

THE
ACTS AND MONUMENTS

BY
JOHN FOXE.

(1517-1587)

First published in

1563

Original woodcuts are excluded

FAMILY EDITION

Books I – IV

EDITED BY

REV. M. HOBART SEYMOUR, M.A.

1855

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THE
ACTS AND MONUMENTS
OF
THE CHURCH;

CONTAINING THE HISTORY AND SUFFERINGS OF
THE MARTYRS:

IN WHICH IS SET FORTH AT LARGE THE WHOLE RACE AND COURSE OF THE
CHURCH, FROM THE PRIMITIVE AGE TO THESE LATER TIMES.

WITH

A PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION

ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CHURCH OF ROME THAT NOW IS,
AND THE ANCIENT CHURCH OF ROME THAT THEN WAS.

BY JOHN FOXE.

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR, BY HIS SON SAMUEL.

A NEW EDITION,

WITH FIVE APPENDICES, CONTAINING
ACCOUNTS OF

THE MASSACRES IN FRANCE 1572; THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SPANISH ARMADA 1587;
THE IRISH REBELLION 1641; THE GUNPOWDER TREASON 1605; AND A TRACE
SHOWING THAT THE EXECUTIONS OF PAPISTS IN QUEEN ELIZABETH'S REIGN
(1558-1603) WERE FOR TREASON, AND NOT FOR HERESY.

THE WHOLE CAREFULLY REVISED, CORRECTED, AND CONDENSED.

BY

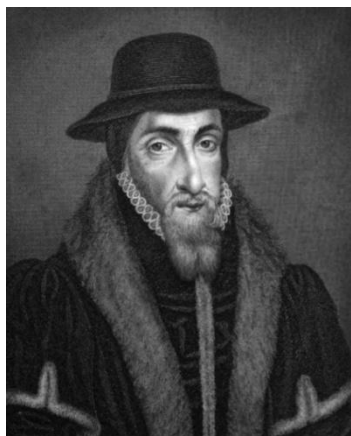
THE REV. M. HOBART SEYMOUR, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "A PILGRIMAGE TO ROME."

NEW YORK:
ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,
285 BROADWAY.

1855.

Notes on Modernization



John Foxe
Engraved by John Cochran

The editor of this 1855 publication of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* was Michael Hobart Seymour (1800–1874). He restored and preserved an accurate, though curated version of Foxe's original work. He placed subsequent material in a five-part Appendix. Foxe himself added the first part to his 1583 edition. Rev. Seymour was an Anglo-Irish Protestant clergyman and historian, a fellow and faculty member of Oxford University, and traveling secretary of the Reformation Society. His Preface shows he was as appalled by papal expansionism in the 19th century, as Foxe had been in the 16th.

Foxe's 8-volume 1563 publication, with its 60 woodcuts, was the largest English publishing project up to that time. It was a single volume, a bit over a foot long, two hands wide, over 1500 pages, and weighing the same as a small infant. It contained (and was notorious for) its gruesome drawings of torture. This being a

“Family Edition,” Rev. Seymour limited and gentrified those images, among other refinements to the text, as he explains in his Preface. I chose to leave out the drawings, feeling that the text descriptions were sufficiently gruesome. And yet, even those serve a purpose, in the same way that the photographs and records of the Holocaust in Germany during World War II serve a purpose. There are those who deny that such atrocities ever occurred, or that they were not as bad as described, or that such crimes were justified or excusable. Despite photographic evidence, despite eyewitness accounts (even by the perpetrators themselves), despite exhaustive court records, such Holocaust denials persist.

In the same way, Foxe has left a record of what was done to Christians for their faith, documenting it for future generations. We would like to say, with the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, “Never again.” But Christians know that man's depravity is boundless, and at work in every age. These descriptions, with their unimaginable horror and scope, confirm it. The danger is that the sheer number of these accounts, with the repetition of how these martyrs died, may inure us to their horror, injustice, atrocity, and pain — even to the faith and courage of these suffering believers. We must not let ourselves become indifferent or desensitized to it. We should be as shocked by the last martyr's death, as by the first. Perhaps we might see in them, the faces of our own spouse, parents, children, or friends.

The *Chron. Table of Contents, General Index, and footnotes* reference the **original** page numbers. Those page numbers are retained in [brackets], with page-breaks adjusted for readability. Dates in the page headers are now beside the bracketed page numbers.

Dates: Dates in parentheses are mostly Seymour's. All dates depend on available data — so they are debatable, and may be at odds with other histories. Consider that Ireneus was looking back 150 years; Eusebius 250 years; Foxe 1500 years. Foxe's book was 290 years old when Seymour edited it; Seymour's edition is now 170 years old. Therefore the dates should be taken as best guesses at the time. Years preceded with an “r.” are the years reigned.

Language: Rev. Seymour preserved not only the middle-English *thee's* and *thou's*, but the old-English of Chaucer (*e.g., they tillen, ne sowen, weeden, ne repen*), which is largely unintelligible today (as he admits). I modernized it all to make it accessible to those with English as a second language. Although I updated the language, I did not correct the content; I only adjusted or supplemented it where the original might be confusing. I reduced Foxe's constant use of the present tense, and made his ambiguous pronouns explicit.

Verse references: I used 3-letter abbreviations with a period between book and verse (Gen 1.1, 1Cor 1.1,4) — no colon, no Roman numerals. I think they’re easier to read and to find. The verse references that I added to the original text have been superscripted. ¹King 1.1

Footnotes: I annotated uncommon personalities, words, and events in blue, along with any supplemental materials, explanations, or corrections. Seymour’s footnotes are followed by [ED.]. The rest belong to Foxe. I took the liberty of moving some of Foxe’s editorial comments into footnotes — for example, on pages [62] and [66].

Spelling and syntax: Because this edition was published in New York, and intended for an American audience, I Americanized the spelling (*labour* and *Saviour* are now *labor* and *Savior*). Long, incomplete, or complex sentences have been simplified, and archaic words updated. I changed some well-known names to their more accepted spellings. For example, Otho was changed to Otto, Tindal to Tyndale. Wickliff to Wycliffe. Correcting or updating other spellings proved to be problematic. I corrected Egbert (bishop) to Edbert (king) where either Foxe, Seymour, or the typesetter, gave the same name to two different men. King Celulfus we know as Ceolwulf, the Synod of Clonesho as Clovesho. I caught a number of such odd or archaic spellings; but with 2400 pages, it’s unlikely that I caught all or even most of them. Please excuse those.

This is more than an account of the martyrs’ lives and deaths. Foxe provides us with the historical context, and the political and religious intrigues that led to their brutal executions. It is a detailed history book, describing the ongoing contest between kings and popes, with ordinary Christians caught between. The Reformation was thus political as well as religious in nature, because freedom of conscience transcends them both (Act 24.14-16; 1Pet 3.15). This book is also a defense of biblical doctrine and practice, against the many errors and aberrations that arose over time. These faithful and heroic Christians stood firm, sacrificing themselves for the cause of God and truth, in the face of vicious and violent opposition. Their resolve and stalwart defense of the faith changed the course of history for the better, to God’s glory. Foxe has provided us with hundreds of examples of what it looks like to live to God, to be faithful to His word, and to take up our cross daily and follow Christ. We’re indebted to these faithful believers; and also to John Foxe for honoring and preserving their memory. All praise be to God, who is mightily at work in His people. ^{Col 1.29}

William H. Gross

December 31, 2024

The 14th edition of Encyclopedia Britannica (1960 printing) has an article on John Foxe written by J.F. Mozley, who himself wrote a book in 1940, “John Foxe and His Book.” Mozley was certainly sympathetic to John Foxe and his book. In his summary concerning Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*, he states the following: “It is indeed prolix [*i.e.* long-winded], unsystematic, carelessly edited, one-sided, oversharp, sometimes credulous. But it is honest and it is strong in facts.... It opens a window on the English Reformation by preserving much firsthand material unobtainable elsewhere.... The charges of deliberate falsification brought against him by Alan Cope (1566), Robert Parsons(1603), and some moderns [viz. S.R. Maitland, etc.] have no substance.” (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14th ed., 1960, Vol. 9, p. 573).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foxe's_Book_of_Martyrs (accessed 12/31/2024)

“I wrote no such booke bearyng the title *Booke of Martyrs*. I wrote a booke called the *Acts and Monumentes* ... wherin many other matters be contayned beside the martyrs of Christ.”

— John Foxe, *The Actes and Monuments* (1570)

Note: Bishop Edmund Grindal (1519-1583) called it a book of martyrs, and the name stuck.

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Editor's Preface

TO THE 1855 EDITION.

The energies exhibited of late by the emissaries of the Church of Rome, to re-establish her influence in this country (England), have loudly demanded the republication of those works with which our forefathers withered her influence, and baffled her energies. There is no volume in the range of our literature, that has been more effective in maintaining the principles of the Reformation — that noblest of all achievements — than *the Acts and Monuments of Martyrs*, by Master John Foxe.¹ It is this conviction which has induced the present edition of that admirable work.

When we speak of *the Church of Rome*, we speak of a religious, though a fatally erring community. But when we speak of *the Papacy*, we allude to an ecclesiastical system which not only teaches such absurdities as Transubstantiation — such blasphemies as the Sacrifice of the Mass — such idolatry as the Worship of Saints — and such a novelty as her Creed, but also has elevated an Italian Bishop to the throne of an Italian Prince who has territories, and broad domains, and numerous subjects of his own, and placed him in such a peculiar position, that he can bind by solemn oaths, and demand allegiance from a portion of the subjects of every other prince. This man — combining in himself the offices of *Priest* and *King* — has been raised to such a lofty pinnacle of secular authority, that he can control, punish, or reward a portion of the subjects of other Princes, so as to secure to himself the service and fealty of all those who, as members of the priesthood, possess either power or influence in the land. We must not regard this as a purely spiritual power, for those persons are bound by the most solemn oaths — not to defend the royalties of their liege sovereign, but to defend to the utmost of their power, in the heart of every other state, the usurped or pretended royalties of this Italian Bishop. It is a fearful and a melancholy fact that in our own fair England, palmy and beautiful England — the land of the brave, and the home of the free — there should be hundreds of men, holding and wielding a certain influence in the land, who have been appointed by this foreign potentate, who ought to have no authority in this realm, and who have sworn — not to maintain the royalties of the sovereign of England — but to maintain the royalties of this Italian Prince.²

As loyal subjects of the sovereign of England, and as liege subjects of the King of kings, we never can consent that this Italian Potentate should possess authority in this realm. We feel that the experience of this nation, and the history of the world have proved, that he exercises his authority to minister to his own ambition, and to the degradation of mankind; and that the ecclesiastical system of Rome is a mighty confederacy against the civil liberties, and religious privileges of man. We likewise feel that the emissaries of this system have never been very scrupulous as to the means of accomplishing their ends.

[ii]

It may be the darkening of a nation's glory, as in the time of King John of England. It may be the sundering of all the civil ties of man, as in the history of the German emperors. It may be the massacre of thousands, as in France on the day of St. Bartholomew. It may be the tortures of an Inquisition, as in the atmosphere of Spain. It may be the most terrible persecution, as in the reign of Mary I of England. Any and all means are alike welcome to accomplish the objects of that church. And there is at all times an ample agency, in the Bishops, and Priests — in the Monks and Friars of Rome. By such agency and such means, the most potent

¹ The 1563 title was *Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Days, Touching Matters of the Church*.

² The Court of Rome has at present — A.D. 1850 — above eight hundred Missionary Priests in England. [ED.]

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Monarchs of Europe have been humbled; the most noble Princes of Christendom have been ruined; Emperors have been dethroned, and Kings trampled underfoot; Nations have flowed with blood, and Kingdoms have been broken into dust — all to satiate the ambition of an Italian Priest who, while professing to be meek and lowly, compelled imperial potentates to kiss his feet, and accept their crowns and kingdoms at his hands.

When we contemplate this system — though shorn of much of its power and splendor — concentrating its energies in connection with all the peculiar doctrines and discipline of the Church of Rome, and endeavoring with all its powers to re-establish her influence in this country, it is high time for every lover of religious liberty, and every friend of civil freedom to make those efforts which seem best calculated to prevent so terrible a calamity.

The Church of Rome has never abandoned her claim to this country England; and from the age of the Reformation to the present time, she has repeated her efforts to reassert that claim with an untiring perseverance. We shall touch on the chief of these efforts which she has made from time to time in this country.

In the time of good King Edward VI, the Church of England was completely emancipated from the influence of these Italian ecclesiastics. The stately and venerable pile which had been marred by the hand of time, was restored to its primitive beauty. Its goodly pillars that had been overgrown with the mold of years, and its noble arches that had been overspread with many corruptions, were cleared of all that deformed them. The minions of Priestcraft, who had made it a den of thieves and had driven their merchandise of men's souls within her porches, were removed, and the Church of England returned to her original and apostolic purity. Had the life of this young and gentle Prince been spared, the religious freedom of England had been established beyond the possibility of danger. But it was the purpose of God to scourge this nation with a scourge of scorpions, so as to teach us to cherish an undying hatred of the whole system of Popery, that the memory of its horrors and its cruelties might live in the minds of our children, and our children's children, and that so there might be cherished among us a high and unwavering resolve that it should never again be established in this country. Edward was taken to his rest, and Mary ascended the throne. We don't know what feminine amiabilities she may have naturally possessed, but we do know that she surrendered herself into the hands of the Italian Priests, and to use the language of our Redeemer, they "made her two-fold more the child of hell than themselves." ^{Mat 23.15}

It was on the accession of this queen that the Papacy made its first effective efforts to re-establish its influence in this land. Mary, with more zeal than prudence, restored the reign of Popery. To that reign we are to look for a true portraiture of this Italian religion, when possessing influence in a Protestant nation. It is not by the unauthorized professions of modern members of that system, softened and attenuated for a purpose, that we are to look for a living exhibition of its character, but we are to read the records of those times in which the Papacy possessed the power of accomplishing its own purposes, and unfolding its own characteristics. If we desire to know the fierceness of the lion, or the ferocity of the tiger, we must view them, not with their teeth drawn, and their claws extracted, and confined within cages of iron, but as in their native wildness they range the forest, or crouch in the jungle. We must form our judgment of the nature of Popery, not from her present chained and fettered state, but from the tendencies she displayed when she possessed power and influence in the nation, and could without restraint accomplish her purposes.

[iii]

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The peculiar characteristic of the effort made in this reign to restore the dominion of the Papacy was PERSECUTION. Mary commenced her career with a fearful abandonment of moral principle. She pledged herself to the men of Norfolk and Suffolk, who had embraced the principles of the Reformation, that if they would assist in placing her on the throne, she would never interfere with the Protestant principles of the nation. On this pledge³ she induced them to take arms in her cause, and they placed her triumphantly on the throne. Her whole reign was one continued act of perfidy to that pledge. The system of persecution which she put in force was the most awful exhibition of cruelty, and of cold and deliberate blood-guiltiness, that the records of our race present to us. There may have been at other times, and in other lands, persecution as terrible and as bloody; but this continued through the whole five years of her reign. The loftiest in the land were its martyrs, and a woman was the perpetrator.

No rank, or virtue, or learning, gave exemption to the possessor — Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, Farrer — all bishops of the church, were removed from their sees — degraded from their office — cast into prison, and finally martyred amidst the fires. Many hundreds of Christian souls were persecuted to the death.⁴ Two persons were publicly appointed in every parish, to discover and inform against every Protestant who refused to conform to Popery. They were then apprehended, examined, and, if they still refused, martyred. Many thousands were thus compelled to flee their homes, their properties, and their country, to seek in foreign lands a welcome that was denied them in their fatherland. Among these fugitives was MASTER JOHN FOXE, the justly celebrated Author of this justly celebrated Work — “THE ACTS AND MONUMENTS OF MARTYRS,” in which we have the only full and faithful narration of the cruelty of this persecution in which men, women, and children, without regard to age or sex, were indiscriminately martyred. Sometimes five, and sometimes ten were consumed in one fire, and on one occasion three women were burned at one stake, and (the blood runs cold while we write it) when one of them, under the pain of the flames, travailed with child, and one of the multitude, more humane than the rest, rescued the new-born babe, the authorities commanded it instantly to be burned with its mother! When such scenes were transacted under the authority of one who was herself a woman, we may well feel that there is an alchemy in Popery, that if it finds us angels, it can transform us into devils.

The death of this woman — whose only claim to our respect is that, like one of old, she was “a king's daughter” — stayed the work of persecution, and thus rendered ineffectual the first great effort of the Papacy to re-establish itself in this country. The succession of Elizabeth freed the Church of England from Italian influence, and settled it upon surer pillars and more steadfast foundations than ever.

The noble spirit of this Queen was such as became the monarch of this gallant nation, over whose destinies she presided. When, by that act of Popish perfidy — the massacre of St. Bartholomew⁵ — the streets of Paris flowed with the blood of her Protestant sons, the French ambassador appeared at the court of Elizabeth. He looked around for the splendor and chivalry of England. His cheek paled. The court of Elizabeth was arrayed in the deepest mourning!

Under her reign this country stood forth as the friend and protector of the reformed religion both at home and abroad, and the grand antagonist of the Papal system. It was therefore

³ One of the most interesting historical documents ever read, is the petition of these men of Norfolk, and Suffolk, to the Queen's Council, in the time of persecution. It will be found at p. 918.

⁴ Grimdal, who lived during the period, says the number was 860; others estimate it at half that number.

⁵ Referring to the murder of many thousands of French Huguenots in 1572.

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scarcely to be expected that with an enemy so powerful, persevering, and unscrupulous as Popery, this country could be left in tranquility. The second great effort for the re-establishment of the Church of Rome, unfolded a system of internal REBELLION and foreign INVASION.

[iv]

Pope Pius was pleased in A.D. 1570, for the accomplishment of this effort, to issue his bull anathematizing the Queen of England, and absolving all her subjects of their oaths of allegiance.

“The nobles, subjects, and inhabitants of England,” says this audacious manifesto, “who have in any way sworn to her, we declare to be absolved forever from any such oath, and from all manner of duty, allegiance, and obedience, as we do by the authority of these presents absolve them, and do deprive the said Elizabeth of her pretended right to the kingdom, and all other things aforesaid. We command and interdict all nobles, subjects, people, and others aforesaid, that they not presume to obey her mandate, monitions, or laws. Those who shall act otherwise we bind under a similar sentence of anathema,” etc.

This Italian Priest, not contented with thus anathematizing the Queen of England, and blasphemously assuming to absolve the people of England from their allegiance, proceeded to two other measures that strikingly illustrate the character of the Papacy. He first sent certain Jesuits into Ireland with bulls, authorizing them to raise the inhabitants of that island in rebellion against England. They unhappily accomplished his purpose there. He then took it upon himself to make over the realm of England, with its crown, its revenues, and its dependencies, as a gift to Philip of Spain. There too he succeeded in inducing that prince to equip the celebrated Armada, and prepare for an invasion of England.

Such were the means by which it was proposed to re-establish Popery in this land. Rebellion in Ireland — treason in England — and a foreign invasion in both!

But by the Providence of God, the rebellion in Ireland was crushed, the treason in England baffled, and the armada of Spain destroyed. We could mourn over the fate of the gallant armament, were we not acquainted with its object. The pomp of the chivalry of Spain, the flower of all her gallant youth were there. All that high hope could expect from noble daring, and all that the enthusiasm of superstition could achieve, might have been expected there. The voice of Papal infallibility had proclaimed it invincible. It walked the mighty ocean in its pride. It spread its fluttering wings for the shores of England. But an Angel of Heaven was moving over it unseen. The winds rushed in their fury above it. The waves swept in their madness beneath it. There were fearless hearts before them, and mighty arms to meet them. The chivalry of England manned her fleets, and the yeomanry of England lined her shores. And this “invincible armada,” scattered on the deep or stranded on our cliffs, strewed our shores with the moldering bones of the youth of Spain.

