, who was proceeding to the imperial court on affairs of the
State. These prelates were the bearers of an important Papal letter
addressed to the Emperor and imploring him to dissociate himself
from the partisans of the late patriarch, Acacius, who had gone to
his final account under the anathema of the Church, and to return
to that warm and pronounced allegiance to Christ's vicar which he
had so constantly displayed before his accession to the throne. So
far was the Emperor from permitting himself to be gained over to
the cause of religion that he even succeeded in securing from Festus
a solemn undertaking to use all his powerful influence, in the church
and at court, to have the Henotikon adopted and approved by the
Pope and the Western bishops. This Henotikon, it will be remem-
bered, was a most seductive document, drawn up by Zeno at the dic-
tation of Acacius, professedly in the interests of peace and union,
but implicitly heretical, since it ignored the Ecumenical Council of
Chalcedon.

Before the return of Festus, however, Pope Anastasius had died,
and already speculation was keen on the subject of a successor. Festus
saw that if his unworthy projects and schemes were to have any
chance of success it would be by the election of a Popewho would
owe his elevation to his support and who would promise him to
effectuate his engagements to the Emperor. On the 22d of Novem-
ber, 498, the Archdeacon Symmachus, a native of Sardinia, and at-
tached to the Constantine Basilica or St. John of Lateran's, as it was
afterwards called, was duly consecrated Pope in that church, having
been elected, according to custom, by the vast majority of the clergy
and people. But Festus had utilized with effect the short interval
from his return, and in the words of Nicephorus quoted by Baronius,
"he had corrupted a certain number of the clergy who gave their
votes to Laurence, a Roman priest." Thus there were two conse-
crated, the deacon Symmachus, elected by the larger number (and
already promoted to the priesthood), and Laurence, supported by
the minority. On the very same morning, while the true Vicar of Christ was receiving the episcopal ordination and Apostolic commission as Bishop of Rome and Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, the turbulent and corrupt schismatics were setting up a rock of scandal by the uncanonical and criminal consecration of the Antipope in the Basilica of St. Mary Major. Festus was in the zenith of his power; he had just delivered to Theodoric the Emperor's official letter under his great seal, recognizing his status as King of Italy. Though he had been already acknowledged as such by his own Ostrogoths and by the conquered Italians, this formal acknowledgment of his royal dignity by the Emperor of the East added a fresh lustre to his power and prestige, while it removed all fear of molestation. To Festus, as the trusted bearer of this important message, enhanced importance and increased influence naturally accrued, and he was not slow to improve the opportunity thus offered by representing that he was commissioned by the Emperor to endeavor to heal the religious differences that distracted the churches of the East, and to bring about a clear understanding and perfect harmony between the East and the West, Constantinople and the Holy See. Owing to the praiseworthy and urgent nature of the momentous task he professed his anxiety and power to achieve, he succeeded in deluding, by false pretences, many holy ecclesiastics; bribery was a more potent weapon to overcome the objections of the less upright.

The ecclesiastical histories deal with this critical conjuncture in the affairs of the Church in so confused and misleading a manner that it is only by a careful comparison of the Letters of Ennodius on the subject that we can arrive at a clear conception of the sequence of events. For instance, we are informed that the schism continued for four years, and in the next sentence or so it is stated that both sides in the prolonged dispute agreed to submit their jarring claims to the arbitration of Theodoric. Both these statements are undoubtedly accurate, but it was immediately after the election that the joint appeal was addressed to the King, praying him to intervene and promising cheerful submission to his judgment. The following are the words of the Libor Pontificalis: "After a long discussion the rival parties agreed that the two Pontiffs should go to Ravenna to submit their case to the judgment of the King, Theodoric. The equitable principle enunciated by the King was this: 'The Apostolic See belongs by right to him who was first ordained or who obtained the larger number of votes.' His opponents could not resist manifest facts, and it had to be admitted that Symmachus had received the majority of votes. He took possession of the chair of St. Peter." This obviously just decision did not, however, crush the revolt or
restore tranquillity. Open resistance was abandoned for dark conspiracies and squalid calumny.

All this took place during the winter of 498, and in March, 499, a council was convoked by order of Symmachus, under whose presidency as undisputed Head of the Church 72 bishops, 67 priests and 5 deacons assembled in St. Peter's Basilica. The decrees of this council are followed by the signatures, first, of the Supreme Pontiff: "I, Coelius Symmachus, Bishop of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, have subscribed these synodal decrees, approved and confirmed by my authority," in the second place, by the bishops; and, thirdly, at the head of the list of priests' signatures, appears that of the Antipope: "I, Coelius Laurence, archpriest of the title of Saint Praxedes, have subscribed, with my full consent, these synodal decrees, and I swear to remain faithful to them." We shall see how lightly this solemn oath sat on the conscience of the arch-disturber; but the direct aim of our narrative and the order of the salient facts demand that we should first briefly review the motives and manner of the advocacy of the Papal rights by Ennodius, whose historic oration was not the only testimony of his whole-hearted zeal. He threw himself into the contest from the very outset with a devotedness and perseverance that obstacles and dangers were powerless to shake or thwart.