Thus ended the second great effort to restore the influence of Rome in this country. Its characteristics were rebellion and invasion — suitable precursors of the next attempt of these Italian Priests.

The vigor of Elizabeth's government was felt even after her death. James I received a kingdom (r. 1603-1625) from which the more daring and dangerous spirits had been exiled for their treasons, or had gone into banishment to escape the vengeance of the laws. Those were members of the Church of Rome, and devotedly attached to the interests of the Papacy. They had religiously believed that the Papal authority could absolve subjects of their allegiance, and depose sovereigns from their thrones. They had held that this “heresy” (the designation

The Editor's Preface

given to the reformed faith) was sufficient to lead to a forfeiture of all rights and privileges, and they therefore entered eagerly into every conspiracy that was deemed likely to re-establish the Papacy in its ancient influence in England.

These men resided chiefly in Flanders and Spain, where the members of the Order of Jesuits were in considerable numbers and activity. Garnet, Creswell, Baldwin, Parsons, and other celebrated Jesuits, soon obtained an ascendancy over these emigrants, and with the deep subtlety and unwavering courage of their order, they implicated them in endless conspiracies. It is to the intrigues of this remarkable class of ecclesiastics, that we owe the GUNPOWDER-TREASON, ⁶ which was discovered on the eve of its consummation. They bound each of the agents of this horrible treason under an oath of secrecy, administered upon receiving the Sacrament! The form of the oath was,

“You shall swear by the blessed Trinity, and by the Sacrament you now propose to receive, never to disclose, directly or indirectly, by word or circumstance, the matter which shall be proposed to you, to keep secret, nor desist from the execution thereof, until the rest shall give you leave.”

[v]

There must be a frightful amount of human depravity, when a number of ecclesiastics could administer the Sacrament and swear by the Trinity to go forward in this terrible conspiracy. It appears likewise that another Priest named Gerrhard gave absolution of the sin to each of the agents, preparatory to the accomplishment of their treason. Well might that celebrated lawyer, Coke, say, “I never yet knew a treason without a Romish Priest.”

The whole design of this conspiracy was revealed upon the trial of the conspirators. The written confession of Guy Fawkes and Thomas Winter give ample details of the mode of accomplishment. ⁷ It was proposed to blow up, by gunpowder, the houses of Parliament at the opening of the Session, when the King, with the Royal Family, the Peers, and Members of the House of Commons, would be assembled together. By such a stroke, it was expected that they would destroy the heads of all the principal Protestant families in the kingdom. And then it was arranged to seize the infant daughter of the King, who was then in Warwickshire, and proclaim her Queen, to educate her a Papist, and themselves to govern the realm during her long minority.

Such were the objects of this conspiracy, and such was the third great effort to re-establish the Papacy in England. The next was of a different character.

It was made in the time of James II (r. 1685-1688). Four of the sovereigns of England had successively been Protestants. And when it might have been expected that all hope, or at least all efforts to restore the system of Popery had been crushed forever, an avowed Papist ascended to the throne in the person of James II. He gave new life to the hopes and energies of the emissaries of Rome. He was a man bigoted to his sect, and resolved to re-establish Popery on the ruins of Protestantism. His efforts to accomplish this object were different from all that had gone before. He proposed to encourage the growth of Popery — not by persecution as in the days of Mary (for the nation would not bear it) — but by all THE POWER OF THE CROWN and the influence of the Court. He knew that in the state of the nation then, it would not suit his purposes to make an avowed assault upon its Protestantism. He therefore adopted the more gradual and insinuating instrumentality of courtly favor and royal authority.

⁶ Referring to the conspiracy to blow up the Parliament building, Nov. 5, 1605.

⁷ These confessions together with an account of the whole conspiracy, will be found in the Appendix to this Edition of the Acts and Monuments.

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His reign, like that of Mary, was one continued act of perfidy to the most solemn promises. He had solemnly promised in Parliament, before he came to the throne, that he would cherish his religious principles between himself and his God, and never permit them to interfere with his government of the nation. He had solemnly promised afterward, on opening the first Parliament of his reign, in the speech delivered on that most public occasion, that he would never interfere with the religion of the Established Church. His whole reign was an illustration of how the most binding pledges, and the most sacred promises, can all be violated, with a recklessness that is peculiar to the Church of Rome, whenever her interests are involved in the results. It is as easy to stay the planets in their course, as to find a moral tie, either of promises, or pledges, or oaths, that will bind the Church of Rome.

The extraordinary lengths to which this unhappy monarch was led by Father Petre, and those other Priests to whose guidance he so implicitly committed himself, awakened the dormant spirit of this nation. His measures respecting the Judges of the land, his proceedings among the Officers of the Army, his attempts against the Universities, his attack upon the Bishops, his claim of a dispensing power, indeed, his whole proceedings could not but compel the nation to look to its civil liberties, and its religious freedom; and to take measures for the preservation of the former against a Despot, and of the latter against a Papist.

The Revolution was the consequence.⁸ And thus ended, in the triumph of civil and religious liberty, the fourth great effort of the emissaries of Rome to re-establish Popery in England.

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The principles involved in the Revolution were carried out during the reign of William III. The civil and religious institutions of the country became inseparably blended in our National Constitution. The Protestantism of the Church of England became amalgamated with the State, and it was designed that one should be as lasting as the other. Well, nearly a century and a half has elapsed since that glorious event, and the experience of every added year only unfolds more manifestly the wisdom of those principles on which the Revolution was founded.

But although a century and a half have developed the wisdom of those great principles, and have elicited and secured the attachment of the people of England to the doctrines of the Reformation, yet it could scarcely be expected that the intrigues of the Church of Rome could have remained stilled and quiescent during the lapse of so many years — not where the wealth of so great a nation, and the influence of so scriptural a Church, were the objects to be secured and the prize to be obtained.

The nation had scarcely settled into tranquility after the storm of the Revolution, and the ground-swell was not yet wholly at rest, when the intrigues of the Order of Jesuits were brought into action in a totally new direction. That profound and subtle Order applied all its energies to corrupt the teaching of the Church of England, by tainting the fountains of education, by corrupting the youth at the Universities, and so making the Ministry of the Church of England the means of her own destruction. They had already tried every external

⁸ The English Civil War (1642–1651) ended with the Parliamentary victory at the Battle of Worcester on Sep 3, 1651. The Civil War led to the trial and execution of Charles I, the exile of his son, Charles II, and replacement of English monarchy with the Commonwealth of England (1649–53), then a Protectorate under Oliver Cromwell (1653–59). The war established the precedent that an English monarch cannot govern without Parliament's consent; this was not legally established until the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688. King James II of England was overthrown by a union of English Parliamentarians with the Dutch stadtholder William of Orange. His successful invasion of England with a Dutch fleet and army led to his ascending the English throne as William III of England, jointly with his wife, Mary II of England.

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resource. They had tried persecution, invasion, treason, and arbitrary power, and they had failed in all. And now they were resolved to scatter the seed of Romanism in the very seats of Academic learning, in the hope that they might reap in time an ample harvest, in the Romanizing spirit and principles of the Ministry of the Church herself.

This design, so analogous to the system working among us at the present day, deserves attention in a place like this. It was exhibited in the reign of Queen Anne, and is thus alluded to by Bishop Burnet in his "History of his own Times," Book vii, the year 1712:

"There appeared at this time an inclination in many of the Clergy to a nearer approach to the Church of Rome. Hicks, an ill-tempered man who was now at the head of the Jacobite party, had promoted in several books the notion that there was a proper sacrifice made in the eucharist, and he had on many occasions studied to lessen our aversion to Popery. The supremacy of the Crown in ecclesiastical matters, and the method in which the Reformation was carried, were openly condemned. One named Brett had preached a sermon in several of the pulpits of London, which he afterwards printed, in which he pressed the necessity of priestly absolution in a strain beyond what was pretended to, even in the Church of Rome. He said, no repentance could serve without it, and affirmed that the Priest was vested with the same power of pardoning that our Savior himself had. A motion was made in the lower house of Convocation to censure this; but it was so ill-supported that it was let fall. Another conceit was taken up of the invalidity of lay-baptism, on which several books have been written. Nor was the dispute a trifling one, since by this notion, the teachers among the Dissenters, passing for laymen, this amounted to re-baptizing them and their congregations.

"Dodwell gave the rise to this conceit. He was a very learned man, and led a strict life. He seemed to hunt after paradoxes in all his writings, and broached not a few. He thought none could be saved but those who, by the sacraments, had a federal right to it, and that these were the seals of the covenant. Thus he left all who died without the sacraments to the uncovenanted mercies of God. And to this he added that none had a right to give the sacraments but those who were commissioned to it; and these were the Apostles, and after them Bishops and Priests ordained by them. It followed upon this that sacraments administered by others were of no value."

This movement originated at the University of Oxford. And if this account had been written at the present day, it could not more accurately describe the analogous movement of our times; the principles are the same, and the objects are alike. It will be the prayer of every right-hearted friend of Protestant Christianity, that the failure of the latter may prove as complete and perfect as that of the former. ⁹

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There is something strange, even to incredulity, that such a destiny could have befallen this church and nation, as that Romish doctrines should be preached by Protestant clergymen, and that Romish ceremonies should be practiced in Protestant Churches. And there is something strange, even to scorn and loathing, that men can be found who sign the articles of the Church of England on the one hand, and the canons of the Council of Trent on the other. They publicly subscribe themselves Protestants, and receive salaries on the faith of their vow to teach only the doctrines of the Church of England — while they surreptitiously subscribe themselves Romanists, and exert all their influence in propagating the doctrines of the Church of Rome.

Yet strange and unilateral as all this is, it has spread widely and gone deeply among those who have been in process of education in the Universities of England during the last fifteen years,

⁹ [The Oxford Movement in the Church of England began in the 1830s and developed into Anglo-Catholicism.](#)

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and has gone far to justify the most glowing anticipations of those profound and subtle men with whom the intrigue had originated. We are now treading on the ashes that hide the glowing lava, and the least disturbing cause may let loose the elements of ruin and desolation. The Universities have been unfaithful in being so long indifferent to the propagation of such principles among the youth committed to their care. The Bishops have been unfaithful in having taken no adequate pains to save the flock of Christ from those who were leading them astray. And now he is a far-seeing Prophet, who can foreshow what the end will be.

The Church and nation are now ripening for some great and extensive change. Men's hearts are failing for fear. Startling facts are continually occurring. Many among the Clergy, and many among the laity, have passed over to the Church of Rome, while all the tendencies and sympathies of many who remain among us, are towards the genius and spirit of Romanism. And the tendencies of political latitudinarianism in the councils of the nation, and the extensive and ill-concealed Romanism of too many of the Bishops and Clergy of the Church of England, seem almost to invite to the most audacious claims, and to justify the most insidious pretensions of the Court of Rome.

And there is no backwardness on the part of the Papacy. The late Bull of Pius IX annihilating, as far as papal rescript could do so, the whole order and constitution of the Church of England, and establishing a hierarchy under his own exclusive authority in its stead, dividing the whole realm anew into dioceses, and appointing one Archbishop and twelve Bishops with local authority and territorial titles, shows a full consciousness of the state of the Church of England, and knowledge of the fact that her long-tried Protestantism has been for years under a process of being undermined. The conclave that counseled this act of Papal aggression, believed that the whole fabric of the Church of England was ready to sink into ruin, and all that remained was for the Church of Rome to enter on possession.

No appliance is neglected and no means unemployed to propagate the doctrines and the discipline of Romanism among the various classes of the population. There is an unwearied exercise of influence and an unexampled expenditure of wealth to advance the system among us. Over eight hundred Priests of the Church of Rome have been located throughout the country. As missionaries, these either settle themselves in certain localities or move in various directions through the land, everywhere endeavoring to disseminate their principles, through the instrumentality of Sermons, Lectures, Tracts, etc. Their exertions have so far succeeded, that during the last half century (1800-1850) they have increased the number of their chapels from about thirty, to more than six hundred *in* this island. A large number of Seminaries, or Colleges, have been formed with a view to secure the education of our youth. Many Nunneries and Monasteries have been established, so as to become centers for the propagation of the whole system of Popery. The success with which their measures of proselytism have been crowned, has been beyond their most sanguine expectations. And the ignorance of the population on one hand, and the political party to whom the emissaries of Rome have allied themselves, on the other hand, seem to promise still more ample success to their unwearied exertions. They no longer hesitate to avow their expectation that this nation will return to the bosom of the Church of Rome.

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This state of things is pregnant with the most disastrous consequences to the Protestantism of England, and demands the mightiest efforts that Christians and Protestants can make for the defense of our faith. They have a mighty adversary in the Church of Rome, against which they have to contend; but they have a still mightier treasure to preserve, in the true religion established among us. It may truly be said of England, as of Israel in the day of her

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blessedness, that she is a great and understanding nation, that there is no nation that has God so near, or to which He has given such statutes and ordinances, that we might walk in them, and live in them, and be a delightsome land. We have by the REFORMATION, an *English Service* and an *open Bible*. We have by the REVOLUTION, all the *religious liberty* that Christians can wish, and all the *civil liberty* that good subjects can desire.

Shall it be, that such matchless treasures will be lost by our apathy? Shall it be, that by our indifference, we will again be doomed to come under Italian influence, blighting our morals — withering our privileges — destroying our liberties — our homes ceasing to be happy, and our altars ceasing to be free? Shall it be, that the souls of our children, and our children's children, will become the merchandise of Friars, and their morals become contaminated by the Priests of the Confessional? Shall their birthright of an open Bible, and an English Service, and freedom to think and judge for themselves, be taken from them by our apathy or neglect? It would be better that the blast of death sweep through the land, and as of old leave the firstborn dead in every house; and that the wail of the desolate, and the cry of the mourning be heard on every wind, and echoed from every home, than that a calamity so disastrous as this should befall our fatherland. Then, indeed, the dark spirit of Popery would be traced by the fall of our fanes (temples) and the ruin of our altars; and she would erect her throne amidst the fallen columns, the crumbling arches, and the moldering aisles of the Temple of Protestantism. Then, indeed, the glory of Britain — not the triumphs of her iron-hearted battalions on the battlefield, nor of her bannered masts upon the wave — not the treasure of her gold and silver and precious stones, nor the countless navies that waft to her shores the merchandise of the world — but her truest and her best, *the Glory of her essential Protestantism*, would be departed. If ever such an eclipse should darken it, then “Ichabod” will be written upon her ruins, and “The glory is departed” become the requiem of fallen England. ^{1Sam 4.21}

It is with the view of strengthening the religious principles of Protestantism in the convictions of the People of England, and with the view of exhibiting fully and faithfully before their eyes, a living portraiture of the Papacy, that this FAMILY EDITION of *the Acts and Monuments of Martyrs*, has been published.

It is impossible for a candid and unprejudiced mind to peruse this work and to think otherwise of it, than that it was a noble production for its age, and an invaluable compilation for *any* age. MASTER JOHN FOXE, who was born in the same year that Luther commenced the Reformation, has collected together those scattered registries, and official documents, and original writings, respecting the Martyrs of Protestantism, which had been long since lost to the Church, were it not for his assiduity and zeal. He had access to Diocesan Registries, which are now lost forever; excepting in those extracts which he has made from them. They give the official account of the articles charged against the Martyrs, and their answers to the same, in public courts. He had access to some documents, such as Monitions, and Proclamations, which now are only to be found in the pages of this work; and which illustrate the spirit and tendencies of the times. He had access to many of the Martyrs themselves, and he possessed their own original statements, written by their own hands, detailing the course of their previous sufferings and the methods of their examination. These have all long since passed away forever, except so far as they have been preserved in these *Acts and Monuments*. This is sufficient, of itself, to make this work an invaluable treasure as an extensive compilation of evidences and materials for the general historian; and especially for those who feel an interest in the confessions of those Martyrs of the Anglican Church, who were “slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held;” ^{Rev 6.9} and whose blood proved such prolific seed for the Church of England.

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The greater portion of the work is a compilation of these original documents. He gives them to the world as such, and exhibits no trace of that vanity which has tempted so many to clothe original materials in more modern phraseology, so as to pass them current as their own; and we are sure that the name of JOHN FOXE will live green in the memory of our children, and our children's children, when his envious and malicious detractors have passed into oblivion.

It could scarcely be expected that in times like the present, when every effort is being made to bring the character of our Reformers and the principles of the Reformation into contempt and obloquy,¹⁰ a work of such immense importance as that of John Foxe could escape the malicious assaults of the avowed enemies of Protestant Christianity, or the insidious efforts of the traitors now concealed in the cloistered shades of the Church of England. Those assaults and efforts have been made, and have just thus far succeeded in proving that this great production was not the production of absolute inspiration — that the author, compelled like all historians to accept the statements of others on particulars of minute or minor importance, has fallen into some slight mistakes. These mistakes are so slight in their nature, and so few in their number, that there is no historian of either times past or present, who has exhibited a work of the same extent that is so free from errors, or so safely to be relied on in all the grand objects which he contemplated. He lived in the times of which he wrote; and he devoted the greater portion of his work to them. He collected the official registers or original documents. He compiled and published them for the benefit of posterity. And the deference which all learned historians and all sound divines pay to his authority, is a monument to his ability, his learning, and his honesty, which will live forever, when the very names of his detractors will be utterly forgotten. The volume still remains the first, the best, and the most certain authority for either the Historian or the Divine, in all the wide field upon which it enters, in laying open the workings of Romanism at the age of the Reformation.

The work proposes to give a general sketch of the history of the Christian Church — a more detailed account of the Church of England — an accurate portraiture of the rise, and progress, and genius of the Church of Rome — and finally, the fullest and most ample account of the examinations, sufferings, and martyrdoms of those holy men of God who were the strength and ornament of the Protestantism of this land.

*The edition which we now present to the public,
possesses certain peculiarities which require notice.*

I. There is a large mass of official documents and forms which, though interesting to the writers of history, possess no interest or value for the religious or general reader. They seem to have been published by Foxe, more with the view of preserving them as records, than in the expectation that they would be perused by the general reader.

A large portion of these have been omitted from this edition.

II. There is a series of narrations, from time to time introduced by the author, connected with the superstitious credulity of the dark ages. Some of them are absurd, others are marvelous. And Foxe, while he inserts them, does not hesitate to express judgment on them, pronouncing them to be apocryphal.

These have been excluded from this edition, as calculated to injure, rather than promote the interests of religion.

¹⁰ A false accusation of an offense or a malicious misrepresentation of someone's words or actions; defamation.

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III. There is also inserted in the original work, a variety of Latin quotations, a few from the Greek, and a number of letters and documents, also in the Latin language.

These have been removed from the present edition, as being calculated to encumber it unnecessarily.

IV. Owing to the state of society in the age in which this work was written, there was a coarseness of expression, and an absence of delicacy and propriety in some of the narrations, which render it unfit for family perusal in the present state of society, and which have aided much in consigning the work itself into oblivion.

All these narrations and indelicacies have been most carefully expunged from this edition.

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V. There are many errors in the dates, embodied in the original work. Some of these are perhaps the result of those mistakes into which authors of that age were very likely to fall, in reference to more ancient history. Many of them are merely the mistakes of the printing-press, accumulated through successive editions.

These have been carefully corrected in the present edition, so as to prevent the reader falling into error.

These particulars present the peculiarities of this edition. The object has been to present the Protestant population of this land with a FAMILY EDITION — one that in point of size and cheapness would be accessible to all — one that could be perused without toiling through unnecessary and uninteresting documents — and especially one that could be read with interest and advantage, in the family circle.