Magnus Felix Ennodius was a native of Arles, where he first saw the light in 473. His family, like most of the nobility of France in those days, was connected with many illustrious houses of Rome and of other cities of the now fallen and dismembered Empire. While still very young he was taken to Milan by a rich aunt who resided there and by whose generosity his gifted mind received all the available advantages of a splendid education. If we accept as unexaggerated recitals of facts his somewhat startling accusations of himself in a work framed on the model of St. Augustine's Confessions, we can hardly regard his boyhood as a fit prelude to that after life of sanctity and self-sacrifice that has gained for him an honored place on the Calendar of Saints. He inherited his aunt's attenuated fortune, which was so notably augmented by the dowry he received with the lady he married while he was but a little over 16 years of age that he describes this latter accession to his material wealth as incomparably greater than what remained of his aunt's property and legacies. Ex mendico in regem mutatus sum. At 20 he was attacked by a malignant and lingering disease which was the turning point in his life. His wife entered warmly into his new views and showed her earnestness by embracing the religious life and entering a convent forthwith. Ennodius devoted himself with characteristic ardor to a thorough preparation for Holy Orders, and received deaconship at

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the age of 21. Laurentius, Archbishop of Milan, then entrusted to
him the supervision of the hospitals, the care of the poor of the city
and the management and custody of the Cathedral revenues. In
addition to these onerous and engrossing duties, he conducted a
most successful school, mainly frequented by the youth of the aris-
tocracy and including in its programme the humanities and the
rudiments of the art of eloquence. He became Bishop of Pavia in
511, was twice employed as Papal Envoy to Constantinople and died
in the prime of life in 520. His memory is honored by the Church
on the 17th of July, the anniversary of his edifying death. Popes
Nicholas the First and John the Eighth speak of him as the "great"
and "glorious confessor."

To justify the character and to appreciate the value of Ennodius' 
well directed efforts in the early stages of this momentous contest
between Pope Symmachus and his unscrupulous rival, it is neces-
sary to consider the disorganized and venal condition to which civil
and judicial administration had been reduced by the recent civil
wars. Thierry assures us that the improbity of judges was so gen-
eral that the vice had to be reckoned with in all important cases; and
Ennodius himself, though in his profession of advocate at the public
bar, which he followed for many years, he never accepted briefs in
any but transparently just cases, often found what we may bluntly
call bribery of the unfriendly judges a regrettable necessity. With
this ungainly aspect of public morality we are not brought into im-
mediate contact, fortunately, in this bitter and protracted struggle;
but we can very easily infer from the spirit of venality that every-
where prevailed how necessary it was to have abundance of money
at ready command to purchase the good offices of the needy court-
tiers at Ravenna in order to secure a satisfactory hearing from the
King. When the ready cash at the disposal of Ennodius out of his
own personal resources was exhausted by the enormous expenses
of which we shall learn more as we proceed and on gratuituities of
the nature just indicated, his credit as the owner of immense property
and of an honorable name was sufficient to cover as a guarantee of
repayment all the advances that were needed.

The Pope, on the other hand, stood in a position of helpless penury, the chief sources of revenue to the Roman churches being
in possession of his reckless adversaries. It is touchingly edifying,
however, to observe from the statements of Ennodius that the Holy
Father, in the midst of all his anxieties and the most pressing de-
mands for money to meet expenses incurred on his personal account,
ever permitted to be touched the small but sacred reserve which he
retained in inviolable trust for the deserving poor. Even now, after
the lapse of 1,400 years, those energetic and withal graceful letters
of Ennodius to the Deacon Hormisdas, who afterwards filled with dignity and distinction the Papacy he was now defending against faction and fraud, and to the upright and scholarly Luminosus, who acted in the capacity of chancellor to the Pope, are replete with interest and instruction. At first blush a forcibly worded appeal to the Head of the Church to discharge money liabilities contracted on his behalf and with his knowledge suggests a scandalous laxity in a quarter where the whole world is to look for guidance in example as well as in word, especially in reference to admitted claims of justice. The writer very properly defends the urgency of his repeated applications on the ground that it is Laurence, the Bishop of Milan, that is pressing for repayment, and he even goes so far as to say that he is prepared to fully reimburse that prelate out of his own pocket if all else fail. We must remember that the abnormal exigences of the Pope's hampered position amply warranted a delay; and, secondly, that the guarantor nowhere expresses a doubt as to the demands of justice being satisfied in the end. The amount of which there is question in the following instructive quotation from a letter to Hormisdas was due to Ennodius himself, but is not very urgently demanded back:

"Some short time ago, while we were overwhelmed with anxiety and were still uncertain of the favor of our pious King and in doubt as to the judgment he might pronounce on the accusations with which the Pope was charged, I handed over all my numerous camels to you to be given to His Holiness the Pope, with this stipulation, that if the animals themselves were not necessary (presumably for conveying the Papal equipage from Rome to Ravenna) their value should be realized and their price, as fairly estimated, be restored to me. Independently of this transaction, His Holiness is fully acquainted with the fact that, to the very best of my ability, I have on all occasions relieved, at your request, the pressing needs of our holy Roman Church. In return, kindly do me the favor of recalling to the memory of the Pope, just now, the facts of the negotiation I allude to. I would request you also respectfully to make known to me the result of your interview. I have every confidence that neither the Pontiff of the Apostolic See nor you who worthily discharge the office of intermediary can entertain on the question any other views or intentions than such as are in consonance with our stipulated agreement and with justice."

This modest and diffident epistles sheds a flood of light on the devotedness of our Saint to the Holy See; almost single-handed and at enormous risk he sacrificed his peace of mind, he expended all his money, mortgaged his vast estates, devoted his brilliant talents and staked his wide popularity and distinguished name in the disinter-
ested and weary work of defending the rights and liberty of the Supreme Pontiff. It is with a heavy heart and a keen sense of the cold ingratitude of the Pope's entourage for all his unspiring efforts and lavish expenditure in the sacred cause with which their sympathies and interests were so closely bound up that he pens the scathing but just reminder: "Cui mos est pia jugiter facere, justa non despiciet, et qui largitum proprium aliena non subtrahet."