In endeavoring to accomplish these objects, every effort has been made to render this edition an available repository of all that was calculated to strengthen the religious principles of the Reformation, in the Protestants of England, and to supply them with as much as possible, that would arm them against the principles and the practices of the Church of Rome — thus making this edition consist of all the information that was valuable in the original work, and all that was likely to be available in the controversy with Rome.

Those who desire an ecclesiastical history of England, will find it here. Those who seek a detail of the iniquities of Popery, both abroad and at home, will not be disappointed. The Christian who desires examples of faithfulness unto death, ^{Rev 2.10} will be amply recompensed in a perusal. And those who wish to obtain a practical knowledge of the controversy with Rome, will find it one of the most useful works in our language.

In order to render the work complete, an Appendix has been added, containing accounts of the massacre of St. Bartholomew — of the Spanish Armada — of the Gunpowder Treason — of the great Rebellion of Ireland in 1641 — all written by authors who wrote immediately after the events which they narrate. There is also an account of the executions in the reign of Elizabeth, proving they were the punishment for treason, and not a persecution of Popery.

M. HOBART SEYMOUR.

BATH, *December*, 1850.

The Life of Mr. John Foxe.

By his son, Samuel Foxe (1560–1630)

Included in the 4th English edition of Acts and Monuments.

Childhood and early education

John Foxe was born in Boston, in the county of Lincoln, A.D. 1517. His father and mother were of the commonalty of that town, of good reputation, and in respectable circumstances. While young, his father died, and his mother married again. This brought him under the care of his step-father, with whom he dwelt during his childhood. At an early age, he gave indications of a love of learning. His friends, well approving of this, sent him to study at Oxford. The first nurse of his more serious studies was Brasenose College. There, he was chamber-fellow with Doctor Nowell, who was so famous a man in this city afterwards, and dean of St. Paul's. It was therefore no marvel if their manners were so alike in the course of their lives, whose education and nurture in youth was the same. The native excellence and soundness of his judgment were well seconded by the fitness of the place: where the emulation of equals was frequent, and where each student's proficiency was narrowly sought into. Nor was industry wanting; as it seldom accompanies the greatest talents, so where it is conjoined, it is most available.

When in a short space he had won the admiration of all, and the love of many — in reward of his learning and good behavior — he was chosen fellow of Magdalen College. This being accounted a principal honor in the university, and usually due to the students of that house, it was seldom bestowed upon any others, and not unless in regard of singular deserts. It appears that he gave the first indications of an early wit, to the exercises of poetry. He wrote diverse Latin comedies, in a copious and graceful style, but somewhat lofty. He did not altogether leave behind this fault of his writing in his elder years, though age and experience mitigated it more than a little. But even then, he began to give earnest of what he afterwards proved, for those first efforts of his youth were spent only in holy histories of the bible; nor did he follow that course long. He took to the study of divinity with somewhat more fervency than circumspection, and discovered himself in favor of the Reformation, before he was known to those who maintained the cause, or were of the ability to protect those who did. From this grew his first troubles.

Reign of Henry VIII

This was the time when Henry VIII was uncertain what course to take, being at variance with the pope, and not resolved in himself, thinking the affairs of the church (then grown to an infinite height of power and pride) were neither in all respects tolerable, nor that it was necessary to wholly alter them. While he desired to show moderation in both, Henry prevailed in neither. By his unprofitable indifference, he obscured an act of which none had more glory since the world began. Never before were the people in more distraction, or in less security of their lives and estates; there were such contrarities in the laws, that no man could tell what to take to with safety, nor what to avoid. For although the pope's supremacy had been renounced, his doctrine was still retained. The first news of the abolishing of the pope's supremacy was as prosperous as it was welcome to the reformers. Many joined the reformers out of love for the truth, being further assured of the king's intentions, by the punishment inflicted on some of the opposite party — and especially when the abbey's were dissolved. Nor was their hope little increased when they perceived that the noblemen more or less rose in the good opinion and favor of the king, in proportion to their opposition to the pope's pretensions. Meanwhile, the Act of the Six Articles was still in force; and if any

were found guilty of breaching it, they were sure of punishment. ¹¹ So that, as long as the king held the middle way between his own judgment and the advice of his counsellors — feeding them with favors upon which they could build no assurance, and pleasing himself in his own severity — fear and hope equally prevailed.

But when the protectors themselves, and the pillars of the reformed religion, were taken away — the duke of Suffolk by his untimely death, the lord Thomas Cromwell by the sword, the archbishop Cranmer and his friends borne down by those of the contrary side; so that there was no help remaining, either in the laws or in the protection of the peers — then all things began to rapidly hasten back to their former abuses. This happened with so much more violence, because the conquest seemed a kind of revenge.

Awakening at University

In the universities and schools, there was yet no open change or innovation — I do not know whether it was through fear, or that they would not be followers.

This was the state of church affairs when Master Foxe began attentively to seek into the substance of the controversy that was then in agitation. He found the contention was of great antiquity, and no age had been free from some debate in the church.

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But those first quarrels were rather for dominion and increase of territory. The Romans endeavored by subtle practices and the pretext of religion, to retain under the jurisdiction of a high priest the ancient honor of their city, which they could not defend by open force. Then no sooner did anyone show himself to differ from them in point of faith, than the hastening of his punishment prevented any infection that might spread among others.

Thus by their cruelty, and the patience of princes who allowed it, the greatest part of these dissensions were appeased. Afterwards, the pope having grown bolder by good success, began to draw to himself all power and authority. Nor content with having weakened the estate of the Roman empire alone, the pope now longed to finger the scepters of other princes; and to compass his design, he did not spare violating any human or divine right. Meanwhile, the clergy was little impressed by the great damage done to religion by men of immoral life and conversation ¹² sometimes being chosen to the papacy — by whose example the strictness of life used by their forefathers was drawn into scorn, and their poverty into disgrace. The industry of the priesthood languished; and on the contrary side, ambition, riot, and avarice began to reign among them. Then at length the practices of the churchmen were brought to light, and their delusions laid open. It was then known why the ceremonies and rites in the church had been brought to that excessive multitude — namely, that the number of the clergy might be increased to perform them. These were to be maintained of necessity; and to that end, such opinions were broached as seemed most likely to draw money from all places. Opinions of the merit of works; of purgatory; of the power of absolution and the pope's indulgences — all of which being in themselves false, and soon subject to decay — were thought fit to be cemented together with that new and subtle invention, the pope's "infallibility" in matters of faith.

By this ingenious bond, and linking one opinion to another, the credulity of the Christians was easily ensnared; all this, while the new-forged opinions were yielding plentiful increase,

¹¹ [The Act of Six Articles was passed by Henry VIII in 1539. It reaffirmed traditional Catholic practices and doctrines within the Church of England, even though it had recently broken away from the Roman Catholic Church.](#)

¹² [Conversation: our public conduct, both in speech, attitude, temper, and actions.](#)

and great sums of money, by a hundred devices, were screwed out of the clergy and the common people, and came daily to the pope and court of Rome.

I have often heard Master Foxe affirm that the first matter which occasioned his search into the popish doctrine, was that he saw diverse things, most repugnant to one another in their own natures, thrust upon men to be both believed at one time — such as, that the same man might be superior in matters of faith, and yet be inferior in his life and manners to the whole world besides. Upon this beginning, his resolution and intended obedience to that church was somewhat shaken; and little by little there followed some dislike to the rest.

His first care was to look into both the ancient and modern history of the church; to learn what beginning it had; what growth and increase; by what arts it flourished, and by what errors it began to decline; to consider the causes of all those controversies which had sprung up in the meantime, and to weigh diligently of what moment they were, and what was advanced on either side which was sound or erroneous.

He performed this with such diligence of study, and in so short a time, that before the thirtieth year of his age, he had read over all that either the Greek or Latin fathers had left in their writings; the schoolmen in their disputations; the councils in their acts; or their consistory in their degrees; *and* he had acquired no mean skill in the Hebrew language.

By the reports of some who were fellow-students with him, over and above his day's exercise, he used to bestow whole nights on his study, or not to take his rest till it was very late. Near to the college was a grove in which, for the pleasantness of the place, the students took delight to walk and spend some idle hours for their recreation. Master Foxe had chosen this place, and the dead of night, with their solitude and darkness, to confirm his mind, which trembled at the guilt of a new imagination.

I would rather omit in this discourse how many nights he watched in these solitary walks; what combats and wrestlings he suffered within himself; how many heavy sighs, and sobs, and tears he poured forth in his prayers to Almighty God; than to give it the appearance of ostentation. But of necessity it was to be remembered, because from this sprang the first suspicion of his alienated affections. For no sooner was the fame spread abroad of his nightly retirements, than the more understanding sort, out of their own wisdom, and others as they stood inclined towards him, were apt to interpret all of this to the worst sense. At length, those with whom he was intimate were drawn to suspect him; there were some employed who, under a pretense of admonishing him, might observe his walks and pry with more curiosity into his words and actions. And others were not lacking, who in comparing his customs formerly used, with the present course that he now took, aggravated the act even more with bitterness. Why does he not come to church as often as he was accustomed to in former times? Why would he shun the company of his equals, and refuse to recreate in his usual manner, unless he had felt in his mind some sudden alteration? And if that alteration were for the better, why would he conceal it?

Expulsion from University

Being a man of plain dealing, he could neither hide his resolution any longer, nor had he seen fit to excuse himself by forging a lie. Being thus reported of, surrounded with treacheries and accused by everyone, when the matter came to more severe scanning, he was convicted by the judgment of the college, condemned as a heretic, and removed from the house. Nevertheless, his adversaries affirmed that he was favorably dealt with by that sentence, and might have been examined for his life, if they had not used clemency towards him rather than extremity. But this wound raged worse than it was thought it would. Upon

the report of this incident, his friends were sorely displeased, and especially his stepfather. He had now grown altogether implacable, either through a real hatred conceived against Foxe for this cause, or pretending to be aggrieved so that he might now with more justice, or at least with more security, withhold from Foxe his own father's estate. For his stepfather both knew that it could not be safe for someone who is publicly hated and in danger of the law, to seek remedy by the law; and that Foxe was by nature so ignorant in requiting injuries, that he would many times, and with much ado, confess himself to be wronged, even when he had in his hands the ability of revenge.

When he was thus forsaken by his own friends and left naked of all human assistance, God's providence began to show itself, procuring Foxe a safe refuge in the house of a worshipful knight of Warwickshire called Sir Thomas Lucy, to whom he was sent to instruct his children. In this house he afterwards married a wife, and there continued till the children arrived at mature years, and no longer had need of a tutor. But fear of the popish inquisitions hastened his departure from there. Now relying on the favor of the laws, the inquisitors were not content to pursue public offenses, but also began to break into the secrets of private families.

While conversing with his friends in the later days of his life, Foxe would often, with much vehemence of mind, detest the wretched condition of that departing. He would say that he had pretty well endured all other mischances; but in this case, the misery was so much greater, because to have borne it patiently would have seemed unnatural. Having brought his faithful consort, who entirely loved him, away from her friends and kindred, her grief and tears were to be comforted with all obliging piety. It therefore behooved him either to find some speedy remedy, or in assurance of his love, to weep with her. For it would be in vain to show an example of his constancy, if she suspected her grief went unregarded, rather than his mind be unconquered with such great calamities. He therefore consulted with himself what was best to be done. Only two ways were left by which he might free himself from further inconvenience: he might with most safety choose either to go to his wife's father, or to his stepfather.

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His wife's father dwelt nearest, being a citizen of Coventry; nor did her father bear any hatred towards him yet, and was more likely to be entreated for his daughter's sake. His stepfather was better known to him, but more suspected. At last he resolved to go first to his wife's father, and in the meanwhile to test by letters whether his stepfather would receive him or not. His stepfather's answer was that it seemed to him a hard condition, to take someone into his house whom he knew to be guilty, and condemned for a capital offense; nor was he ignorant of what risk he might undergo in so doing. *Nevertheless*, he would show himself a kinsman, and for that cause neglect his own danger. If Foxe would alter his mind, he might come, and on that condition stay as long as he desired. But if he could not be persuaded to that, he should content himself with a shorter stay, and not bring himself and Foxe's mother to risk their fortunes, who were ready to do anything for his sake.

At a Crossroads

Mr. Foxe's state was at such a crisis, that he thought no condition ought to be refused; besides, he was secretly advised by his mother to come, and not fear his stepfather's severity. For that, perhaps, it was needful to write as he did; but when occasion offered, he would make recompence for his words with his actions. The truth is, he was better entertained by both of them than he hoped for anyway; but his business required that he

rely long upon neither. Therefore, by often going to and fro from one home to the other, which carried with it some show of business, he both deceived the diligence of those who inquired after him, and he effected that neither of them grew weary of his company.

But, however, he kept himself concealed by this means. Yet it is certain that no time of his life passed more unknown to posterity than that. Whether he did but little (which is scarcely credible), or whether it more concerned those who knew what he did, it should be withheld rather than published abroad. For his own part, he always forbore, with particular care, to speak of that story, lest where he had deserved so much, he might, by extolling a small courtesy, seem to upbraid the slenderness of the requital, rather than to show himself thankful by remembering it. Afterwards he took his journey towards London; but from what motive he did that is uncertain, unless we may imagine the convenience of the place enticed him there. Being full of all classes of people, both inhabitants and strangers from all places, London afforded him a better opportunity either to conceal himself, or to make known his abilities, or to get acquainted with those of like inclination.

By computation of times, I should think the chief cause of his going there was this: about that time religion began at length to recover itself a little, and to gather strength, especially about the city. For Mr. Foxe did not go to London till a few years before king Henry departed this life. As I said before, though the kingdom was divided into factions, as long as Henry's youth and strength remained, he so ordered the matter, that sometimes the power of each party being equal, and sometimes one or other prevailing by his authority, both were retained in their obedience. But when Henry grew into later years, perceiving that his health was impaired every day, and that his death could not be far off, he then began to consider which side was most to be trusted, and which was most to be doubted. He considered at what age he should expose his son to the raging hatred of the papists. Because of his youth, Edward was yet unfit to govern; and he was brought up in the discipline of a religion which the papists opposed.

Therefore, Henry at last resolved upon that which in reason seemed most wholesome, and in the end proved most fortunate. Having removed the papist officers from their authority, by his will he appointed for his son those tutors whose love to himself he had always found readiest, and by long trial of their fidelity, he thought were likely to continue the same to his successor. This set the protestant religion again in safety, and its professors were thereby secured of their lives. Yet no public benefit or profit was afforded them from this. So that Foxe was still in as great a want as before, having already spent all that either his friends had bestowed on him, or his own daily industry had acquired.

God's gracious provision

I would forbear to speak of a marvellous accident here, and great example of God's mercy, were the matter not so well known abroad, that it would be to no purpose for modesty's sake, to be silent.

As Mr. Foxe one day sat in St. Paul's church, exhausted with long fasting, his countenance thin, and eyes hollow, in the ghastly manner of dying men, everyone shunning a spectacle of so much horror, there came to him one whom he never remembered seeing before. Sitting by him and greeting him with much familiarity, he thrust an untold sum of money into Foxe's hand, and bidding him be of good cheer; he added that he did not know how great the misfortunes were which oppressed him, but suspected that it was no light calamity. He therefore requested that he accept in good part that small gift from his countryman, which common courtesy had forced him to offer. And he recommended that he go and nurse

himself, and take all occasions to prolong his life. In the meantime he informed him that within a few days his prospects would be improved, and a more certain condition of livelihood would be secured for him. Foxe could never learn who that man was, by whose seasonable bounty he had been relieved in that extreme necessity, though he earnestly endeavored to find him out. Some who looked further into the event which followed that prophecy, believed that this man did not come of his own accord, but was sent by some others, who very much desired Foxe's safety; and that it might perchance be through the servant's negligence, that he had suffered so much misery before any relief had been afforded. It is certain that within three days the issue seemed to make good the prediction. For there was a message sent from the duchess of Richmond, inviting him into her service on fair terms. It had so fallen out, not long before, that the duke of Norfolk,¹³ the famous warrior and most renowned general of his time, together with his son Henry, the earl of Surrey, was committed to custody in the Tower of London — for what crimes is uncertain. Henry was a man, as far as may be imagined, of sincere meaning and good understanding. While they were in prison, the earl's children were sent to the aforesaid duchess, their aunt, to be brought up and educated. These were Thomas, who succeeded in the dukedom; Henry, afterwards 1st earl of Northampton; and Jane, afterwards countess of Westmoreland.

Foxe was appointed tutor to these young lords, to instruct them both in manners and learning. In this charge he did not deceive the expectation which the duchess, a woman of great wisdom, had of him. For the two sons grew to that height of proficiency in their behavior and scholarship, that building upon this foundation in their riper years, the elder, Thomas, seemed to deserve more than the kingdom could bestow on him. And the younger, Henry, came to such happiness, that he was able to measure his fortunes, not by the opinion of others, but by his own enjoyment. The young lady Jane profited so wondrously in the Greek and Latin tongues, that she might well stand in competition with the most learned men of that time, for the praise of elegance in both kinds.

There Foxe dwelt during those golden days of felicity, not seen for a long time before, in the last years of king Henry's reign, and through the five-year reign of king Edward the Sixth — a young prince incomparably hopeful. By perfecting the work begun by his father, Edward surpassed all the acts of his predecessors, till the beginning of queen Mary's sovereignty. Upon her coming to the crown, and turning the stream of religion, all things again yielded to the papists' authority. From this, not long after, proceeded that cruel tempest, the noise of which has come also to the ears of our age. Many who suffered in that common shipwreck, had swum out to those peaceful times, as to safe harbors of everlasting tranquility. Foxe was among these.

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Bishop Gardiner — Foxe's Enemy

At that time he was sheltered by the protection of the duke, his scholar. Yet this was not without the observance of many, who for hatred or envy narrowly watched him, and secretly laid wait for him. Among these was Doctor Gardiner, bishop of Winchester.¹⁴ Foxe saw

¹³ Thomas Howard, 3rd duke Norfolk (1473-1554). His son, Henry Howard (1516/17-1547), earl of Surrey, was a famed poet. Henry was executed for treason; his father Thomas was not, but remained in prison. The earl's eldest son was Thomas (1536-1572), later 4th duke of Norfolk; he would be executed for conspiring with Mary Queen of Scots against Elizabeth I. The earl's other son was Henry (1540-1614). Lady Jane Neville (née Howard), Countess of Westmorland (1533/37-1593), had a role in the Northern Rebellion in 1569 against queen Elizabeth I.

¹⁴ Stephen Gardiner (1483-1555). The son of a wealthy cloth-maker; defender of royal supremacy over the Church; yet chief opponent of Reformation doctrine. He was secretary to Cardinal Wolsey in 1525. Bishop of Winchester 1531 to

something in him which he greatly feared, and he also much disdained that the heir of one of the foremost families in the kingdom (the duke), and nearest joined to himself in friendship, should be depraved by his company.

Because Gardiner was Foxe's greatest enemy, it will not be apart from our purpose to say something further about this man, so that both their natures may be better known.

The bishop of Winchester was a man famous in his youth, whether for his birth or parentage I have no certainty — one who stood midway between good and bad, and always growing worse as he grew older. Nature had bestowed on him industry, wit, and eloquence. But his pride, craftiness, and desire to bear sway, he learned from cardinal Wolsey. His abilities qualified him for any employment, which he managed with exceeding diligence, to gain new honors. Having obtained them, he then put on boldness instead of industry, flattery for obedience; and instead of fidelity, he put on deceit and compliments, and similar frivolous fashions of the court. He was cruel and proud in bearing those honors which his virtue won to him: in regaining any that he lost, he was able to weary any man with submission and humility. For he appeared as great in the diversity of his fortunes, as in his conditions.

He was pleasing to king Henry for some while, and high in his favor. By his pen he maintained the king's authority against the pope.¹⁵ Afterwards, when his prevaricating in this was understood, he was slighted by the king, and stripped of his dignity (office) so that he might be less able to do harm. Under Edward VI, he was not only neglected, but imprisoned, and underwent the reproach of a mean estate. At length, in queen Mary's reign, he was freed. Being restored to his former honors, he exercised not so much command as tyranny. He was sick with envy that cardinal Pole out-shone him in dignity, and overshadowed his glory with height of honors. He had often, but in vain, tried to cure his malady by seeking cardinalship. Anger at length exasperating his disease, he pined away.

That man began and ended in this manner, commended for many excellences of mind while he led a private life; but in his honors, he was unbridled and of no moderation. One might well say, nature had made him a worthy man, and fortune corrupted him.

Foxe and the duke of Norfolk

Now, Foxe was cherished in the bosom of a most loving duke. Yet after he saw all sorts of men troubled for their religion's sake, some imprisoned, and others burnt — in brief, nothing on all sides but flight, slaughter, and the gallows; and that Gardiner, the bishop of Winchester, was the principal incendiary of all this — he began to fear what might become of him, and to think of some speedy way for his departure from there. In private respects, Gardiner was already his enemy.

As soon as the duke knew Foxe's intent to leave, he gently chided his fearfulness. He used many words to persuade him to leave all thought of going away. He affirmed that it was not agreeable either to honor or modesty, for him to allow his tutor, so well-deserving at his

1551 and again 1553 to 1555. Henry bypassed him to appoint Thomas Cranmer as archbishop of Canterbury in 1532. Thomas Cromwell eased him out of his secretaryship in 1524. In 1539, Gardiner led the push for the Act of Six Articles. Gardiner and Thomas Howard, 3rd duke of Norfolk, had a hand in bringing about Cromwell's downfall in June 1540. He then succeeded Cromwell as chancellor of Cambridge. He was committed to the Tower by Edward VI in 1548, and deprived of his bishopric in 1550; he was reinstated by queen Mary in 1553, who appointed him lord Chancellor.

¹⁵ In 1528–29 he was sent on missions to Pope Clement VII to negotiate for the annulment of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon—the issue that was to cause Henry to break with Rome and declare himself head of the English Church. As a reward for his services Gardiner was made Henry's principal secretary in 1529 and bishop of Winchester, the wealthiest see in England, in 1531. — *Ency. Britannica*.

hands, to be taken from him at any time of his life. But that it should *then* be done, was not seemly for the one who desired it. Let him but think to himself how great a burden of hatred his scholar (the duke) must bear among those who were ignorant, whether he forsook him of his own accord, or were forsaken by him. Yet he entreated not to be excused from any hatred which might light upon him, if at least he might do it for Foxe's advantage. But in fleeing, what misery would be wanting: banishment, poverty, contempt — and among those who did not know him, the reproach of a runaway? He acknowledged, that would be less evil than death; but it had not yet come to such extremity; nor would he allow it to. He said he still had wealth, and favor, and friends, and the fortune of his house. If the mischance prevailed further, he would himself partake of the danger, and make the destruction common. He remembered with what precepts Foxe had fortified his younger years; nor had he hearkened to his instructions with more attention than he would with constancy put them into practice. Only let Foxe be of good courage, and so avoid the violence of his enemies, as not to be weary of his friend's company. He spoke this, hoping to prevail with Foxe by his authority; but if that might not be obtained, he would then further Foxe in the course he intended.

There was in the duke's speech even more credit, because it was known to proceed from the sincerity of his heart, and a most tender good will towards him. And Foxe now grew ashamed, not so much in what he had done in asking leave, for he believed his request might have been granted; but his modesty excused him. The duke's answer was that the same care did not befit the lord and his servant; that it was indeed for the duke's honor to defend his tutor from any injury. It was Foxe's own part to take care lest, for his safety, the duke might incur apparent danger, or perpetual trouble. Nor did his fear lack all excuse. For though he well knew the duke could not be drawn from his promise and good intentions towards him, Foxe was not ignorant that by some wile or other, the duke might be circumvented and deceived.

Foxe's Escape from England

For even at that time, the bishop of Winchester was very intimate with the duke, relying upon the ancient friendship he had always used toward that family, and by whose credit he had increased his own dignity. He often resorted there, to present his service to the duke. At several times he desired that he might see the duke's old tutor. At first the duke denied his request, one time alleging his absence, another that he was ill at ease. Still, after feigning several delays to put him off, at length it chanced that Foxe (not knowing the bishop was within the house) entered the room where the duke and he were in discourse; and seeing the bishop, he withdrew himself with a show of bashfulness. The bishop asked who that was; the duke answered, "his physician, who was somewhat uncourtly, being newly come from the university." "I like his countenance and aspect very well," replied the bishop, "and when occasion arises, I will make use of him." The duke straightaway understood that speech as the messenger of some approaching danger; and now he himself thought it high time for Foxe to no longer remain within the same city, or within the same see, against the force of a crafty, and then open deceiver. But by all means, the bishop being sick, must be prevented.

From that time he caused all things necessary for Foxe's flight to be provided, with the least notice possible. He sent one of his servants ahead to Ipswich haven to hire a bark,¹⁶ and make ready all things needful for the voyage. Because it seemed scarcely safe for Foxe to stay in any city or place of resort, he chose the house of one of his servants, a farmer, where

¹⁶ *Or barque: a sailing ship with 3 (or more) masts.*

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Foxe might with convenience await a fair wind to put to sea. Foxe went there as secretly as he could, taking his wife as companion in his travels. She was then pregnant, but resolved to go with him, not yielding to the entreaty of those who would persuade her to the contrary. As soon as it was told him that his company expected him, Foxe made haste to the port, and went on board.

Scarcely had they weighed anchor, when suddenly a boisterous wind arose from the contrary shore, which caused the waves to rage with such violence that the stoutest mariners began to tremble. Then followed a dark night, with continual showers, and a great multitude of clouds gathered together into a thick storm of rain and hail. These both hindered the seamen's work, and took away all possibility to direct their course by the compass any longer. That night, with much ado, they lay at anchor, and as soon as the day appeared, when the tempest seemed not likely to cease, they began to cast about, and make back again to the shore. The tide favoring them a little, at length and with much difficulty they arrived in the evening at the same haven again, from where they had loosed the day before. During the time that Foxe had been at sea, a pursuivant from the bishop of Winchester broke open the farmer's house, with a warrant to apprehend him, wherever he might be found, and bring him back a prisoner to the city. But understanding that he was already gone, after he had pursued him even to the port. There he found that the ship Foxe was embarked in, that was yet scarcely out of sight, had returned back.

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As soon as he came ashore, Foxe heard what had passed, by report of the people. Although the news somewhat amazed him, he collected himself, immediately took a horse, and made out as if he had left the town. But returning the same night, he bargained with the master of the ship to set sail again with the first convenience of the winds, telling him that his business so required it, and he did not much care what shore he landed at. He only desired him to go forward, and not doubt that God would prosper so pious a work. Whether for reward or piety's sake, the pilot took upon him this venturous task, and performed it accordingly. For loosing from there in the silence of the night, as soon as the tide turned, though the sea was rough and the weather blustering, within two days' time he landed Foxe and his company in safety at Newport-Haven, on the other side of the sea.¹⁷

Whoever reads this history, does not need a more evident argument to force him to acknowledge either the certain course of Providence, or the uncertainty of all human forecast. He may see the subtlest deliberations of the wisest heads, oftentimes by errors come to no effect, often overthrown by sudden accidents, and now and then thwarted by contrary counsels. And all this is done to teach men to so use their authority, that the more power which fortune has conferred upon them, the less they are able to do of themselves; and therefore they are not to despise those who are of meaner condition. For God regards all men alike, having made them equal in nature, and distinguished them only by degrees. It is not to puff up the one sort, or shame the other, but to exercise both their modesties — or His own justice if they neglect their duty.

Life in Basel

¹⁷ Likely Newhaven, a port town in the Lewes district of East Sussex, England, at the mouth of the River Ouse. The town developed during the Middle Ages as the nearby port of Seaford began drying up, forcing a "new port" to be established. In Foxe's time, a sheltered harbor was built at Newhaven in the English Channel, the "other side" of the N. Sea.

When he had spent some days at Newport, in refreshing himself and his company, Foxe went to Antwerp, and from there by easy journeys to Basel.¹⁸

This city was at that time much spoken of, for the great friendship and courtesy showed to those of the English nation. For this cause many famous men, withdrawing themselves from the cruelty of the times, had escaped out of England to there. Of these, many had but a small fortune. Some maintained their livelihood one way, some another, but most by reviewing and correcting the press. This place then surpassed all the cities of Germany for careful printing. It abounded with diligent and wealthy men in that profession, and preferred the industry of our men in that employment, before any of their own countrymen.

Foxe joined himself to these men, and was so much the better liked, having always been inured to hardiness. In his youth he was put to the trial of his patience. He had learned how to endure labor, and that which seemed the greatest misery to others — to suffer want, to sit up late, and to keep a hard diet — these were to him but the sports of fortune. This perhaps may seem strange to many, who remember Foxe as a slender-bodied man all his life, and in his elder years somewhat sickly. But let no man compare his old age, worn out and eaten up with cares and by the course of nature, with the flourishing prime of his youth, which appears to have been most healthful. Whether in those of indifferent size, it is an upright shape of the limbs and members that sufficiently serves for health, or perhaps the mind needs less help from the body, when it is animated with a desire of virtuous actions, and is content with its own abilities to pursue those things which it intends.

His industry may be abundantly testified from this: that being so full of employment at Basel, he nevertheless began to write his *History of the Acts and Monuments of the Church* there — a work that, by the title alone, seems beyond man's belief. At first it sufficed only to mark it out, and to draw the first lines or rudiments; or as it were, to fasten the warp to the loom. He added and interwove with it the whole body of the history, after he returned into his own country. First he wrote it in Latin, and sent the copy to Basel to be printed. There the work is still held in great estimation, as it is also in diverse other foreign nations. But it is hardly known among our own countrymen. This shows that while we seek after and admire strangers, we neglect our own countrymen, either through carelessness or envy. Shortly after, to gratify the unlearned, he wrote it in English.

Meanwhile, by the death of queen Mary, the reformed religion began to flourish again in England, and the papist faction began much to decline. While she followed her own inclination, she was in every way excellent, and well worthy of so royal a parentage. But while she denied nothing to some wicked counsellors, she did not obtain that praise she would otherwise have deserved. And if she is not ill spoken of, it may be attributed to the unwillingness of the succeeding age to speak very freely of princes.

Reign of Elizabeth.

The whole Christian world immediately felt some benefit by this change of the English government.

The neighboring nations, now disburdened of the exiled Englishmen, rejoiced as much for the good fortune of their guests, as for their own. But at home what could be devised to assure their safety, or relieve their distresses, which they did not sooner enjoy than presume to hope for? Those who had forsaken their houses, were now called back home. Those who had suffered imprisonment, were now released. Those who were decayed by loss of goods,

¹⁸ [Basel is a city in Switzerland located on the river Rhine, at the southern borders of Germany and France.](#)

were now repaired by gifts. Those who had been thrust from places of honor, were now restored to their former dignities. The unjust laws which had been enacted were in the meanwhile abrogated, and wholesome laws established in their places. Their minds were quieted; their consciences at liberty; they were in all degrees at peace among themselves, and every man's goods were without danger. For queen Elizabeth, even in the infancy of her reign, disposed the affairs of the commonwealth in such a way, that whatever the long and prosperous government of other princes hardly produced in many years, broke forth all at once at her very first entrance, even beyond the people's wish. It was as if some deity had diffused itself, and poured out felicity upon the world. To mention this incomparable and most glorious queen on any occasion, and not to supply some further digression, let it be accounted a capital crime among all writers of history.

Elizabeth was born of the lady Anne Boylen, whom king Henry VIII, after his divorce from his first marriage, took to wife. From her she received, as a princely dowry, a true zeal for religion. As she grew older in years, so she increased in manners, knowledge, and beauty, which as well befit a princess. So that nature seemed to have boasted in her the masterpiece of her most absolute workmanship; and fortune seemed to have raised her to as high a degree as hope could ever aspire to.

It made her better capable to bear so great a fortune, that she at first learned to obey, and then to command, and to use that honor first toward others, which was shortly after to be used by others toward her. In her private life, she had experienced the hatred that is fatal to the successors of great empires; yet she was of a nobler spirit than to return the like upon those who were to succeed her. As soon as she came to the kingdom, her several virtues appeared at once in their brightest lustre. Her mind did not descend to an excessive care of her body. The principles of her new sovereignty were to acquaint herself with the public reasons of state; to seek fit men to bear part of her cares; to strengthen all parts of the kingdom with faithful ministers; to know the temper and abilities of those about her; and to search into the strength, councils, and attempts of foreign princes. But all these qualities, if not well tempered, might have had, perhaps, no long continuance. Such therefore was her gravity, as nothing more pleasing; such her severity, as nothing more gentle; and such her frugality, as nothing more bountiful. Only she knew no measure in those excellencies whose glory is founded, not in the even-balancing of different *virtues*, but as it were, in the throng of illustrious *actions*. So was the nobility of her birth heaped with desire for glory. Her religion was most sincere, and seconded with zeal for a holy life. But when all these virtues broke forth into actions, what days of happiness we then enjoyed!

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What more cheerful, more secure or wealthy years did England see, than those forty-four years of peace! For she never voluntarily provoked any to war, and always preferred the justice of the quarrel above the victory. To the Irish, war, honor, and shame to have lost a province, enforced her. To the French, it was piety and pity for her neighbors' danger. To the Spanish, her own safety and necessity compelled her — comprehending in itself the force of all other causes.

In the progress of this war with Spain (1585-1604), we heard of, and saw, that which perhaps never happened in any war before. For other nations, though they fought with mortal hatred against each other, yet their battles were restrained to some certain fields and places. But this war was so scattered over all places, and managed with such nobleness of courage on both sides, that through all seas and havens from east to west, the sun might still behold the English and Spanish navies fighting for their lives, honors, or estates. Never till

then had that sea, which was accustomed to no other command but ours, frothed with strokes of foreign oars. Nor would a large volume contain the discourse, if I were to relate the number and stateliness of ships, the strength of sea and land forces, the supply of ammunition, engines, weapons, guns, and provision of victuals belonging to that navy which Philip the Second, king of Spain, sent here in the year 1588, with the intention to destroy the English name. Let this suffice, that never was any preparation by sea comparable to this fleet, made by any of the most powerful princes or states, as shown in all the records of antiquity. Yet, such a huge and threatening armada, swelling with self-confidence and a presumed hope of victory, was utterly defeated in a moment, by the fortune of this invincible princess.

The navies met together, unequal in number and strength. But the manner of the fight was disadvantageous to the Spaniards, because the English vessels being much less bulky, and lower built at the front, could with more ease cast about for the wind, and immediately having discharged, retire to open sea. Thereby they eluded the sluggish and unwieldy ships of their enemies; and by levelling at the broadsides of the Spanish galleons, they bestowed their shot with a more certain and successful aim. To this, our captains far excelled the Spanish commanders in the skill of sea-fight, and knowledge of the tides. The Spanish, now taught by the former day's experience that they could in no way, but in a set fight, bear the English encounters, cast their anchors near Calais. There they expected new forces out of Flanders, and by the goodness of their ordnance they defended themselves. This laid them open to the English for the victory. For having filled some ships with tow, pitch, brimstone, and all sorts of combustible materials, and setting them on fire, with a favorable tide, the British drove them directly upon the enemy. The Spanish were so exceedingly terrified by this action, that the whole fleet, cutting their cables as fast as they could, took instantly to flight. In this flight, some of their ships were burnt, some sunk, some forced to run themselves on shore, some split upon the rocks, and some, in their haste, fell foul on their fellows, and so they were torn and bruised, and taken by our soldiers. Those who escaped best, did not dare to go back the same way they came. With long labor both by sea and land, they returned at length to Spain, by the coasts of Scotland, and the islands of the Orkney archipelago. These were seas which in no age had been sailed upon, except by those who were very good at fleeing.

Such great virtues and victories met together in one person, that of necessity, envy would be an attendant, followed by hatred and treacheries. These could not be so avoided by this most innocent queen, but that her safety was, throughout her life, daily endangered. Which makes me rather wonder, what rare doctrine of our adversaries this may be, for piety sake which they pretend, persecuting even virtue itself, whereas (not only in no heathen, but in none the most barbarous nation, which does at all acknowledge any deity) it was never thought just to take revenge upon virtue, even in their enemies; unless it is that the indulgence of the Christian religion may be so far extended, that although we are commanded to forgive our enemies, either they must not be virtuous, or they must not be forgiven. But evident enough it is, that in human affairs, the desires of men are often employed to one end, and the will of God to another. By him was queen Elizabeth protected always, from the injuries and wicked enterprises of her enemies, and brought full of years to that honor, as to carry with her that glory unspotted to heaven, which she obtained on earth, envy now in vain carping at her after death, whose cause all posterity does patronize.

Foxe Returns to England

Now let us return to our history.

THE LIFE OF JOHN FOXE.

Master Foxe heard by his friends, the happy news that queen Elizabeth reigned in England, and that the state of religion was sure, and likely to continue. About the end of that year in which this was in hand (1533), he came back to his country. He had taken so much time to think to himself, lest — if by any inconstancy of the people, they should grow weary of their present state — he should again be forced to seek his fortunes abroad. Besides, his family being then increased with two children, he was obliged to stay in Basel till money might be sent from home to bear his charges in travelling. But before he could get from there, he was informed that some hard statements had been made respecting him, as if through pride he had delayed to come, thereby seeking a shorter and speedier way to preferment as being due him, whenever he should be sent for. This he knew to be a cast of their cunning, who were themselves striving for honors with all earnestness, and feared Master Foxe as a man deserving of it, and likely to be preferred before them. Yet he did not think it worth his labor to make any excuse for a crime that would of itself come to nothing. But equally despising injuries, and neglecting his own right, he hid himself wholly in his study.

As in our bodies it is commonly seen that those men are healthier who use moderate diet and exercise than those who exceed in either, so I suppose the case stands with our minds. He who fortune has given no rule, and prescribes none for himself, can hardly persist in the soundness of his duty. Whereas he who uses modesty in his fortunes, is always fresher and more vigorous for any illustrious undertakings. For Master Foxe, being famous for his abilities, and supported (as I showed before) with the friendship of great personages, might with ease have attained to whatever his desires had inclined him. But affecting neither riches nor authority, nor the wishes of happy men (though his deserts were equal with any) he was well contented to keep the conscience of well-doing to himself, and that rewards should remain in the possession of others. I neither admit this as being wholly to his commendation, nor do I find fault with it, as many have done. Let us at least favor good men so far as to allow virtue to choose what degree of fortune it chooses to shine in. Or if we would restrain it within certain limits, let us do it to those who are good, with hope of reward. As for those who are good for no design, if their glory does not overwhelm us, we will not need to fear their multitude.

I shall write of a life continually bearing true and solid fruits, but not such on which the reader's senses may surfeit; where neither the rare stratagems of war or peace shall be related to you, nor any such discourses as writers use when they intend to captivate the ears of the hearers. I am to speak of a life passed over without noise, a life of modesty at home and abroad, of charity, contempt of the world, and thirst after heavenly things; of unwearied labors, where all actions are so performed as might be exemplary or beneficial to others.

I showed before, that Foxe first applied himself to write the history of the church while he was at Basel. And the reason why he did not finish it there was that he might afterwards use the testimony of more witnesses. This work not a little vexed the minds of the papists. For they well saw that they had shed so much blood in vain, and had been guilty of such great cruelty to no effect, if an account of these proceedings should be transmitted to succeeding ages. And they well understood that the work itself could not be taken out of men's hands. There was therefore no other hope left, than by charging the author with falsehood, and feigning some cavils¹⁹ against him, so as to lessen his credit and authority.