In a letter to Luminosus he further discloses to us, by a palpable and concrete illustration, the endless exertions he had made, and this statement he writes in no boastful or glory-seeking spirit, but from sheer compulsion: "Both through my communications and directly from the mouth of our revered Bishop of Milan himself you have been made aware that he claims the repayment to him of those sums that were expended at Ravenna in the interest of our Holy Father. This expenditure, absolutely necessary to meet the requirements of the case, exceeded in the aggregate 400 gold pieces, distributed in varying sums to influential personages whose names it would be impolitic and wrong to disclose. Now, these large amounts were advanced by my bishop, Lawrence, on my personal security; and I cannot reconcile myself to appearing in his presence with unabashed boldness until I shall have obtained, as I have every confidence I shall obtain, through your kind offices and mediation, a thorough fulfilment of the promises given. Should you think my claim either extravagant in itself or disrespectfully asserted, then I shall discharge out of my own resources every fraction that the revered bishop has been good enough to advance, and for the reimbursement of which I alone am bailsman. I hold in my possession the Pope's letter, wherein he authorized all necessary expenses to be defrayed under my note of hand." It is consoling to reflect that, slender as were the revenues and impoverished the exchequer of the Holy See at this trying crisis, the principal at least and probably the interest, too, at the current rate had been duly discharged in the interval between the date of this last quoted letter and that of his application to be indemnified for the sale of his camels and for expenditures of his own money. But numerous were the messages and urgent the appeals on each of three occasions at least conveyed by a confidential courier, who was to bring back the coin, before the heavy debt was liquidated. In turn he invoked the aid of Luminosus, Hormisdas and the Deacon Dioscurus to give effect to his demand. To Luminosus he addresses language of piteous entreaty: "You promised that the repayment of these necessary expenses advanced by your request would be forthcoming without any avoidable delay; but, in punishment for my faults, some hidden destiny has always interposed an obstacle. The Bishop importunes me with
such urgent pressure that he scarcely allows me time to despatch a
special messenger to the Holy City. After God, the matter is now
in your hands."

The second projected visit of Symmachus to Ravenna to counter-
act the effect and to demonstrate the groundlessness of the filthy
charges trumped up against him, as he had already appeared there
with striking success to defend the validity of his election, must have
taken place in the winter of 499, if the design was ever carried into
execution. That ample means were provided for that express pur-
pose we know, and that the ministers and courtiers at Ravenna were
kept posted on the nature and extent of the foul means adopted by
the partisans of the Antipope to compass their nefarious designs we
likewise know. But we are not in possession of such explicit state-
ments or precise data as would justify the assertion that the visit
actually took place. Two important and undeniable facts point in
the opposite direction; the appointment of a visiting bishop to in-
vestigate the charges in the beginning of the year 500 and the visit
of the King himself in the September of the same year. The mal-
contents did journey to Ravenna to prefer their calumnious charges,
and succeeded in carrying their point for the time. They convinced
the King that they were proceeding according to the requirements
of Canon Law and were easily able to adduce instances in which the
Pope had himself appointed a visitor to take cognizance of charges
alleged against bishops. What the Supreme Pontiff had put in
force against others they argued he could not object to submit to
himself. The King, being himself an Arian and only superficially
acquainted with the constitution and ordinances of the Catholic
Church, was in good faith convinced of the seeming reasonableness
of their contention. Thus was the Roman Pontiff sought to be
placed on the same level with other bishops, which was a direct and
emphatic denial of the supremacy of the Holy See. All the un-
wearying vigilance and energetic precautions of Ennodius failed to
prevent the tricky intriguers from snatching this far-reaching con-
cession from the unsuspecting King. Had the case been presented
with that lucidity and cogency of reasoning on behalf of the Pope
that Ennodius displays in his Apologia, even a temporary triumph
could not have been scored by his opponents thus, seemingly by
chance. But chance is a pseudonym and a misleading one; it was
by a wise and happy disposition of Providence, who can ever make
passing evils the occasion of lasting good. It was to this event that
the immortal "Apologia" owed its origin; and it was this event and
its immediate consequences that opened the eyes of the bishops of
the world to the glaring outrage of subjecting the recognized suc-
cessor of St. Peter to such an indignity and injustice; and it was this
event that drew from Avitus and the other Bishops of Gaul their noble and memorable protest.

It is important to observe that there were as many as five councils summoned at Rome in connection with this calamitous struggle. The dates of the councils enable us to fix, with tolerable accuracy, the time and duration of most of the other incidents. We have seen that the first of the assemblies met on the 1st of March, 499. Of this council two canons are extant and incorporated in the legislation of the Church. They are both conversant with Papal elections, and enact the extreme penalties of deposition and excommunication against priests, deacons or inferior clergy who enter into cabals or adopt corrupt means to further the cause of any aspirant, and they seal with the Church’s approval the wise principles followed by Theodoric in favor of the majority of votes. At the close of this council the too indulgent Pontiff canonically appointed the hypocritical Laurence to the bishopric of Nuceria; and we gather from Ennodius that, concealing his unsatisfied ambition and his dark designs, he departed from Rome and took possession of his see. It is pretty obvious that the new and execrable trick of endeavoring to oust the legitimate Pope by bringing against him vile, calumnious charges must have been started and worked with malignant persistency from the very moment of the Antipope’s departure from the city. For Baronius and other reliable authorities prove to a demonstration that a second council, of which the acts have not been preserved, was held soon after Easter of 500, and that the visitor and Antipope were there deposed and excommunicated. It was, therefore, in the winter of 499 that, yielding to the entreaties of Faustus, Probinus and many other influential personages, the King approved of the nomination of Peter, Bishop of Altinum, to inquire into the alleged charges. The Liber Pontificalis has the following summary:

“Some intriguing clerics and certain Senators with Festus and Probinus at their head formulated an indictment against Symmachus and suborned false witnesses, whom they sent to Ravenna, there to make their depositions. In the meantime they secretly recalled Laurence and published throughout Rome the various articles of the impeachment. The schism was revived; some of the clergy adhered to the communion of Symmachus, others to that of Laurence. The Senators Faustus and Probinus addressed an appeal to the King and employed all their efforts to obtain from him that he would appoint a visitor to the Apostolic See. The King named Peter, Bishop of Altinum, for that office—a measure opposed to the canons.”

The visitor was expressly directed in the commission given him by the King to report himself to the Pope directly on his arrival in
Rome, but instead of doing so he at once publicly identified himself with the party of revolt, forgetting his official character of impartial judge as well as his duty as a bishop in communion with the Holy See. "It was, undoubtedly," says Ennodius, "the King's explicit desire that the visitor should bring to Rome not dissension and discord, but harmony and peace. He clearly foresaw that if he did not fortify this unfortunate man with the most precise instructions for his guidance, the contagion of your envenomed artifices would soon make of him a corrupt supporter of faction. Because it is written: The simple man believes in every word. Consequently he defined for him a line of conduct and imposed upon him a solemn obligation not to deviate from it. These instructions directed the visitor to present himself at the Basilica of St. Peter's as soon as he would have reached the city of Rome. This was nothing more or less than to embody in a royal order the wishes of the Holy Father himself. Who, then, would have conceived for a moment that a bishop, even if the secular authorities had forbidden it, would have failed to conform to those pious rules and customs that the prince himself did not believe himself exempted from complying with? The visitor was bound to pay his respects to the Pope and to request him in a personal interview to deliver over his slaves; he was bound to give him an undertaking that the said slaves would not be put to the torture, but would be kept in safe custody to be heard by the council in the process of the investigation." These slaves belonged to the Pope's household, and were alleged by his accusers to be in possession of incriminating information. "From the very beginning of his mission this visitor was circumvented by intriguers and, so far from being a messenger of peace, was transformed into a brand of discord. Without so much as the formality of a visit to St. Peter's—invisis beati Apostoli liminis—he gives himself up to be blindly conducted by the caprice of your fury; and that temple—the centre of strength and authority for all other churches—which attracts the faithful from all corners of the earth; that temple your visitor passes by close to its very porticoes, but condescends not to enter. He, a mere commissioner of investigation, is too grand to approach the supreme court of the Church. That branch severed from the stem left no room for hope, from that instant, that it would produce good fruit. You have refused to permit your visitor to avail of the privilege of approaching those hallowed precincts, filled as they are with ennobling memories, fearing that he might perchance detach himself from your crawling errors if he knelt in homage before that august sanctuary of St. Peter's confession. You cannot, therefore, screen yourselves behind the royal authority which you have flouted in its very first ordinance; already doomed objects
of the wrath of heaven, you have merited in addition the severest chastisement from the King, whose explicit directions you have maliciously infringed."

The reader cannot fail to observe with what prudent deftness the accomplished orator contrives to extol the foresight and fairness of Theodoric, while at the same time he proceeds to show, with characteristic force of argument, that the appointment of a visitor by the King or by any other authority, civil or religious, was directly opposed to the canons and to the most elementary laws of the constitution of the hierarchy. As has been already remarked, the existence of a visitor with power to bring the accusations against Pope Symmachus formally before a council or so-called high court supposed to possess jurisdiction over him was an explicit negation of the Papal supremacy. But while he heaps compliments upon the King with royal profusion, though with cultivated delicacy, he is much more eloquent in his tribute of eulogy to the tomb of the Apostles. In contrasting the conduct of the visitor with that of the millions of pilgrims that come from the ends of the earth to do reverence to the Vicar of Christ and to reinvigorate their faith and zeal on the spot where Saints Peter and Paul preached the true doctrine and sealed it with their blood, he proposes the objection: "Perhaps you will say it is doing an injury to the dignity and power of those denizens of heaven to imagine that their influence is confined to any one particular place on earth." And he proceeds: "Prayer, it is true, is heard, no matter in what part of the world it is offered; the faith and devotion of the suppliant make the martyr present by knowledge wherever he is invoked. But who will venture to deny that the saints are more deeply loved in the land of their birth, or that they are more tenderly reverenced and more confidently invoked on the spot where they sacrificed their lives to be received into God's everlasting presence? Our Redeemer, I admit, makes the entire world the theatre of His stupendous miracles, but the countless crowds of pilgrims that throng to this glorious monument have invested it with unrivaled honor and prestige. He who can change carnal man into an angel can assuredly endow with special blessings one particular corner of the earth."