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¹⁹ *Cavil*: An evasion of the point of an argument by raising irrelevant distinctions or objections.

While Foxe endeavored to remove and take this away from himself, he could not avoid it. Rather, he was obliged to pass the lawful bounds of a history, by a new collection of matters and testimonies. And let us only judge by this, the *industry* of our author. He not only gathered together so many things for the materials of his work, taken from all distances of time or place, and through all counties of the kingdom, collecting the acts of both courts, and the records of the matters judged — but by a most distracted kind of diligence, he also alone searched out, examined, even freed from moth-eating, and afterwards reduced into convenient order, those things themselves. They were partly rusty and eaten out, as it were, by antiquity, partly corrupted by hatred or flattery of authors, and partly hidden in the rugged and short form of old writing. I find by the author's own notes, that in the eleventh year after he began to write it, the work was finished. And it is very probable that the work shall live on, which was so long in being brought forth. Neither did he, in all that time, use the help of any servant, about his writing or other business. Industry employed to one purpose, and gathered into itself, affords more useful assistance than being scattered, and the mind divided into many cares at once, however many helping hands it has.

For many years Foxe had left no time free from his study, either not at all, or not seasonably affording himself what nature required. His natural liveliness and vigor being spent, he was at length brought to such a condition, that neither his friends nor kindred could recognize him by sight. By this means he first fell into that withered leanness of body, in which many afterwards saw him. He never again returned to that pleasing and cheerful countenance which he had before. But when he would not be persuaded to lessen his accustomed labors, or to lay aside his study, or to recreate himself, these being the cause of the debility which had been produced, the signs of it likewise remained.

Foxe's Reputation

From this time, Foxe began to be much spoken of as a good historian. The other virtues of his mind, as they were less known abroad, so they were overshadowed by that which was known. Shortly after, he also began to grow famous for his other endowments, not only as a learned man, but as one who is useful for his friendliness, and helpful to others. Modesty will not allow me, by way of his journal, to recite the voluntary pains he took upon himself. However, it will not be amiss to say something of it in general; and to show how, either by good advice, comfortable persuasions, or a charitable hand, he either relieved the wants, or satisfied the desires of innumerable persons. Whereupon no man's house in those times was thronged with more clients than his. There repaired to him both citizens and strangers, noblemen and common people of all degrees, and almost all for the same cause: *to seek some relief for a wounded conscience*. At length, some who were likewise sick in body, would need to be carried to him. But to stop any rumors, he would not allow this to be done. For some reported that these people were cured, *because* they were brought there.

Thus spending the day at home in such duties, and frequently preaching abroad, and going to visit those who were not able to come to him themselves, he fulfilled what was enjoined of him by the courtesy of his own disposition. Nor did he neglect the performance of that duty which the office of his ministry had imposed upon him. Whatever little time his friends had left free to his own disposal — either being called away by other occasions, or ashamed of being too tedious — he did not bestow upon sleeping or taking his pleasure, but in prayer and studying. When he engaged in either of these exercises, he always retired into some private apartment, or made use of the night's silence for secrecy, lest by chance the vehement groans he sometimes mingled with his prayers, being heard by some who were near the place, gave notice how earnest he was in his devotions. For at no time of the night

could any man come to find his labors ended; but often the next morning's light concluded the last of his night's care.

Now, although these things are true, I well know that many will find fault, that I have so slightly passed them over. They will demand to know why I did not produce the matters themselves, as witnesses of his actions, or at least some particular example of each kind, so that they may give credit to the rest, with more security. But there are many things which hinder me from doing so.

First, common civility forbids us to publish abroad that which the conscience of another has committed to our secrecy. He would give a very bad example, who should by all means conceal rather than make known to the world, the secrets of private houses, the conflicts of friends, and such private affairs in men's lives that may either shame or repent them. Next, the matters themselves, which used to be attended to in the greatest possible privacy, could by no means come to our knowledge. Or if something were gathered by suspicion, and I were to instance it in one or two particulars, what great assurance in the rest, could I draw from this?

I will now bring the last argument for his ability or industry — I do not know whether I should say — that this man, who had given himself so wholly to please his friends that he had set apart no time for his other occasions, yet he wrote so much that it might well have been believed, he had done nothing else.

Foxe's Writings

Here, for the sake of those who may desire it, I have set down the titles of those books he wrote; which are these:

Comaediaram libri 2 (Book 2 of the Comedies) — Syllogisticon (Syllogistics) ²⁰ — Admonitio ad Parliamentum (Reminder to Parliament) — De lapsis per errorem in Ecclesiam restituendis (On restoring into the Church those who have fallen into error) — Oliva Evangelica (Evangelical Olive) — De Christo gratis justificante (Of Christ justifying by grace) — De Christo Crucifixo (The Cross of Christ) — Papa confutatus (Refutation of the Pope) — Contra Osorium de Justitia (Against Osorius on Justification) — Meditationes supra Apocalypsi in Rerum in Ecclesia gestarum Commentarii (Meditations on the Apocalypse, in Commentaries on Events in the Church) — and, The Acts and Monuments of the Church.

Foxe's Motivations

We have now come so far as to be able from all this, to give the reader a full sight at once of the rest of Foxe's life. This should, I suppose, please in the same way that we see those who travel, when they have been long tired with continual rugged ways and rough forests, and at length come into the plain and champagne countries, are not a little delighted and refreshed with the very change of soil.

In this sketch of his conditions (as it were), we will first observe what might well be thought the foremost of his virtues; namely, a deliberate and resolved contempt of all things which are in greatest esteem among men, and especially of pleasures. This disposition of his, whether inbred by nature, acquired by discipline, or infused by God, of necessity gave him great ability to perform with commendation, whatever he chose to take in hand. There is

²⁰ *Syllogistics*: in logic, the formal analysis of logical terms and operators and the structures that make it possible to infer true conclusions from given premises.

nothing which can mislead the mind into errors — which would otherwise of itself hold the right way — except what proceeds from some pleasure or other, lying in wait to entrap us in our journey. But Foxe so played with these enemies, as one who did not desire to save himself by fleeing to or sheltering himself in some secret place of retirement. But by often skirmishing, and gaining experience in the manner of fighting, he increased his own strength, and gave others an example of fortitude. He used to say that they did not greatly matter, who forsook business and employments in the world, lest they allow themselves to be allured and deceived by them. For these things were in themselves innocent, and all grew hurtful only when they were overvalued and pursued with avaricious desire. Whoever can beat this back when it assails him and strives to break in upon him, is deservedly called temperate. But someone who was never in any temptation, may seem to be good through lack of occasion to be otherwise, rather than by his own virtue.

He therefore never declined the friendship of illustrious personages — not to draw honor to himself, but that thereby he saw his commendation would be more effectual, when he desired favor on behalf of others. The money which rich men sometimes offered him, he accepted, giving it back to the poor. He likewise frequented the tables of his friends, not for his own pleasure, being of a spare diet, but from *courtesy*, to keep them company.

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And let none imagine he either feared or fled from wrestling and striving with gourmet delights, or that he thought himself better defended against the pleasures incident to eating and drinking, by being absent rather than by guarding his own moderation. In a word, Mr. Foxe so behaved himself in those things which are accompanied by delights, it is certain that none of those who were always in his company, can remember any speech or action of his, which might betray the least show of a desire for them. And he was so far from thirsting after honor, riches, applause, or any outward good, that he would at no time allow the care of his private estate to enter his mind, much less that it should be overcome or drawn aside by thoughts of his household affairs. I will hereafter declare where either his security, or as some called it, the slothfulness in his own fortunes, proceeded from. In the meantime, I will consider the cause for which he thought all other things were so contemptible, especially since that could not be imagined to arise from any obstinate disdainfulness, much less from a sluggishness of mind. I assure myself that it was only the love of God with which his mind was so filled, and so much delighted, that he left no room or affection free for other pleasures. Of his own accord, he separated himself from the fashions of the world, of which he was not otherwise incapable. And devoting himself wholly to this care, like someone who had found an invaluable treasure, he bent his eyes and mind upon this only, neither hoping nor expecting anything besides, but resolved to make this the scope of all his wishes and desires. As must happen in such a case, it so fell out by this, that those who observed his mind so steadfastly fixed upon God, seeing that he both spoke and did many things beyond the capacity of an ordinarily good man, they believed he could not be void of some divine inspiration. And now some began to honor him, not as a good man, but as one sent from heaven, even to adore him — through the folly of mankind madly dotting upon anything, whatever their own will has set up to be worshipped.

Foxe on the church of Rome

It will not be out of the way to add in general what Foxe thought of the church of Rome and its bishop, as far as it may be gathered out of his speeches, when being of ripe years, he had strengthened his judgment with much experience.

THE LIFE OF JOHN FOXE.

The heads of his opinions were these:

- That among the Christian church, the Roman church had always been chief in dignity, and greatest in antiquity.
- That it retained this dignity and preference many ages after, little by little growing to greater authority, not by consent of the people, nor by any right to that claim, but by reason of a certain inclination and custom among men, that where any chanced to excel others, they first began to be powerful among the rest, and then at length began to exercise command over them.
- That the greatest honor and authority it had was among these western kingdoms which, as everyone mostly loved the Christian religion, so they were most assisted by the diligence and piety of the Romans; in this respect, it had not ill-deserved to be called the *mother* of those churches.
- That the occasion of so great an increase, was that the city of Rome, being of such ancient renown, and as it were, appointed monarch of the world by destiny, it abounded in all ages with men of great courage and virtue — being well peopled, wealthy, usefully seated, and always under the emperors' sight, easily afforded this convenience.
- That at first the Christians could not meet anywhere together with less trouble than in Rome, nor be more plentifully provided for, nor more safely concealed, nor when there was need, die with more constancy — all of which made posterity greatly admire and honor them.
- That the church at first flourished in good discipline, and in the approved holiness of professing believers, rather than in abundance of riches, there being yet no looseness, no pride or ambition found in the manners of the clergy; and money, servants, lands, jewels, and similar goods, were altogether unknown to them — in short, all things were so restrained, either by modesty in using what they had, or by being content in what they did not have, that the seat of the Christian religion seemed to be in Rome alone.

All this was observed with the greatest strictness in the times nearest to the church's infancy. But in process of time, little by little, it began to be neglected and corrupted, in the same way that rivers, whose streams being small and clear near their head, the farther they proceed, the larger is the channel, but with more troubled waters; till at length, by mixing with the sea, they also become unwholesome. And though in no one place can we perceive where they are in any jot changed from their first purity; yet we may easily enough find a great difference if we compare the extremes together. In the church, it so fell out that having brought all nations to the Christian faith, they began to think it was for the honor of the empire, that the priests should no longer endure poverty (as they had formerly been accustomed), but live in a more sumptuous way. To this purpose, the emperors granted many things to the churchmen, both as an ornament and a reward to them. Then too, the priests began first to be taken with the love of riches, and then by degrees, to grow wanton through abundance, and not care what little pains they took. Afterwards (as the succeeding age always adds to the vice of the former) they affected power also. Once they had obtained it, and received the command of the church by the emperor's gift, they did not give it up till (having cast down the emperors, by whose bounty they had so prevailed) they invaded the privileges of the empire, and now laid claim to both spiritual and temporal government.

In the meanwhile, neglecting those rules of religion which their predecessors had prescribed to them, neither searching the Scriptures themselves, nor permitting others to do it, they

esteemed the worship of God to consist in outward devotion and pomp of ceremonies, rather than in the obedience of faith. By this means, it came to pass that the church of Rome (as with all other immoderate empires) not only fell from that high degree it once held, but it also subverted in itself the very substance and state of a church. Nor should this seem strange if, as with most healthy bodies, they fall into sickness with the most danger. So it happens that the prime of all churches should have no mean, but either remain in perfect health, or become its most dangerous enemy; and that for this cause, the pope now seemed to be antichrist. Notwithstanding that the case was so plain, neither part should lend too much belief to arguments, nor be too earnest in hindering it, if by any moderation of men the matter might be brought to soundness and agreement:

- That it was not, perhaps, in our power to take from Rome her ancient honor, and the opinion of her religion that was so fixed already in the minds of men.
- That the church of Rome had fallen by her own covetousness, ambition, and prevarication; but that no man had ever gone so far in sinning, that repentance had not reached as far.
- That therefore it was fitting to allow them, as returning to repentance, some convenient *means* to move them to it, and sufficient *space* to repent in.
- That it might be the author disliked them, because it was a German or a Frenchman, and not an Italian of their own nation, who had told them of their errors.
- That there might one day be found among their own men, some by whose authority they would not be ashamed to amend their faults, and with more willingness, to part with their own power in order to procure the peace of the whole world.
- That there was at least this hope left, it might so fall out that they had no further erred in the articles of faith, than that they would not suffer too much to be known.
- That the conditions of agreement would be, first,
 - That the pope should forsake all those tenets by which he gained such great sums of money — there being nothing to which the people might be persuaded with more difficulty, than that Christ, the Savior of the world, had instructed his church in the way of getting money — and putting the Scriptures up for sale.
 - Next, that the pope should renounce all secular jurisdiction, and not suppose himself to have title, or anything to do with the right of princes.
- That, on the other side, the pope's opposers should not refuse the idea that some one man may have the principal place of counsel and government in church affairs, as it would have many conveniences in it, if it could be done with security; nor should the Romish church having once fallen, be an argument against it; nor because the Romish church had first flourished, should that prevail for it, and make it preferred before any other.

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- That all this was to be left to the discretion of a general council of the Christians, which might be so equitable that neither the power nor the favor of anyone should be able to promise itself any advantage to the injury of the rest, regarding either the place of meeting, or the difference in number of voices.
- That meanwhile, it would be of great moment to the hope and speediness of settling all controversies, if hereafter, on *both* sides, they would give such instructions as might cause in each party a better hope and opinion of the other — especially that they ought to quit

that stubborn conceit by which each of them, presuming itself to be the only true church, supposes the other to be excluded.

For it would not only be wicked, but also highly to the dishonor of God, to think that He had so given his commandments to mankind, that they should be turned to the destruction of those who obey them. If all men will not consent in the same opinion, this must of necessity come to pass: that those who understand the most, will refuse to admit the rest. Was the kingdom of heaven therefore reserved only for the more understanding sort, and those who know the most? Where then would the fools of the world be? Where would little children be, whom Christ had set apart for himself? How much better would we serve God by following what was evident, than by interpreting what was doubtful? How much more probable would it be that God's mercy is abundant, than if men were so agreed in point of general obedience, that nothing else would be laid to their charge? For the force of obedience before God would be so great, that thereby all other inequalities might be made even. But if all were *not* in equal condition, then certainly with God, those who judged others with the most modesty, would be best esteemed.

Foxe's Friends

I will now speak of the friends of Mr. Foxe, among whom I have already shown with how great an affection he was beloved by the duke of Norfolk, being maintained by his bounty during his lifetime, and after his death by the pension the duke bestowed on him, which his son, the right honorable earl of Suffolk, to whom those revenues descended, continued out of his liberality.

His fortunes were increased by the lord William Cecil, then lord treasurer, a man excellent beyond expression, whom it as much availed queen Elizabeth to have for her minister, as it availed the kingdom to have Elizabeth for their queen. Without doubt, lord Cecil was most deserving that in himself and in his posterity, he should flourish in that kingdom which he had made most flourishing by his wisdom and advice. He obtained for Mr. Foxe, from the queen's gift, the rectory of Shipton, upon no other inducement but his public merits. And when Mr. Foxe delayed, and in his manner entreated leave to excuse himself, the lord Cecil politically overcame his bashfulness by telling him that he neither accepted that for an answer, nor did he deserve that the blame of Mr. Foxe's refusing the queen's gift, should be laid upon himself, as if lord Cecil had been his hindrance.

He was very acceptable to the earls of Bedford and of Warwick.

He was very intimate with sir Francis Walsingham, secretary of state, a prudent and vigilant man, and one who deservedly was the first who advanced the power of the secretaryship.

He sincerely loved the two brothers, sir Thomas Hennage and Master Michael Hennage; the first for the sweetness of his behavior, the other for his solid learning and singular modesty of life. And though they were both, in their kind, most accomplished gentlemen, Foxe was prone to say that sir Thomas Hennage had as much as was requisite in any way to become a complete courtier, but that Master Michael Hennage had in himself all that his brother had, besides his own, which the court had not corrupted.

He likewise bore a strong affection toward sir Drew Drury, as to a man of sincere intentions, and of great constancy in all fortunes, and perhaps the only man in the court who continued his favor without loss of his freedom.

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Among the prelates he principally revered Doctor Grindall, archbishop of Canterbury; Doctor Elmar, bishop of London; Doctor Pilkington, bishop of Durham; and Doctor Nowell, dean of St. Paul's, who were his partners in banishment at Basel.

Among the writers of his time, he preferred before the rest, Doctor Humphrey, Doctor Whiteaker, and Doctor Fulke, with whose learning he was greatly delighted; and he esteemed it no small benefit to be beloved by them in return.

But with none did he have more familiar acquaintance than with Master John Crowley and Master Baldwin Collins, whose counsel he made use of in all his affairs, especially of Master Collins. He used to say concerning him, that he did not know which had the greatest share in him, whether excellence of knowledge, or modesty of mind.

Among military men, sir Francis Drake was much delighted with Foxe's familiarity. It would be needless to commend him near the times he lived in; but many volumes would scarcely suffice to commend sir Drake to posterity, according to his merits,.

Foxe always found great good will among the citizens of London, especially with sir Thomas Gresham, sir Thomas Roe, Alderman Bacchus, Master Ismith. Master Dale, and Master Sherington, who held him in great estimation. Part of them were those who had borne the highest places of honor in the city, and part of them were merchants of great substance.

I pass by many who perhaps had as great a share in Master Foxe's friendship as any of these. Nor should it be accounted a fault if I either did not know or remember them all. But this I should not omit (being the chief cause why I thought it fit to mention the above-named worthy men) that these were men from whom, as I said before, Master Foxe received such large sums of money to divide among the poor. Although they did it with so much privacy that they did not trust it to messengers in delivering it. They did not regard any outward praise that their well-doing might procure them, knowing the consciousness of it was as much as they needed to desire. Yet it was not fitting for me, in Foxe's history, to dissemble it, or to give any man occasion to suppose the truth was not revealed by Foxe, though they themselves thought it good to neglect the fruit of such great liberality. This is especially true, since it may abundantly serve to commend both him and them, that they should be known by *their* own actions, and he by none but *his*.

Among his friends, Foxe always used a pleasant kind of familiarity, with which he seasoned the gravity and severity of his other behavior.

Once, being asked at a friend's table what dish he desired to be set up for him to begin his meal with, he answered, "the last." This word was pleasantly taken, as if he had meant some choicer dish, such as those which are usually brought for the second course. Whereas he rather signified the desire he had to see dinner ended, that he might depart home.

Going abroad, he met by chance a woman that he knew, who pulling a book from under her arm, and saying, "Do you not see that I am going to a sermon?" Foxe replied, "But if you will be ruled by me, go home instead; for you will do but little good at church today." And when she asked, "At what time, therefore, would he counsel her to go?" he answered, "When you tell nobody beforehand."

It happened at his own table that a gentleman there spoke somewhat too freely against the earl of Leicester. When Foxe heard this, he commanded a bowl filled with wine to be brought him. This being done, he said, "This bowl was given to me by the earl of Leicester," thus stopping the gentleman in his intemperate speeches, without reprehending him.

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When a young man, who was a little too forward, had said in the presence of many, that he “could conceive no reason, in the reading of old authors, why men should so greatly admire them,” Foxe replied, “No marvel indeed, for if you could conceive the reason, you would then admire them yourself.”