We are still quoting from the sublime and immortal Apologia, and as this is the most appropriate place to examine the answer of Ennodius to the argument that secured from the King his approval of the uncanonical nomination of a visitor, we shall give the orator's own statements and reasoning, even at the risk of making the quotation rather lengthy. The momentous character of the question at issue and the unanswerable cogency of the reasons adduced are, it is hoped, a sufficient excuse.
“The Pope, they argue, assigns visitors in case of other bishops, and common justice requires that he should be himself bound by the law of which he is the author. Let us see if that proposition can be defended in canon law. Now, I have no wish to accuse them of wilfully contradicting the known truth; I will not directly denounce them as liars. I will content myself with affirming that the legislator is not subject to his own law; if the prince is not above the laws that he enacts for his subjects, it is vain to invoke his authority to have these laws executed.” It is the same line of argument as that of St. Thomas. No man can be subject to himself; hence his enactments can only possess for him a directive force; the punitive and coactive elements are wanting. It is this directive force that Ennodius designates the law written in the heart or conscience. “There remains for him the law of his conscience, a law written in the hearts of all of us and which fails not to direct the man who is exempt from all other laws. Of his own uncoerced motion he embraces that virtue with which no fear of punishment imposes upon him compliance. When there is question of others, God has willed that they should be judged by their fellow-men; but in regard to the Pontiff of the Holy See, He has reserved the judgment to Himself in the most absolute manner. Sedis istius prasulém suo sine quasíone reservavit arbitrio. It is the Divine will that the successors of Saint Peter should be amenable to heaven alone, and that they should bring before the Supreme Judge a conscience that no earthly authority has had jurisdiction to examine. If they are guilty, imagine not that they are exempt from fear; their own conscience and the ever-present Deity, whom nothing can escape, are constant witnesses of all their actions.” They can say with David, Tibi soli peccavi.

“But, you will object, every man is in this position; he has his conscience to accuse him when he goes wrong and God to condemn him if he perseveres in his guilt. My answer to this is brief and conclusive: It was only to one man and his successors that the Divine Redeemer said: Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram edificabo ecclesiam meam. Quidquid solveris super terram, erit solutum et in caulis. I will add that the verdict of the saints since the foundation of the Church proclaims the dignity of the Pontiffs of the Holy See as an object of veneration throughout Christendom, since the universal fold of Christ is subject to it and lovingly accepts its sweet yoke. This see is named the central and the chief see of the whole world, and to Rome may be applied the exclamation of the prophet Isaiah: ‘If she is humbled, to whom will you have recourse? Where will you leave your glory?’”

These are some of the words that the learned Baronius very justly remarks “ought to be engraved in letters of gold,” and our readers
will agree that their author deserves a more prominent place and higher praise than our historians have hitherto given him. A few of his hymns, especially the beautiful ode on the holy virgin Euphemia, are referred to with scant eulogy; we are informed that his Apologia was approved by the Pope and the Roman Synod and ordered to be inserted among the acts of the Council, and some of the unappreciative notices add that his style was labored and turgid. Thus is relegated to undeserved obscurity one of the most devoted sons of the Church since the days of the Apostles; an unselfish and powerful supporter of the Roman Pontiff by purse and pen, by material succor and by the gift of eloquence, in the hour of sore and trying necessity; a bright and shining light; a beacon on the hilltops of the distant past as a signal of the Church's infallible security. His conclusions have been crystallized into unchangeable dogma by the Vatican Council. “Si quis dixit non esse ex ipsius Christi Domini institutione seu jure Divino ut beatus Petrus in primatu super universam ecclesiam habeat perpetuos successores; seu Romanum Pontificem non esse beati Petri in codem primatu successorem: anathema sit.” “Si quis dixit Romanum Pontificem non habere plenam et supremam potestatem jurisdictionis in Universam Ecclesiam, non solum in rebus quae ad fidem et mores, sed etiam in eis quae ad disciplinam et regimen Ecclesiae per totum orbeem diffusae pertinent; aut hanc potestatem non esse ordinariam et immediatam sive in omnes et singulas ecclesias, sive in omnes et singulos pastores et fideles: anathema sit.”

A question will have naturally suggested itself to the reader before he has reached this stage of the proceedings: what were the charges preferred against the Pope? That they were worthy of the criminal gang that invented and propagated the calumnies he will have already suspected. In the histories, where even the most meagre account of the schism appears, it is surmised that one, and the one most dwelt upon, of the allegations accused the saint of leading a scandalous life. It is for this reason that his slaves are so frequently alluded to, as his enemies pretended that they could depose to the irregularity of his conduct. Now, a slave's oath was not accepted as conclusive evidence, according to the canon or the civil law of the day, unless the deponent was subjected to torture, and, naturally enough, the malignèd Pontiff refused to hand over the slaves to be tampered with by his calumniators; but he voluntarily undertook to present himself, to allow the examination of every member of his household and to facilitate the acquisition of evidence in every way in his power when the conditions he insisted on as preliminary to his submitting himself to judgment were first fulfilled. The principal of the conditions was that the Papal estates that had been wrested from him by gross violence
and glaring injustice and the Church revenues and personal income that had been similarly seized upon and misappropriated should be restored to him, as he had been pronounced by the King and by the Council legitimate Pontiff and hence the rightful owner or administrator. In other words, he claimed that, in accordance with the canons, everything should be placed in status quo ante, and that then he would answer all charges, however foul, that his adversaries might bring against him. We shall see that, at the King's suggestion, he waived even this reasonable and legal demand, and thus covered his calumniators with confusion and disgrace. Nor ought we to feel staggered by the filthy accusations hurled against this holy and pure ecclesiastic. St. Athanasius and many other saints before and since his day, men of angelic chastity, had to suffer cruelly for the time from similar nasty calumnies, but their terrific ordeals only added new gems to the glorious crowns that awaited them. A disappointed rival without a conscience is dominated by unbridled passions, and an Antipope most faithfully represents on earth the leader of the first rebellion in heaven. His counsel to his disappointed partisans is forcibly expressed by the great author of Paradise Lost:

> Our better part remains
> To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
> What force effected not; that He no less
> At length from us may find, Who overcomes
> By force, hath overcome but half his foe.

It is a singular and a striking fact that neither in the exhaustive reply of Ennodius nor in the acts of any of the councils are the counts of indictment particularized. But the cause of their silence is not far to seek; other allegations they would specify, but a charge of incontinence, however clearly disproved, they shrank from mentioning in connection with the Holy See or its revered occupant. Ennodius, in a very elevated and eloquent passage, alludes to "abominable inventions which ought to be buried in eternal oblivion," and to "accusations so scurvy that their very recital would defile the tongue and taint the atmosphere." And in another passage his eloquence is as telling in effect as it is sublime in conception; he introduces St. Paul as addressing to the accusers those apposite words of his Epistle to the Romans: "You accuse others of perversity, you who are yourselves filled with injustice, with fornication, with avarice, with malice and with envy; laden with murders, always ready to condemn, tricky and jealous. You remind us that nobody ought to hold communication with fornicators, and you are not ashamed to allow all the world to see yourselves in the company and train of the adulterer, Laurence, you vile instruments, which he uses at will to spread his poisons and to expand the area of infection."
And whilst you move in that pestilent company, while you carry the badge of that corrupt rebel, you impute it as a crime to the priests of the Lord to remain attached to the old communion. You pretend to judge us culpable in communicating with a Pontiff whom you have accused no doubt, but whom not an atom of evidence is forthcoming to convict, while you yourselves associate with a man whom the Sacred Scriptures smite with a two-edged sword." These passages leave no room for reasonable doubt as to the nature of the imputations, and the inference they so clearly suggest becomes perfectly irresistible in face of the fact that Pope Symmachus himself, hoping to save others equally guiltless from such foul accusations, got a most extraordinary decree passed in solemn council immediately after peace had been restored, and insisted on its being observed rigidly not by bishops alone, but by priests and deacons as well. In its original form it was devised to safeguard the character of bishops only—Præceptum quo jussi sunt omnes episcopi cellulanos habere. The Bishop of Milan, in a pastoral letter, which Ennodius mentions and quotes from at great length elsewhere, expressly states that this surprising legislation had been dictated by motives of prudence, in consequence of the calumnies to which the Pontiff of the Apostolic See had been subjected, and the incalculable scandal that had been caused by their circulation. "We must take into account," says the sage and holy bishop, "that some people will be found to believe a thing as long as it is a possibility even; we remove all scandalum infirmorum by making such conduct on the part of clerics impossible; this is secured by having present at all times a companion or witness. Those whose revenues do not permit of their keeping a second priest in the house with them, sleeping in the same apartment at night, can arrange with others in the neighborhood similarly circumstanced, so that two may have their beds in the same or in adjoining rooms. Outside the females sanctioned by the canons, let no woman, especially one unconnected with the house, be admitted save on strict business, and, that over, let her at once depart, lest the reputation even of the most innocent should be compromised."

Again in the passage of the Apologia where the auditor notices, with biting sarcasm, the sneering reference of the opposite party to the class of people that flocked around the venerable Pontiff on his way to stand his trial, he conveys pretty clearly that the Pope's revilers had hinted at unworthy and disreputable motives engendering their sympathy. It is needless to say that the poor and destitute were the special beneficiaries, as they have always been, of the Supreme Pontiff's generosity and the most attached and devoted to his person. Hence when they saw their beloved Bishop and bene-
factor proceeding to the council, to be there charged by his malign-
"nent and crime-stained enemies with abominations of which they
knew him to be perfectly innocent, it is no wonder that they gath-
ered around him, with frantic manifestations of their grief and in-
dignation.

But the matter is placed entirely outside the pale of doubt or con-
jecture by a document known as the Manuscript of Verona, dis-
covered about 200 years ago and published in a Roman edition of the
lives of certain Popes by a learned compiler named Mianchini. This
production is undoubtedly authentic, in the less rigid sense of that
word, its author's name being unknown. It was written about the
time of the unfortunate schism we are dealing with, and is obviously
the work of a strong partisan of the Antipope, as mendacious as it is
scurrilous. Since it does not appear to have attracted the notice of
most Catholic historians, some extracts from it may prove interest-
ing. The bolder and more enlightened policy, approved by our
present illustrious Pontiff, is never to shrink from publishing gen-
uine historical facts and documents, with due distinction of the true
and the false. Our Church has nothing to fear and everything to
gain from an impartial investigation of all traditional and docu-
mentary evidence. "All the pick of the clergy and all the more
worthy Senators supported Laurence, who was ordained according
to the canons." This statement is an unexaggerated sample of the
whole tone and tenor of the Verona Manuscript. In narrating the
details of the pleading before the King in Ravenna on behalf of
Symmachus it attributes, as we might expect, the royal decision to
bribery, though it is utterly repugnant to the estimate all historians
form and convey of that Prince's uprightness, to conceive him
guilty of corruption. Had he been open to the acceptance of a bribe,
Festus was both willing and able to offer him any amount he might
name. Another charge is that of heterodox views on the Paschal
question; but, as Ennodius deals with this insinuation so summarily,
we assume it is only introduced to account for the alleged sojourn
of Symmachus at Ravenna to test his orthodoxy. The story hangs
so loosely together that its character of fiction is apparent in almost
every sentence.