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I could mention many anecdotes of this kind, but I will not exceed my intended limits too far.

At length, having spent out his age in such actions and such behavior, now being full of years, and blessed with friends, he died before he had quite passed through his seventieth year (1587) — not through any known disease, but through great age.

Upon the report of his death, the whole city lamented, honoring the small funeral which was made for him, with the concourse of a great multitude of people; and in no other fashion of mourning than as if, among so many, each man had buried his own father, or his own brother.

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²¹ [Rood: Representation of the cross on which Jesus died.](#)

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To the True and Faithful Congregation of Christ's Universal Church, with all and the singular Members of it, wherever congregated or dispersed throughout the Realm of England, a Protestation or Petition of the Author, wishing to them abundance of all peace and tranquility, with the speedy coming of Christ the Spouse, to make an end of all mortal misery.

SOLOMON, the peaceable prince of Israel, as we read in the first Book of Kings, after he had finished the building of the Lord's Temple (which took seven years), made his petition to the Lord for all who would pray in the temple, or turn their face toward it; and his request was granted. The Lord answered him, as we read in 1Kng 9.3. "I have heard your prayer and have hallowed this house," etc.; although the infinite Majesty of God is not to be confined within any material walls, yet it so pleased his goodness to respect this prayer of the king, that he not only promised to hear those who prayed there, but also filled it with his own glory. For we read, "The priests could not stand to minister, because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord," 1Kng 8.11.

After my seven years' labor about this Ecclesiastical History, upon a similar trust in God's gracious goodness, if I, a sinful wretch, might either be so bold as to ask, or so happy as to speed, I would most humbly crave Almighty God to bestow his blessing upon it. I am not comparing my work with the building of that temple; yet I am following the zeal of the builder. Just as the prayers of those who prayed in the outward temple were heard, may all true disposed minds, who resort to reading this history, receive some spiritual fruit for their souls. For it contains the acts of God's holy martyrs, and the monuments of His church. By the example of their life, faith, and doctrine, and through the operation of His grace, may it be to the advancement of His glory, and the profit of His church, through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

But as it happened in that temple of Solomon, all who came there did not come to pray, but many came to prate — some to gaze and hear news, some to talk and walk, some to buy and sell, some to carp and find fault, and some also at last to destroy and pull it down, as they did indeed. For what in this world is so strong, that it will not be impugned? What is so perfect, that it will not be abused? What is so true, that will not be contradicted? or so circumspectly done, that wranglers will not find fault with it? Even so, in writing this history, I expect that among many well-disposed readers, some wasp's nest or other will be stirred up to buzz about my ears, so dangerous a thing it is now-a-days, to write or do any good. But either we must offend the godly by flattering a man, or else we must procure the hatred of the wicked by speaking the truth. I had sufficient trial in my former edition, of such stinging wasps and buzzing drones. If they had found in my book any just cause to find fault, or upon any true zeal for truth they had proceeded against the untruths of my history, *and had brought just proofs for the same*, I could right well abide it. For God forbid that any faults, wherever they are, should not be detected and accused. And therefore, accusers in a commonwealth, to my mind, are of no small service.

But then such accusers must beware not to act like the dog Cicero speaks of in his oration, which being set in the capitol to frighten away thieves by night, let the thieves alone, and barked at true men walking in the day. To bay and bark where true faults are, is not amiss. But to carp where there is no cause; to spy straws in others, and leap over their own blocks; to swallow camels and to strain at gnats; to oppress truth with lies, and to set up lies for truth; to blaspheme the dear martyrs of Christ, and to canonize as saints those whom Scripture would scarcely allow for good subjects — *that* is intolerable. Such barking curs, if

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they were well served, would be made to stoop awhile. But I do not intend at this time to wrestle much with these brawling spirits.

Therefore, to leave them a while till further leisure serves me to attend to them, I thought in the interim season, by way of protestation or petition, to write to you this much, both in general and particular — the true members and faithful congregation of Christ's church, wherever congregated together or dispersed through the whole realm of England. For what all these adversaries seek, is to do what they can to withdraw readers from this History, by discrediting it with slanders and sinister surmises. Therefore, in few words, this will be to warn and desire all well-minded lovers and partakers of Christ's gospel, that you not allow yourselves to be deceived with the boastings and hyperbolic speeches of those slandering tongues, whatever they have, or will hereafter, exclaim against it. But impartially deferring your judgment till the truth is tried, first *peruse* and then *refuse* — measuring the alleged untruths of this history, not by scoring up the hundreds and thousands of lies which they give out, but wisely weighing the purpose of their doings according to how you find them, and so judge the matter.

I allure no one to read my books; let every man do as he pleases. If anyone thinks his labor is too much in reading this history, his choice is free either to read *this* or any other work. But if the fruit of it recompences the reader's trouble, then I wish no man be so light-eared as to be carried away by any sinister clamor of its adversaries, who many times deprave good doings, not for the faults they find, but only finding faults because they would deprave. As for me and my history, my purpose was to profit all and to displease none. So if skill is wanting in any part, my purpose has yet been simple, and the cause no less urgent, which moved me to take this enterprise in hand.

For *first*, it grieved me that this part of history had been so long unsupplied in my country church of England, and to see the simple flock of Christ, especially the unlearned sort, so miserably deluded. And all this was for ignorance of history, not knowing the course of times, and the true descent of the church.

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Again, considering the multitude of chronicles and history-writers, both in and out of England, of whom most have been either monks or clients to the See of Rome,²² it grieved me to behold how partially they handled their stories. I cannot but commend their diligent labor in committing many things to writing that are not unfruitful to be known, nor unpleasant to be read. Yet I lamented to see that the principal points which chiefly concerned the state of Christ's church, and which were most necessary to be known by all Christian people, were either altogether omitted in their monuments, or else, if any mention of them were inserted, all things were drawn to the honor specially of the church of Rome, or else to the favor of their own sect of religion. Hearing and reading no other church mentioned or magnified in their writings, except that church which flourished in this world in riches and riot, the unlearned were thereby led to think that no other church stood in all the earth except the church of Rome.

In the number of this sort of writers, besides our monks of England (for almost every monastery had its chronicler) I might also recite both Italian and other authors, such as Platina, Sabellicus, Nauclerus, Martin, Antony, Vincent, Onuphrius, Laziard, George Lilius,

²² A "see" is the seat within a bishop's diocese, where the cathedral is located. The See of Rome refers to the pre-eminent seat of jurisdiction in the Roman Catholic Church. Foxe takes exception to this in his Preliminary Dissertation.

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Polydore Virgil, with many more. They take it upon themselves to intermeddle with matters of the church. Even though they express some part of the truth in matters concerning the bishops and See of Rome, yet in suppressing another part, they play with us, as Ananias and Sapphira did with their money; ^{Act 5.1-10} or as the Greek painter Apelles did: painting the one half of Venus coming out of the sea, he left the other half imperfect. So these writers, while they show us one half of the bishop of Rome, they leave the other half of him imperfect and utterly untold. For they paint him, on the one part, glittering in wealth and glory, showing —

what succession the popes had from the chair of St. Peter; when they first began, and how long they sat; what churches and what famous buildings they erected; how far their possessions reached; what laws they made; what councils they called; what honor they received from kings and emperors; what princes and countries they brought under their authority, with other similar stratagems of great pomp and royalty;

on the other side, they leave untold —

what vices these popes brought with them to their seat; what abominations they practiced; what superstition they maintained; what idolatry they procured; what wicked doctrine they defended contrary to the express word of God; what heresies they fell into; what division of sects they cut the unity of Christian religion into; how some practiced by simony, some by necromancy and sorcery, some by poisoning, some contracted with the devil to come by their papacy; what hypocrisy was in their lives; what corruption in their doctrine; what wars they raised; what bloodshed they caused.

They leave untold what treachery they traversed against their lords and emperors, imprisoning some, betraying some to the templars and Saracens in bringing others under their feet; also in beheading some, as they did with Frederick and Conradine, the heirs and offspring of the house of Frederick Barbarossa, A.D. 1269. Furthermore, how mightily Almighty God has stood against them, how their wars never prospered against the Turks, how the godly and learned from time to time have ever opposed their errors, etc. Not one word has been said of these and a thousand other things, but all were kept as secret as in auricular confession. ²³

When I considered this partial dealing and corrupt handling of historians, I thought nothing was more wanting in the church than a full and complete history. Being faithfully collected out of all our monastic writers and written monuments, should neither contain every vain written fable, for that would be too much; nor leave out anything necessary, for that would be too little. But with a moderate discretion, taking the best of everyone, it should both ease the labor of the reader from turning over such a number of writers, and also open the plain truth of times that have long lain hidden in the obscure darkness of antiquity. Thereby, beholding as in a glass the stay, course, and alteration of religion, the decay of doctrine, and the controversies of the church, all studious readers might better discern between antiquity and novelty. For if the things which are *first* are to be preferred before those which are *later* (following the rule of Tertullian), then the reading of history is very necessary in the church, in order to know what went before, and what followed after. Therefore, it is not without cause that in old authors, history is called the Witness of Times, the Light of Verity, the Life of Memory, Teacher of Life, and shower of Antiquity, etc. Without the knowledge of history, man's life is blind, and it may soon fall into any kind of error. We see this by manifest experience in these desolate times of the church, when the bishops of Rome, under color of antiquity, have turned truth into heresy, and brought such new-found devices of strange

²³ *Auricular confession: a spoken confession of sins heard by a priest, and kept secret by him.*

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doctrine and religion, as were never heard of in the former age of the church, and which are now believed — all through ignorance of times, and for lack of true history.

For, to say the truth, if times had been well-searched, or if those who wrote histories had without partiality gone upright between God and Baal, halting on neither side, it might well have been found that most of all this catholic corruption intruded into the church by the bishops of Rome, such as —

transubstantiation, elevation and adoration of the sacrament, auricular confession, forced vows of priests not to marry, veneration of images, private and satisfactory masses, the order of Gregory's mass that is now used, the usurped authority and supreme power of the See of Rome, with all the rest of their ceremonies and weeds of superstition now overgrowing the church —

all these (I say) are new nothings, recently coined in the mint of Rome, without any stamp of antiquity. I trust this will sufficiently appear by reading this History. Therefore, I have here taken that history in hand, which other writers have previously employed their labor to magnify the church of Rome, so that in this history there might appear to all Christian readers the image of *both* churches, the one as well as the other; especially of the poor, oppressed, and persecuted church of Christ. This persecuted church, though it has been for a long season trodden under foot by enemies, neglected in the world, not regarded in histories, and scarcely visible or known to worldly eyes, has it been the only true church of God. It is the one in which He has mightily wrought up to now, preserving it in all extreme distresses, continually stirring up faithful ministers from time to time, who have always kept some sparks of His true doctrine and religion.

Now, because the true church of God does not go lightly alone, but is accompanied with some other church of the devil to deface and malign it, it is necessary that the difference between them should be seen, and that the descent of the right church be described from the apostle's time, which up to now has been lacking in most histories. This was partly for fear, because men dared not describe it, and partly for ignorance, because men could not discern rightly between the one and the other. Beholding the church of Rome so visible and glorious in the eyes of all the world, and so shining in outward beauty as to bear such a port, to carry such a train and multitude, and to stand in such high authority, they supposed it to be the only right catholic mother. The other, because it was not so visibly known in the world, they thought that it could not therefore be the true church of Christ. In this they were much deceived. For although the right church of God is not so invisible in the world that none can see it, yet neither is it so visible that every worldly eye may indeed perceive it. For as is the nature of truth, so is the proper condition of the true church, that commonly none see it except those who as are the members and partakers of it. And therefore, those who require that God's holy church should be evident and visible to the whole world, seem to define the great *synagogue* of the world, rather than the true spiritual church of God.

In Christ's time, who would have thought that the congregations and councils of the Pharisees had not been the right church? And yet Christ had another church on earth besides that one. Although it was not so manifest in the sight of the world, yet it was the only true church in the sight of God.

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Christ referred to this church, speaking of the temple which he would raise again the third day. And yet, after the Lord was risen, he did not show himself to the world, but only to his elect, who were but few. After that, the same church increased and multiplied mightily

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among the Jews. Yet the Jews did not have eyes to see God's church, but persecuted it, till at length their whole nation was destroyed.

After the Jews, came the heathen emperors of Rome. Having the whole power of the world in their hands, they did all the world could do to extinguish the name and church of Christ. Their violence continued the space of 300 years, all of which time the true church of Christ was not great in the sight of the world, but rather was abhorred everywhere. And yet notwithstanding this, the same small flock, so despised in the world, the Lord highly regarded, and mightily preserved. For although many of the Christians suffered death, yet their death was neither loss to them, nor a detriment to the church. Rather, the more they suffered, the more of their blood increased.

In the time of these emperors, God raised up in this realm of Britain, diverse worthy preachers and witnesses, such as Elnanus, Meduinus, Meltivianus, Amphibolus, Albanus, Aaron, Julius, and others, in whose time the doctrine of faith, without men's traditions, was sincerely preached. After their death and martyrdom, it pleased the Lord to provide a general quietness to his church, by which the number of his flock began to increase. In this age, then followed in this land, Fastidius, Nivian, Patrick, Bacchiarius, Dubricius, Congellus, Kentigern, Helmotus, David, Daniel, Sampson, Elnodugus, Asaphus, Gildas, Heulanus, Elbodus, Dinothus, Samuel, Nivius, and many more, who governed the church of Britain by Christian doctrine for a long season. But the civil governors for the time were then dissolute and careless (as Gildas very sharply lays to their charge), and so at length they were subdued by the Saxons.

All this while, about the space of 400 years, religion remained uncorrupt in Britain, and the word of Christ was truly preached. This was until about the coming of Austin the monk,²⁴ and his companions from Rome, when many of the said British preachers were slain by the Saxons. After that, Christian faith began to enter and spring among the Saxons, in a certain Romish way. Yet, notwithstanding, it was somewhat more tolerable than the times which followed. This was through the diligent industry of some godly teachers who then lived among them, such as Aidanus, Finianus, Coleman, archbishop of York, Bede, John of Beverly, Alenin, Noetus, Hucharius, Serlo, Achardus, Ealtesus, Alexander, Neckham, Negellus, Fenallus, Alfricus, Sygeferthus, and such others who, though they erred in a few things, yet they are not so greatly to be complained about, compared with the abuses that followed. For as yet, the error of transubstantiation and elevation, with auricular confession, had not crept in for a public doctrine in Christ's church, as may appear by their own Saxon sermon made by Elfric, set out in this present history. During this time, although the bishops of Rome were held in some reverence by the clergy, they had nothing as yet to do in making laws regarding matters of the church of England, but pertained only to the kings and governors of the land, as will be seen in this history.

And thus, although the church of Rome began then to decline from God, yet during all this time it remained in some reasonable order till, at length, the bishops of Rome began to shoot up in the world, through the liberality of good princes, and especially of Matilda, a noble duchess of Italy. At her death she made the pope heir of all her lands, and endowed his see with great revenues. Then riches begat ambition, and ambition destroyed religion, so that all came to ruin. Out of this corruption sprang forth here in England (as it did in other places) another Romish kind of monkery, worse than the other before it, being much more drowned in superstition and ceremonies. This was during the tenth century. Of this swarm

²⁴ *Austin: Augustine of Canterbury (c. 5th century to 604).*

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were Egbert, Aigelbert, Egwine, Boniface, Wilfred, Agathon, James, Romain, Cedda, Dunstan, Oswald, Athelwold, Althelwine, duke of Eastangles, Lanfranc, Anselme, and such others.

And yet in this time also, through God's providence, the church did not lack some of better knowledge and judgment, to weigh against the darkness of those days. For although King Edgar, with Edward, his base son, was then a great author and favorer of superstition — being seduced by Dunstan, Oswald, and other monks — and erected as many monasteries as there are Sundays in the year; yet notwithstanding, this did not continue for long. For soon after the death of Edgar came King Ethelred, and Queen Elfhred his mother, with Alferus, duke of Merceland, and other peers and nobles of the realm. They displaced the monks again, and restored the married priests to their old possessions and livings. Moreover, after that also followed the Danes, who overthrew those monkish foundations as fast as King Edgar had set them up before.

And thus stood the condition of the true church of Christ up till then, although not without some opposition and difficulty. It was yet in some mediate state of the truth and verity, till the time of Pope Hildebrand, called Gregory VII (about A.D. 1080), and Pope Innocent III. (A.D. 1215), by whom all was turned upside down. All order was broken, discipline dissolved, true doctrine defaced, and Christian faith extinguished. Instead of these, the preaching of men's decrees, dreams, and idle traditions was set up. And whereas before, truth was free to be disputed among learned men, now liberty was turned into law, and argument into authority. Whatever the bishop of Rome announced, that stood for an oracle to be received of all men, without opposition or contradiction. Whatever was contrary to it was heresy, to be punished with faggot²⁵ and flaming fire! Then the sincere faith of this English church which had held out so long, began to quail. Then the clear sunshine of God's word was overshadowed with mists and darkness, appearing like sackcloth to the people, who could neither understand what they read, nor were permitted to read what they could understand. In these miserable days, as the true visible church now began to shrink and keep in for fear, so started up a new sort of player to furnish the stage,²⁶ such as school doctors (scholastics), canonists, and four orders of friars, besides other monastic sects and fraternities of infinite variety. These have ever since kept such an influence in the church, that almost none dared stir, neither Caesar, king, nor subject. What they defined stood; what they approved, was catholic; what they condemned was heresy; whomever they accused, few indeed could save. And thus these continued, or rather *reigned* in the church, the space of now 400 years and odd. During this time, although the true church of Christ did not dare to openly appear in the face of the world, being oppressed by tyranny, yet neither was it so invisible and unknown, that some remnant of it did not always remain, by the providence of the Lord. This not only showed secret good affection for sincere doctrine, but it also stood in open defense of truth against the disordered church of Rome.

In this catalogue, we must first omit Bertram and Berengarius, who were before Pope Innocent III. But a learned multitude of sufficient witnesses might be produced here, whose names are neither obscure, nor doctrine unknown: such as Joachin, abbot of Calabria; Almeric, a learned bishop in the time of Innocent, judged a heretic for opposing images; the martyrs of Alsatia, of whom 100 were burned by Innocent in one day, as Herman Mucius writes. We may likewise add to these the Waldenses, or Albigenses, which to a great number, separated themselves from the church of Rome. To this number also belonged

²⁵ *Faggot*: kindling (a bundle of sticks) for a fire.

²⁶ *Player*: a stage actor, playing a part.

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Reymund, earl of Toulouse, Marsilius Patavius, William de S. Amore, Simon Tornacensis, Arnold de Nova Villa, John Semeca, besides diverse preachers in Swabia ²⁷ who stood against the pope (A.D. 1440); Laurence, of England, a master of Paris (A.D. 1260); Peter John, a minorite (Franciscan monk), who was burned after his death (A.D. 1290); Robert Gallus, a Dominican friar (A.D. 1291); Robert Grossthead (or Grosseteste), bishop of Lincoln, who was called the *Hammer of the Romanists* (A.D. 1250); and Lord Peter de Cugneriis (A.D. 1329).