"Numerous crimes brought about, after some years, the impeach-
ment of Symmachus before the King. There was special question
of the Paschal Feast, which he celebrated at a different time from
that observed by the great body of the faithful. The King sum-
mowed him to his presence to give some explanation of this diversity
of practice, and obliged himself and the clergy in his immediate
entourage to abide at Rimini for some time, with a view to testing
their orthodoxy on this point. One evening, as Symmachus was
taking a walk on the seashore, he noticed certain women pass along
that he was accused of being too familiar with. They were pro-
ceeding to the palace by the King’s express orders. Without re-
vealing to anybody that his fears were aroused by what he had re-
marked, he kept perfectly quiet all night, and then, protected by the
darkness, he drove rapidly to Rome and concealed himself within
the walls of his palace. The clergy who had been his companions
protested to the King that they had neither cognizance nor sus-
picion of his intended flight. Then the King gave them a mandate
to be conveyed to the Senate and the clergy, ordering them to take
immediate steps to secure the Pontiff’s condemnation and punish-
ment.”

Now, if this silly invention rested on the smallest basis of solid
fact, is it conceivable that the King would have visited the culprit in
state on the occasion of his triumphal entry into Rome and have
maintained the most cordial relations with him for many years after?
Is it likely that an Arian Prince would have given himself any worry
about the differences in the Catholic Church in regard to the cele-
bration of Easter? Would historians have formed a conspiracy of
silence on the subject and have spared Symmachus alone, while
they invariably exposed such practices no matter by whom else they
were followed? But such trashy fictions were quite capable, in the
circumstances, of misleading the crowd, who paused not to weigh
the probabilities of the case and were absolutely at the mercy of un-
verified hearsay. Newspapers and telegraph wires were undreamt
of; hence contradictions did not follow in hot haste, as they do now,
on the heels of lying gossip.

“They accused him, in the second place, of having squandered
recklessly the revenues of the Church, in direct contravention of
canonical prohibitions, decreed by his predecessors. He had, there-
fore, incurred the censures attaching to such acts of expenditure.
But what contributed most effectively to pull the mask off his pre-
tended uprightness was the infamous Conditaria, as she was called
in the city, and his open trafficking in holy orders for a fixed price
in money. Thus it happened that up to the death of that Pontiff the
Roman Church continued in a state of schism.” This last assertion
is directly contradicted by the statement occurring earlier in the
document that “after four years Laurence, of his own motion, to pre-
vent the recurrence of the horrid scenes of civil war, retired to a
country residence of the patrician Festus, and passed the rest of his
days in self-abnegation of the most exemplary order.” That this re-
tirement from the belligerent and tumultuous life he had been lead-
ing in the city was not resolved upon quite “of his own motion” is
obvious from another passage of the same unreliable production:
“The King enjoined on the patrician Festus strict orders to restore all the churches to the regular government and dependence of Symmachus, and to tolerate only one Pontiff at Rome.” This royal mandate was issued in 503, after the fourth council presided over by the lawful Pope, and its publication was a most crushing answer to the lying and filthy calumnies with which his enemies sought to sully his high reputation for sanctity and charity. Its issue and execution were too public to allow its existence and purport to be ignored even by the hostile writer of the precious document from which we have been quoting.

It is singular that, having just assured his readers that it was the hasty retreat of Pope Symmachus from Rimini on seeing his accomplices arrive at the palace to give evidence against him on the charge of scandalous conduct, that determined the King’s action in having him publicly arraigned before a tribunal of his fellow-bishops, the same inconsistent author should allege that the Paschal irregularities were the chief count in the indictment. “In reference to the Paschal celebration all were unanimous in pressing the King to depute, as Visitor of the Roman Church, the venerable Peter, Bishop of Altinum, and when that solemn festival was over, by order of the King, who acceded to the request of the Senate and the clergy, a council was convened at Rome to inquire into the misdemeanors imputed to the Pope and to pronounce judgment thereon. Some bishops and Senators intrigued against the holding of such a council and proclaimed publicly that no tribunal could take cognizance of charges alleged against the Roman Pontiff, even though such charges were based on actual facts. But the cream of the episcopacy, considering the publicity the matter had attained, were of opinion that it was impossible to avoid a judicial inquiry, as well on the ground of religion as in obedience to the King. These differences produced animated discussions and added fuel to the flames of discord already raging; but at last it was decided that the impeachment should be entertained and officially investigated. Some prelates were despatched to summon Symmachus to appear, but they were repulsed by the clergy at the palace; a second and a third deputation were sent, but he did not condescend to reply. His friends made two strong appeals, at different stages, to the dissentients to return to his allegiance without further examination; but they replied that this course was impossible. Let him prove that he was innocent of the crimes alleged against him, and they would then acknowledge him; otherwise let him be deposed from the priesthood. These delays embittered the feelings of both parties, and the friends of Symmachus among the bishops retired to their respective sees. But all that was sound and uncorrupted in the Church and
Senate persevered in declining to communicate with that Pontiff and petitioned the King in favor of Laurence, whom they recalled from Ravenna, where he was then residing. They proved from the canons that having been elevated to the episcopacy at Rome, it is at Rome he should rule; and for four years he governed the Roman See. It is foreign to our purpose to recount in detail the dreadful havoc effected by these quarrels, which assumed the dimensions of a civil war; many citizens of every order were murdered during that prolonged and desperate conflict. At last Symmachus represented to the King, by despatching the Deacon Dioscorus of Alexandria to the court, the limitless extent of his losses, more particularly in regard to the leading parish churches of Rome, the revenues of which Laurence had appropriated. This recital of grievances deeply moved the King, and he ordered all the churches to resume their allegiance to the Pope."

It is unnecessary to dwell on the contradictions and errors with which this biased effusion everywhere teems. What we deduce from it as the main charges against the persecuted Symmachus were: First, some vague insinuations as to his being a Quartodeciman. This accusation did not assume definite shape, and is little attended to on either side. Most probably it was introduced merely to create a prejudice against him, as there was a furious craze at the time against all who were suspected of wrong views or practices on the Paschal question. Secondly, it was alleged that he had procured the King's decision in favor of the validity of his election by simoniacal means, and that, according to the laws regulating the elections of all bishops, bribery rendered his appointment null and void. This argument was privately addressed, with much show of virtuous indignation, to bishops and priests, and the accusation was circulated sedulously among the Senators and the people. Dread of the royal anger caused the Laurentian party to observe more caution in public. Besides, next to physical force, bribery was the most powerful weapon that party wielded, since the Emperor of the East had filled, and was prepared at any time to replenish, the coffers of the crafty Festus. Thirdly, the waste of the public funds of the Church was advanced as a crime entailing censure and deposition, but the allegation was regarded as a sort of grim joke, since it emanated from those who had sacrilegiously pillaged the treasures of all the leading basilicas, of which the Pope was no doubt the rightful guardian, and abused the plunder to compass the destruction of its first owner. Fourthly, he was accused of the lowest and most flagitious form of simony, practised in the open sale of holy orders and ecclesiastical preferments to the highest bidder. The particulars adduced to sustain this charge have not been transmitted; but the unsmirched
reputation accorded by most of his contemporaries and by all posterity to the illustrious and saintly victim of these gross calumnies leaves no room to doubt that this accusation was as groundless as the others. Lastly, the abominable fiction about his leading a sinful life and inviting a notorious courtesan, Conditaria, to his palace, throws a lurid light on the character of his accusers and must have intensified immensely the heartfelt sympathy of the vast majority of bishops, priests and people for their cruelly wronged Spiritual Father.

We cannot too urgently or too frequently direct the attention of the reader to the unyielding persistency of the great body of the bishops—here unconsciously attested as a public fact by this antipapal scribe—with which they utterly disclaimed any jurisdiction to sit in judgment on the recognized Supreme Head of the Church. Ennodius, in his sublime oration, was but the faithful mouthpiece of the *ecclesia docens*; he voiced with eloquence and truth the sentiments of his contemporary successors of the Apostles, and echoed the pure doctrine of a more remote antiquity. Nor did the bishops themselves, individually and collectively, at home in their different sees or assembled together at Rome, fail for a moment to profess from the roof-tops the strong faith that was in them; quite as firmly, though not so eloquently as Ennodius, they all proclaimed that it was the Roman Pontiff alone that could summon them to a synod; that he enjoyed jurisdiction over them all by reason of the primacy of the Holy See. In evidence of this all-important fact, we read in every history dealing with the period that the bishops of Liguria, Emilia and Venitia, being obliged to pass through Ravenna on their journey to Rome, called at the palace and sought an audience with the King. Respectfully but vehemently they represented to him that the supremacy of the Holy See had been at all times recognized by the greatest councils that had ever assembled; that it was the privilege of the Pope alone to summon the prelates of the Church to meet in synod, and that no precedent existed for obliging the Roman Pontiff to submit himself to the judgment of his inferiors. The King replied with characteristic courteousness; Symmachus himself had expressly requested the summoning of the council; therefore, he was only carrying out the wishes of the Pope. Finally he permitted them to see for themselves the Pope's letter, in which he had begged the King to have the bishops convened with his authority and acquiescence. When they arrived in Rome Symmachus confirmed the accuracy of the King's explanation in every detail, and added that he was deeply grateful to that noble-minded Prince for having so promptly given effect to his wishes. He assured them they might proceed to attend the episcopal synod without any scrup-
pies of conscience, as it was virtually by his command they were summoned. This incident possesses a deep and far-reaching significance; the all-wise Providence could not permit such an occurrence to pass unrecorded; it was a gleam of light revealing unbroken belief in an important dogma. But before proceeding to treat of this council in detail the order of events demands that we first give a brief account of the royal visit to Rome, where Theodoric made his first official entry in the September of 500.

With this we shall commence our next article.

Vienne, France.

E. Maguire.

THE FIRST AND SECOND BOOKS OF COMMON PRAYER.

RELYING principally on Heylyn's and Canon Dixon's admissions, together with the significant fact that no mention is made in Wilkins' Concilia of any convocation of the bishops between December 26, 1547, and January 24, 1552, the learned authors of "Edward VI. and the Book of Common Prayer" have come to the conclusion that the Book itself never passed through Convocation.

Heylyn states in his "History of Edward VI." (p. 67) that the high Church or Catholic party, as they were then called, contended, at the time of its promulgation, "that neither the undertaking was advised nor the book itself approved in a synodical way by the bishops and clergy, but that it was only the act of some few of the prelates employed therein by the King or Lord Protector, without the knowledge and approbation of the rest."

Summoning to His Royal Presence, on September 1, 1549, the bishops and divines whom he had formerly employed for drawing up the "Form for administering Communion under both kinds in the English tongue," the King commanded them to frame a new public Liturgy, which should contain Morning and Evening prayer, together with a method "of administering the sacraments and sacramentals, and for celebrating all other public offices which were required for good Christian people; which, as His Majesty commanded, out of a most religious zeal for the honour of God, the edification of his subjects, and to the peace of his dominions; so they (who knew no better sacrifice than obedience) did cheerfully apply themselves to the undertaking." (Heylyn, 64.)