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To these we may add, moreover, William of Ockham, Bongratus Bergomensis, Leopold, Andrew Laudensis, Ulric Hangenor, treasurer to the emperor; John de Ganduno (A.D. 1330), mentioned in the extravagants, Andreas de Castro, Buridian, Euda, duke of Burgundy, who counselled the French king not to receive the new-found constitutions and extravagants of the pope into his realm, Dante Alligerius, an Italian who wrote against the pope, monks, and friars, and against the donation of Constantine ²⁸ (A.D. 1330). Taulerus, a German preacher; Conrad Hager, imprisoned for preaching against the mass (A.D. 1339); the author of the hook called *Poenitentarius Asini*, compiled about the year 1343; Michael Cesenas, a gray friar; Peter de Corbaria, with John de Poliaco, mentioned in the extravagants, and condemned by the pope; John de Castilione, with Francis de Arcatara, who were burned about the year of our Lord 1322; John Rochtaylada, otherwise called Haybalus, with another friar, martyred about the year 1346; Francis Petrarch, who called Rome "the whore of Babylon," etc. (A.D. 1350); George Ariminensis (A.D. 1350); John de Rupe Scissa, imprisoned for certain prophecies against the pope (A.D. 1340); Gethard Ridder, who also wrote against monks and friars, a book called *Lacrymae Ecclesiae* (A.D. 1350); Godfrid de Fontanis, William de Landuno; John the monk; Richard Armachanus; Nicolas Orem, preacher (A.D. 1364); Militzius, a Bohemian, who then preached that antichrist had come, and was excommunicated for it (A.D. 1366); James Misnensis; Matthew Parisiensis, Bohemian born, and a writer against the pope (A.D. 1370); John Montziger, rector of the university of Ulm (A.D. 1384); Nilus, archbishop of Thessalonica; Henry de Jota; Henry de Hassia, etc. (A.D. 1371).

I am only reciting the principal writers and preachers in those days. How many thousands there were who never bowed their knees to Baal, is known to God alone. Of these, we find in the writings of one Brushius, that thirty-six citizens of Maguntia were burned (A.D. 1390). Following the doctrine of the Waldenses, they affirmed the pope to be the great antichrist. Also Massaeus records 140 who were put to the fire in the province of Narbon, for not receiving the decretals of Rome. These are besides those who suffered at Paris, numbering twenty-four at one time (A.D. 1210); and the year after, 400 were burnt under the name of *heretics*. Also, a certain good hermit, an Englishman, mentioned in John Bacon (Dist. 2. Quaest. 1.), was committed for disputing in Paul's church against certain sacraments of the church of Rome, A.D. 1306.

Now to descend somewhat lower in drawing out the descent of the church. What a multitude there were of faithful witnesses in the time of John Wycliffe (A.D. 1379),²⁹ such as Ocliff, William Thorp, White, Purvey, Fatshal, Pain, Gower, Chaucer, Gascoin, William

²⁷ *Suevia* or *Swabia*: a region in southwestern Germany.

²⁸ *Donation of Constantine*, the best-known and most important forgery of the Middle Ages (c. 750-760), the document purporting to record the Roman emperor Constantine the Great's bestowal of vast territory and spiritual and temporal power on Pope Sylvester I (r. 314-335) and his successors. (Ency. Brit.)

²⁹ Wycliffe is variously spelled Wiclif, Wyclif, Wycliff, Wickliff, or Wickliffe. Wycliffe is used throughout.

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Swinderby, Walter Brute, Roger Dexter, William Sautry, about the year 1400. John Badby (A.D. 1410), Nicholas Tailer, Richard Wagstaff, Michael Scrivener, William Smith, John Henry, William Parchmenar, Roger Goldsmith, with an anchorite named Matilda, in the city of Leicester; Lord Cobham, Sir Roger Acton knight, John Beverley preacher, John Huss (Jan Hus), Jerome of Prague, a schoolmaster, with a number of faithful Bohemians, and Taborites untold. To these I might also add Laurence Valla, and John Picus, the learned Earl of Mirandula. But why do I stand upon a recital of names, which are almost infinite?

Therefore, if anyone is so deceived as to think that the doctrine of the church of Rome (as it now stands) is of such antiquity, and that it was never opposed before the time of Luther and Zuinglius (Zwingli), let him read these histories. Or if he thinks *this* history is not of sufficient credit to alter his persuasion, let him peruse the acts and statutes of parliament passed in this realm, and in them consider and discern the course of times. In the 5th of Richard II (A.D. 1382),³⁰ he may read of a great number (who are there called *evil persons*) going about from town to town in frieze gowns,³¹ preaching to the people, etc. These preachers, although the words of the statute term them “dissembling persons, preaching diverse sermons containing heresies and notorious errors, to the emblemishment of the Christian faith, and of holy church,” etc., as the words there pretend. Yet notwithstanding, every true Christian reader may conceive of those preachers as teaching no other doctrine than they now hear their own preachers in pulpits, preaching against the bishop of Rome, and the corrupt heresies of his church.

He may also read in the 2nd of Henry IV. chap. 15, (A.D. 1402), of another like company of good preachers and faithful defenders of true doctrine, who stood against blind heresy and error. However, because of the corruption of that time, the words of the statute falsely term them “false and perverse preachers, under dissembled holiness, openly and privately teaching new doctrines and heretical opinions, contrary to the faith and determination of holy church,” etc. Yet notwithstanding, whoever reads histories, and discerns the order and descent of times, will understand these to be no false teachers, but faithful witnesses of the truth. They were not teaching any new doctrines contrary to the determination of “holy church.” Rather, the reader will find the church which they preached against, to be unholy, itself teaching heretical opinions that were contrary both to antiquity and the verity of Christ's *true* catholic church.

In a letter from Henry Chichesly, Archbishop of Canterbury, to Pope Martin the Fifth, in the fifth year of his popedom (A.D. 1422), we find mention of a like number of faithful favorers and followers of God's holy word, of whom he says, “there are many here in England infected with the heresies of Wycliffe and Huss; and without the force of an army, they cannot be suppressed,” etc. Whereupon the pope sent two cardinals to the archbishop, to cause a tithe to be gathered from all spiritual and religious men, and the money to be laid in the apostolic chamber. And if that were not sufficient, the remainder was to be comprised of chalices, candlesticks, and other implements of the church, etc.

Do we then need any more witnesses to prove this matter, when you see, so many years ago, whole armies and multitudes thus standing against the pope? Though they were then termed *heretics* and *schismatics*, yet in what their enemies called *heresy*, they served the living Lord within the ark of His true spiritual and visible church.

³⁰ The British number their statutes by monarch; this is the 5th statute instituted by Richard II.

³¹ *Frieze*: heavy woolen fabric with a long nap.

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Where then is the frivolous boast of the papists (who make so much of their painted sheath, and would bear us down), that this government of the church of Rome which now exists, has been of such an old standing, time out of mind, even from primitive antiquity; and that there never was any other visible church here on earth for men to follow, besides the only catholic mother-church of Rome? As we sufficiently proved before, by the continual descent of the church till this present time, the church *after* the doctrine which is now "reformed," is no newly-begun matter. Rather, the *old* church, which has continued by the providence and promise of Christ, is still standing. Though in recent years it has been repressed by the tyranny of Roman bishops more than before, yet *notwithstanding*, it was never so oppressed that God did not maintain in it the truth of His gospel, *against* the heresies and errors of the church of Rome. This is to be seen more fully in this history.

Let us now proceed further in deducing this descent of the church to the year 1501, when grievous afflictions and bloody persecutions began to ensue upon Christ's church for his gospel's sake, as described in this history. Herein is to be seen what Christian blood has been spilt, what persecutions raised, what tyranny exercised, what torments devised, what treachery used against the poor flock and church of Christ — in such way that greater has not been seen since Christ's time.

And now we come from that time (A.D. 1501), to the present year (A.D. 1570). In this time, the full seventy years of the Babylonish captivity well draws to an end. Or if we reckon from the beginning of Luther and his persecution, then subtract sixteen years. Now, what the Lord will do with this wicked world, or what rest He will give to his church after these long sorrows, he is our Father in Heaven. His will be done on earth as seems best to his divine Majesty.

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In the meantime, for our parts, let us with all patient obedience await God's time, and glorify his holy Name, and edify one another with all humility. And if there cannot be an end of our disputing and contending against one another, yet let there be moderation in it. And as it is the good will of our God, that Satan should thus be let loose among us for a short time, yet let us in the meanwhile strive as we can to amend the malice of the time with mutual humanity. Those who are in error, let them not disdain to learn; those who have greater talents of knowledge committed to them, let them instruct in simplicity those who are simple. No man lives in that commonwealth where nothing is amiss. Yet, because God has so placed us Englishmen here in one commonwealth, and also in one church, as in one ship together, let us not mangle or divide the ship, being divided perishes. But let every man serve with diligence and discretion in his order in which he is called. Let those who sit at the helm keep well the point of the needle, to know how and where the ship goes. Whatever weather betides us, the needle, if well-touched with the loadstone of God's word, will never fail. Let those who labor at the oars, start for no tempest, but do what they can to keep from the rocks. Likewise, let those who are in inferior stations take heed that they move none to sedition or disturbance against the rowers and mariners. No storm is so dangerous to a ship on the sea, as discord and disorder in a commonwealth. The countries, nations, kingdoms, empires, cities, towns, and houses, that have been dissolved by discord is so manifest in history, that I need not spend time in repeating examples. May the God of peace, who has power over both land and sea, reach out his merciful hand to help those up who sink, to keep them up who stand, to still these winds and surging seas of discord and contention among us, so that we, *professing one Christ*, may in one unity of doctrine gather ourselves into one ark of the true church together. There, continuing steadfast in faith, we may at last

be conducted safely to the joyful port of our desired landing-place, by His heavenly grace! To Him be all power and glory, both in heaven and earth, with his Father and the Holy Spirit forever. Amen.

THE UTILITY OF THIS HISTORY

The world being filled with such an infinite multitude of all kinds of books, I may seem, perhaps, to take a superfluous and needless matter in hand at this present time, to write such volumes — especially of histories — considering that the world is so greatly pestered, not only with plenty of these, but with all other treatises. Books now seem to lack readers, rather than readers to lack books. I do not doubt that many both perceive, and lament the boldness of many these days, both in writing and printing this multitude of books. To say the truth, for my part I lament this as much as any man. I would therefore have no man think that I have attempted this enterprise unadvisedly or with rashness, but rather as someone who is not only doubtful, but also bashful and fearful for publishing it. For I perceived how learned this age of ours is in reading books. Nor could I tell what the judgment of readers would be, to see so weak a being undertake such a weighty enterprise. For I am not sufficiently furnished with eloquence to do justice to so great a history, nor sufficient to serve either the use of the studious, or the delight of the learned. The more I perceived this ability to be wanting in me, the less bold I felt to become a writer.

But again, on the other hand, when I weighed with myself what memorable acts have occurred in this later age of the church, by the patient sufferings of the worthy martyrs, I thought it not to be neglected, that so many precious monuments worthy of being recorded and registered, should be buried under darkness and oblivion, by my default. I thought something was to be said of them for their well-deserving, and something also for the benefit which we have received by them. But above all things, nothing so urged me forward as the consideration of the common utility which every man may plentifully receive by reading those monuments of martyrology. And as I have taken this history in hand chiefly for the use of the English church, I have written it in that tongue which the simple people could best understand.

Now, if men commonly delight so much in other chronicles which treat only matters of policy, and they take pleasure in reading the variable events of worldly affairs, the stratagems of valiant captains, the terror of battle fields, the sacking of cities, the turmoils of realms and people — and if men think it is such a great thing in a commonwealth to commit to history an account of these things, and to bestow all their wit and eloquence in adorning those — then how much more fitting is it for Christians to preserve in remembrance, the lives, acts, and doings, not of bloody warriors, but of the humble and constant³² martyrs of Christ? These serve not so much to delight the ear, as to improve the life, to show us examples of great profit, and to encourage men to all kind of Christian godliness.

And first, by reading about these, we may see a lively testimony of God's mighty working in the life of man, contrary to the opinion of the atheists. For as someone said of Harpalus in times past,³³ that his doings gave a lively testimony against God, because being so wicked a man, he had escaped unpunished for so long. So contrariwise, in these martyrs we have a much more assured and plain witness of God, in whose lives and deaths there appeared

³² Foxes uses *constant*, *constantly*, and *constancy* to mean *resolutely faithful to Christ, even unto death*.

³³ *Harpalus*: a Macedonian aristocrat and childhood friend of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC.

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such manifest declarations of God's divine working. While in such sharpness of torments, we behold in them such constant strength above man's reach, such readiness to answer, such patience in imprisonment, such godliness in forgiving, such cheerfulness and courage in suffering, besides the manifold sense and feeling of the Holy Spirit which they so plentifully tasted in their afflictions, that in reading their letters we may evidently understand. Besides this, the humble deaths of the saints not a little avail to establish a good conscience, to teach us the contempt of the world, and to bring us to the fear of God. Moreover, they confirm faith, increase godliness, abate pride in prosperity, and open a hope of heavenly comfort in adversity. For what man reading the misery of these godly persons, may not behold in them, as in a mirror, his own case, whether he is godly or godless? For if God gave adversity to good men, what may not the better sort expect, or the evil fear? Just as by reading of profane histories, we are made perhaps more skillful in warlike affairs, so by reading this, we are made better in our livings. Besides this, we are better prepared for similar conflicts (if by God's permission they happen hereafter), made wiser by their doctrine, and more steadfast by their example.

To be brief, they declare to the world what true Christian fortitude is, and what is the right way to conquer. This does not stand in the power of man, but in the hope of the resurrection to come, and I trust, is now at hand.

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In consideration of this, I think I have good cause to wish that not only subjects, but also kings and princes, who commonly delight in heroic stories, would diligently peruse such monuments of martyrs, and keep them always in sight — not only to read, but to follow; and that they would paint them on their walls, cups, rings, and gates. For doubtless such persons as these are more worthy of honor than a hundred Alexanders, Hectors, Scipios, and warlike Caesars. And though the world judges things preposterously, yet with God, the true Judge, those who kill one another with a weapon are not to be reputed, but rather those who being killed in God's cause, retain an invincible constancy against the threats of tyrants, and the violence of tormentors. Such as these are indeed the true conquerors of the world. We learn true manhood from them, so many as fight under Christ, and not under the world. With this valiantness, that most humble Lamb and invincible Lion of the tribe of Judah, first of all went before us. We hear this prophetic admiration of His unspeakable fortitude, in Isa 63.1: "Who is this, travelling in the greatness of His strength?" Truly, it is the high Son of the high God, once conquered by the world, and yet conquering the world in the same manner that He was "conquered." Rom 8.37

All His martyrs followed in like course, to whom the ancient church attributed so much honor, as never king or emperor could purchase in this world — not with all their images, pillars, triumphs, temples, and all their solemn feasts. In proof of this, we see with what admiration the memory of those good martyrs was received and kept among the ancient Christians. It is thereby manifest in what estimation the martyrs were held in times past — with what gratulation, mirth, and general joy the afflictions of those godly men, dying in Christ's quarrel, were sometimes received and solemnized. And that was not without good and reasonable cause; for the church well considered how much she was beholden to them, by whose death she understood her treasures to increase. Now then, if martyrs are to be compared with martyrs, I see no reason why the martyrs of our time deserve any less commendation than the others in the primitive church. They assuredly are in no point inferior to them, whether we view the number of those who suffered, or the greatness of their torments, or their constancy in dying, or consider the fruit that they brought to the

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improvement of posterity, and the increase of the gospel. The primitive martyrs watered with their blood, the truth that was newly springing up; so these later martyrs by their deaths restored it again, that truth being so decayed and fallen down. *They*, standing in the vanguard of the fray, received the first encounter and violence of their enemies, and taught us by that means to overcome such tyranny; *these* with like courage again, like old beaten soldiers, won the field in the rear of the battle. Like famous husbandmen of the world, they sowed the fields of the church that at first lay unfertilized and wasted; *these* with the richness of their blood caused it to grow and fructify. Would to God the fruit might speedily be gathered into the barn, which now only remains to come!

Now, if we ascribe reputation to godly preachers (and worthily so) who diligently *preach* the gospel of Christ, notwithstanding that they live, by the benefit of time, without any fear of persecution, then how much more cause do we have to praise and extol those men who stoutly spend their lives for its *defense*? All these premises being duly considered, and seeing that we have found such famous martyrs in this age of ours, let us not fail to publish and set forth their doings, lest in that point we seem more unkind to them than the writers of the primitive church were to theirs. And though we do not repute those primitive ashes, chains, and swords to be relics, yet let us yield this much to their commemoration: to glorify the Lord in his saints, and to imitate their deaths (as much as we may) with like constancy, or their lives at least with like innocency. They offered their bodies willingly to the rough handling of their tormentors. And is it so great a matter, then, for us to mortify our flesh, with all its members? ^{Col 3.5} They neglected not only the riches and glory of the world for the love of Christ, but also their lives. And shall we then make so great a stir against one another for the transitory trifles of this world? They continued in patient suffering when they had the greatest wrongs done to them, and when their very heart's blood gushed out of their bodies. And yet, will we not forgive our poor brother, however small the injury, but instead be ready to seek his destruction for every trifling offense? Wishing well to all men, they forgave their persecutors of their own accord. And therefore, we who are now the posterity and children of the martyrs, should not degenerate from their steps. But being admonished by their examples, even if we cannot express their charity toward all men, we can at least imitate it to the extent of our power and strength. Let us give no cause for offense; ^{2Cor 6.3} and if any offense is given to us, let us overcome it with patience — forgiving and not revenging it. And let us not only keep our hands from shedding blood, but also our tongues from hurting the fame of others. Besides this, if the case so requires it, by martyrdom or loss of life, and according to their example, let us not hesitate to yield our life in the defense of the Lord's flock. If men would do this, there would be much less contention in the world than there now is.

And thus much regarding the utility of this History.

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PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION.

The difference between the Church of Rome that now is, and the ancient Church of Rome that then was.

Christ our Savior, in the gospel of Matthew, 16.18, hearing the confession of Simon Peter who acknowledged him to be the Son of God, and perceiving the secret hand of His Father in it, answered Peter. Alluding to his name, Christ called him a *rock*, upon which he would build his church so strong that the gates of hell would not prevail against it, etc. In these words, three things are to be noted. *First*, that Christ will have a church in this world. *Secondly*, that the church would be mightily opposed, not only by the world, but also by the utmost strength and powers of hell. And, *thirdly*, that this church would continue, notwithstanding the devil and all his malice.

We see this prophecy of Christ wonderfully verified, in that the whole course of the church to this day may seem nothing but a verification of it. *First*, that Christ set up a church, needs no declaration. *Secondly*, that princes, kings, monarchs, governors, and rulers of this world, along with their subjects, both publicly and privately, with all their strength and cunning, have bent themselves against this church. And *Thirdly*, how the church, notwithstanding all this, has yet endured and held its own. It is wondrous to behold what storms and tempests it has withstood. I have written this history to more evidently declare this, intending by the favorable aid of Christ our Lord, not so much to delight the ears, as to profit the hearts of the godly in perusing antiquities of ancient times. This is done to the end that the wonderful works of God, in this church, might appear to His glory. Also, that the continuance and proceedings of the church from time to time, being set forth in these *Acts and Monuments*, may redound to the profit of the reader, and the edification of Christian faith.

To better accomplish this, I have thought it good to run over the whole state and course of the church in general, beginning from the time of the primitive church, and continuing to these latter years, dividing the whole of this history into five periods.

First, I will treat the SUFFERING time of the church, which continued from the apostles' age, for about 300 years.

Secondly, the FLOURISHING time of the church, which lasted another 300 years.

Thirdly, the DECLINING time of the church, which comprehends another 300 years. During this time, the church was much altered in ambition and pride, from the simple sincerity of the primitive time. Yet in its outward profession of doctrine and religion, it was somewhat tolerable, and had some face of a church. Notwithstanding this, some corruption of doctrine, with some superstition and hypocrisy, had even then crept in. Yet in comparison with what followed, it might seem, as I have said, somewhat sufferable.

Fourthly, followed the time of ANTICHRIST, and the desolation of the church, containing a space of 400 years. In this time, both doctrine and sincerity of life were almost extinguished, namely, in the chief heads and rulers of this western church, through the means of the Roman bishops. Especially during 400 years, counting from Gregory VII, called *Hildebrand* (p. 1073), Innocent III (p. 1198) and the friars which crept in with him, ³⁴ till the time of John Wycliffe (d. 1384) and John Huss (d. 1415).

³⁴ *Friars*: members of a mendicant Christian order such as the Carmelites (white friars), Franciscans (grey friars) or the Dominicans (black friars).

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Fifthly, after this time of antichrist reigning by violence and tyranny, follows the REFORMATION and PURGING of the church of God, in which antichrist begins to be revealed, and to show his colors, and his doctrine to be detected; the number of the Antichrist's church is decreasing, and the number of the true church is increasing. This time has continued up to now, about the space of 280 years. How long it will continue, only the Lord and Governor of all times knows.

I suppose that the whole course of the church may be comprised in these five periods. This church being universal and dispersed through all countries, I will not be bound to any one nation more than another. Yet notwithstanding, I have purposed to tarry principally upon those historical acts and records which most pertain to England and Scotland.

The church of Rome, in all these ages, has claimed for itself the supreme title, and the ringleading of the whole universal church on earth. Thus, in writing of the church of Christ, I cannot help but partly intermeddle with the acts and proceedings of the church of Rome also;. For so much of the doings and orderings of all other churches, here in England as well as in other nations, have for this long time chiefly depended upon Rome. Therefore, as it is needful and requisite to have the doings and orderings of that church made manifest to all Christian congregations, I have framed this history according to that purpose.

I will first briefly declare in a general description, the misguiding of that church, comparing the former primitive state of the church of Rome with these latter times. This being done, I will then, in a more special way, prosecute more at large all the particulars of it, so far as it seems profitable for the public instruction of all other Christian churches. In the church of Rome, four things seem to me to be chiefly considered: TITLE, JURISDICTION, LIFE, and DOCTRINE.

First, I must declare concerning the TITLE or primacy of the church, how it first began, and on what occasion.

Secondly, concerning its JURISDICTION and authority: what it was, and how far it extended.

Thirdly, regarding the disorder of LIFE and conversation, how inordinate it is. And,

Fourthly, the form of DOCTRINE, how superstitious and idolatrous it has been of late.

Of these four, the *first* was prejudicial to all bishops; the *second* was derogatory to kings and emperors; the *third* was detestable to all men; and the *fourth* was injurious to Christ.

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For the *First*, the TITLE and style of that church was such that it went beyond all other churches, being called

“the Holy Universal Mother Church, which could not err; and its bishop, Holy Father the Pope, Bishop Universal, Prime of Priests, Supreme head of the Universal Church, and Vicar of Christ here on earth, who must not be judged — having all knowledge of Scripture, and all laws contained within the chest of his breast.”

Secondly, the JURISDICTION of that bishop was such, that claiming for himself *both* the swords — that is, both the keys of the Scripture and the scepter of the laity — he not only subdued all bishops under him, but also advanced himself above kings and emperors. This caused some of them to lie under his feet, some to hold his stirrup, kings to lead his horse by the bridle, some to kiss his feet — placing and displacing emperors, kings, dukes, and earls, whom and when he chose — taking it upon himself to transfer the empire at his pleasure, from Greece to France, from France to Germany — preferring and deposing whomever he

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pleased, and confirming those who were elected. Also, being emperor himself when the throne was vacant, pretending authority or power to invest bishops, to give benefices, to spoil churches, to give authority to bind and loose, to call general councils, to judge over them, to set up religions, to canonize saints, to take appeals, to bind consciences, to make laws, to dispense with the law and the word of God, to deliver from purgatory, to command angels, etc.

Thirdly, what was the LIFE and conversation (public conduct) of the court of Rome, will be seen in this history.

Fourthly, his DOCTRINE was in like manner tedious to students, pernicious to men's consciences, injurious to Christ Jesus, and contrary to itself. In laws it was more diverse, in volume more enlarged, in diligence and study more applied to, in vantage and preferment more gainful than the study and learning of the holy Scripture of God ever was.

These four points being well-considered in this history, I trust it may minister to the Christian reader, sufficient instruction to judge what is to be thought of this church of Rome.

Here it is to be noted that all these deformities of vain title, of pretended jurisdiction, of heretical doctrine, of schismatic life, did not come into the church of Rome all at one time. Nor did it spring up with the beginning of the church, but with long working, and little by little. And it did not come to full perfection till the time partly of Pope Boniface III, partly of Pope Gregory VII, partly of Pope Innocent III, and finally of Pope Boniface VIII. Of these four popes, the first, Boniface, brought in the TITLE (A.D. 607), which was never in such an ample way before it was publicly enacted, and received publicly in the church of Rome. The second, Gregory, brought in JURISDICTION (A.D. 1073). The third, which was Pope Innocent (A.D. 1198), with his rabble of monks and friars, and those other bishops who succeeded him, corrupted and obscured the sincerity of Christ's DOCTRINE and MANNERS (LIFE). And lastly, Pope Boniface VIII (A.D. 1294); and after him Pope Clement V. (A.D. 1305), besides the jurisdiction advanced before by Pope Hildebrand, added moreover the *temporal sword* to be carried before them, so that the succession of no emperor would be sufficient and lawful without the pope's admission, By this, the pope's power was brought to his full pride and perfection in the fourteenth century. And thus arose the corruption of the Romish church in continuance of years, by degrees, and not altogether nor at one time.

Therefore, whoever has to deal with any adversaries about the antiquity or authority of the church of Rome, let him well consider when and how the title, jurisdiction, and corruption of doctrine first began in the pope's see. And so he will see that the church of Rome, as it is now governed, never descended from the primitive age of the apostles. Just as the picture of the holy virgin is not the holy virgin, and just as a man painted on the wall is not a man; so it is to be said of the church of Rome (I mean the institution and doctrine of the church of Rome), that although it has the *name* of the apostolical church, and although it brings out a long genealogy of outward succession from the apostles — as the Pharisees in Christ's time brought out their descent from Abraham their father ^{Joh 8.38-44} — yet all this is in name only, and not in effect or matter. For the *definition* of the apostolical church does not now agree with this present church of Rome, nor with the manner, form, and institution of the Romish church as it now stands, if it ever had any succession from the primitive church. But just as Christ said of the Pharisees, that they were not the children of Abraham, but of the devil, so it may be answered that this church of Rome now present, with this title, jurisdiction, and doctrine now used, cannot be fathered upon the apostles, nor Peter, nor pope Linus, but on another author, whom I will not name here.

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And here comes the argument of Pighius, Hosius, and Eccius.³⁵ In arguing for the antiquity and authority of the church of Rome, they reason in this manner:

“That just as an ordinary and known visible church must be known continually on earth, from the time of the apostles, to which all other churches must have recourse; and seeing ;that there is no other church visible known to have endured from the apostles’ time, except the church of Rome; they conclude that the church of Rome is therefore that church to which all other churches must have recourse,” etc.

To which I answer, that although the name of the church and the outward succession of bishops have continued from the time of the apostles, yet the definition and matter which makes a true apostolical church, is not now in the church of Rome. Nor yet was the form and institution of the church that is now used in Rome, ever from the apostles. They were never the authors or fathers of this title, jurisdiction, and doctrine now taught in Rome, but rather were ever enemies to the same.

Again, although the necessity of the church enduring from the apostles, may and must be granted, yet the same necessity was not bound to any certain place or person, but only to *faith*. So that wherever and in whatever church true faith was found, ^{Gal 2.16} *there* was the church of Christ. And because the true faith of Christ must ever remain on earth, the church also must remain on earth. And God forbid that the true faith of Christ should only remain in one city in the world, and not in another as well. And therefore, just as this true and sincere faith of Christ is not given to remain fixedly in one place or city alone, so neither is there any one church in the world so ordained and appointed by God, that all other churches should have their recourse to it, for determination of their causes and controversies.

Now, as to the authorities of the fathers in commendation of the church of Rome, whoever rightly understands their authorities, must learn to make a distinction between the church of Rome, as it *was* and as it *is*. The church of Rome is not the same church now which it was then; and nothing now agrees to what it was then, except in outward name and place. I therefore answer by this distinction, the description of Ireneus,³⁶ Cyprian, etc. commending the church of Rome as “catholic and apostolical,” and say that they speak of the church of Rome *as it then was*. Calling it catholic and apostolical was not untrue, for that same church took its ordinary succession of bishops, joined with the ordinary doctrine and institution, from the apostles. But speaking of the church of Rome *as it now is*, we say that this description by the fathers is not true; but then, neither does it pertain to the same church. For they neither knew the church of Rome as it now is, nor if they had, would they ever have judged anything in it worthy of such commendation.

Our adversaries objecting against us still more, and laboring for the antiquity of the Romish church, for lack of other reasons, are driven to scanning the times and years. “What? (they ask) Where was this church of yours fifty years ago?” In answer, we demand to know what they mean by this *church of ours*? If they mean the ordinance and institution of doctrine and sacraments now received by us, we affirm that our church was in existence when this *church of theirs* was not yet hatched out of the shell, nor had yet seen the light.

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³⁵ Albert Pighius (1490- 1542); Stanislaus Hosius (1504-1579); and John von Eck (1486-1543). These were leaders in the Catholic Counter-Reformation, and well-known in Foxe’s day.

³⁶ The Latin spelling is *Irenæus* (c. 130-200), often pronounced *Eyerenay’us*, instead of the English *Eyereen’eeus*.

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That is, in the time of the apostles, in the primitive age, in the time of Gregory I. and the old Roman church, when as yet no universal pope was publicly accepted, but was repelled in Rome. Nor was this fulness of plenary power yet known, nor this doctrine and abuse of sacraments yet heard of. In witness of this, we have the old acts and histories of ancient time to give testimony with us. In these we have sufficient matter for us to declare the same form, usage, and institution of this “our church,” as now reformed, is not the beginning of any new church of our own, but the renewing of the old ancient church of Christ.

And our adversaries charge us with the faith of our fathers and godfathers, in which we were baptized. They accuse us of revolting from them and their faith in which we were first christened. We answer that we, being first baptized by our fathers and godfathers in water, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit — the same faith in which we were christened then, we *retain*. And because our godfathers were themselves also in the same faith, they cannot therefore say that we have forsaken the faith of our godfathers. As for other points of ecclesiastical uses and circumstances considered, besides the principal substance of faith and baptism, if they held anything which receded from the doctrine and rule of Christ, we now remove ourselves from that. This is not because we would differ from them, but because we would not, with them, remove ourselves from the rule of Christ’s doctrine. Nor does our baptism bind us in all points to the opinions of those who baptized us, but to the faith of Him in whose name we were baptized. For, it is as if a man were christened by a heretic; the baptism, notwithstanding, would be good, even if the baptizer was nothing.³⁷ So too, if our godfathers or fathers who christened us were taught anything that is not consonant with Christian doctrine in all points, neither is our baptism any the worse for that; nor are we bound to follow them in all things in which they themselves did not follow the true church of Christ.

Therefore, just as it is false that we have renounced the faith of our godfathers in which we were baptized, so is it not true that we are removed from the church of Rome. But rather I say, and I will prove, that the church of Rome has utterly departed from the church of Rome, according to my former distinction. To more evidently declare this, I will here compare the church of Rome with the church of Rome; and in a general description, I will set forth the difference of both churches; that is, of both periods of the church of Rome. The intent is that it may be seen whether we or they have most apostatised from the church of Rome. And here, I divide the church of Rome into two distinct periods of time. The first of those is the first 600 years immediately after Christ. The second is the other 600 years, which include our own later days. And so, in comparing these two together, I will search out what difference is between them. Of these two ages and states of the Roman church, I call the first the *primitive* church of Rome; the other I call the *later* church of Rome.

The Corrupting of Church Order and Life

To begin with the order and qualities of life, I ask, where was this church of theirs in the time of the primitive church of Rome — with this pomp and pride, with these riches and this superfluity (excesses); with this worldly splendor and the name *cardinals*; with this prancing dissoluteness; with this extortion, bribing, buying and selling of spiritual dignities,

³⁷ Most reformed churches today will not accept the baptism of Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, etc., because the vows made at their baptism did not profess faith alone, in Christ alone for their salvation,. But if a believer’s vows were indeed true to the Christian Faith, then it doesn’t matter if the person administering the baptism was saved or not, sinful or not. Christians are saved by their own faith, not by the faith of their baptizer.

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these annates, ³⁸ reformations, procurations, exactions, and other practices for money; with this insatiable avarice, and intolerable ambition; with this most detestable fleshly filthiness, barbarousness and negligence in preaching; with this promise-breaking faithlessness, poisoning and supplanting of one another; with such schisms and divisions in the elections and courts of Rome, *for these past 700 years* — with such extreme cruelty, malice, and tyranny, in burning and persecuting their poor brethren to death?

It would take too long to dwell particularly on these things. And if a man were to detail all the schisms in the church of Rome (numbering eighteen), what a volume it would require! Or if it were recorded here, all that this see has burned and put to death, who would be able to number them? Or if all their schemes to get money were to be described, who would be able to recite them all? Of these, the principal ones are reckoned to be at least fourteen or fifteen schemes:

1. For annates or vacancies of arch-bishoprics, bishoprics, abbasies, conventual priories, and other elective benefices.
2. For holding all spiritual livings whatever (benefices).
3. New annates for the same office over again, as often as any one of all his spiritual livings are, or are feigned to be, come by in a disorderly way; hereby it has chanced, at various times, that three or four annates are to be paid for one benefice.
4. For giving benefices before they end, and many times giving them to several persons for money's sake.
5. For resignations, which in many cases the pope claims are reserved to himself.
6. For commendams. ³⁹
7. For compounding with those who are not under their charge.
8. For dispensations, so as to dispense with requirements of age, order, or incompatible benefices; also for irregularity, for adultery, for times of marriage, for marrying in forbidden degrees [e.g., first cousins], or for gossips to marry — in France at one time, 1000 crowns were paid to Rome for this; for dispensing with this canonical affinity of gossips; also dispensations for eating meats at prohibited times.
9. For innumerable privileges, exemptions, graces; for not visiting [shut-ins], or visiting by a proctor; for confirmations of privileges; for transactions made upon favor of the pope; for exchanges of benefices, or for making pensions, with similar things.
10. For mandates granted by the pope to ordinaries,⁴⁰ of which every ordinary, if he often has the collation or presentation, ⁴¹ may receive one mandate; if he has fifty, two mandates; and for every mandate about twenty ducats [\$520] comes to the pope. And yet as many are sold, as there are buyers to pay for them.
11. For the pope's penitentiary [doing penance]; for absolution of cases reserved to the pope; for the breaking of vows; for transfer from one monastery to another, or one order to another;

³⁸ *Annate*: The first year's profits of a Catholic benefice (endowed office), traditionally paid directly to the Pope.

³⁹ *Commendam*: a vacant benefice commended to a cleric until an incumbent is provided.

⁴⁰ *Ordinary*: a church officer who has power to execute the church's laws. This includes diocesan bishops. They have the authority to make, enforce, and judge laws within their jurisdiction.

⁴¹ *Collation*: the presentation of a clergyman to a benefice by a bishop.

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for the licence to enter into certain monasteries, to carry around altars, with many other things of similar devising.

12. For giving and granting pardons and indulgences, to be read not only in public temples, but also to be bought in private houses.

13. For making notaries, prothonotaries [registrars], and other offices of the court of Rome.

14. For bulls and commissioning new foundations, or for changing the old; for reducing regular monasteries to a secular state, or for restoring them again to the old; and for other writs about matters in controversy, that ought to be decided by the ordinary.

15. For giving the pall to archbishops.⁴²

Because of all these devices (besides the annates) it has been accounted from the king's records in France, that in the time of Louis IX (c. 1250), the sum of 200,000 crowns were paid out of France and transported to Rome. Since that time, this sum has been doubled and trebled, besides annates and palls, which altogether, in recent years, has been reckoned to total a yearly sum of 100,000 crowns going out of France into the pope's coffers. Now, as to what has been drawn from other kingdoms and nations besides, let others conjecture.

Therefore, if the gospel sends us to the fruit in order to know the tree, then what is to be thought of the church of Rome with these fruits of life? Or if we seek the church in length and number of years, then where was *this* church of Rome, with *these* qualities, when the church of Rome was a persecuted and not a persecuting church? And when its bishops did not make martyrs, as they now do, but were made martyrs themselves, one after another, numbering twenty-five? ⁴³ Or when its bishops were elected, not by conspiring factions, not by money or making friends, as they are now, but by the free voices of the people and of the clergy, with the consent of the emperor, and not by a few conspiring cardinals closed up in a corner, as they are now.

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And yet if there were no other difference in the matter, but only in the corruption of life, we would impute all that to the common frailty of man, and charge them no further than we might charge ourselves.

Now, over and above this deformity of life, we have to charge them in greater points that more nearly touch the substantial ground of the church, such as,

- (1) in their JURISDICTION presumptuously usurped;
- (2) in their TITLE falsely grounded;
- (3) in their DOCTRINE heretically corrupted.

In all three points, this later church of Rome has utterly separated itself from the nature of the ancient church of Rome.

1. Jurisdiction Presumptuously Usurped.

⁴² *Pall*: a piece of stiffened linen used to cover the chalice at the Eucharist, or the cloth used to cover a coffin. It refers figuratively to investing a new archbishop after the death of his predecessor. He goes to the pope to "receive the pall," which is his authorized vestment.

⁴³ It is unclear where Foxe got this number; perhaps the 11 apostles (Matthias, not John), Paul, James, Barnabas, Linus, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Antipas, Polycarp, Ptolomaeus, Lucius, Justin Martyr, Cyprian, Pothinus, and Ireneus.

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And they have erected for themselves a new church of their own making, usurping a jurisdiction never before known to their ancient predecessors. For although the church of Rome in the primitive time had its due authority among other patriarchal churches, and over such churches as were within its boundary, yet the plenitude of power, both spiritual and temporal — in deposing and dispensing of matters not belonging to the pope; in taking appeals; in giving elections; investing in benefices; in exempting himself from obedience and subjection to his ordinary (secular) magistrate — such things were never accepted in the old Roman church.

For although Victor, bishop of Rome (A.D. 200), went to excommunicate the Eastern churches for observing Easter day, he neither proceeded in this, nor was he permitted by Ireneus to do so. Boniface I, writing to the bishops of Carthage, required them to send their appeals to Rome, alleging the decree of the Nicene council for his authority. However, the bishops and clergy of Carthage assembling in a general council (called the sixth Council of Carthage) — numbering 217 bishops — after they had perused the decrees of the Nicene council, found no such matter as Boniface alleged. They made a decree that no one in that country should make any appeal to that see in Rome, etc. What wonder, if appeals were forbidden to be made to Rome back then, that here in England the kings would not permit any to appeal to Rome, before the time of Henry II? Also in France, like prohibitions were expressly made by Louis IX (A.D. 1268), which forbade by a public instrument, all exactions of the pope's court within that realm. Also King Philip of Spain (A.D. 1296) not only restrained all sending of his subjects to Rome, but also that no money, armor, or subsidy should be transported out of his kingdom. Also King Charles V, and his son Charles VI, punished certain persons as traitors for appealing to Rome. The same resistance was also made in France against the pope's reservations, preventions, and other like practices in the days of Pope Martin V; also when King Henry VI in England, and King Charles VII in France, both agreed with the pope, in investing and in the collation of benefices. Yet notwithstanding, the high court of parliament in France did not allow it, but still maintained the old liberty and customs of the French church. This went so far that when the duke of Bedford came with the king's Letters patent ⁴⁴ to have the pope's procurations and reservations admitted, the court of parliament would not agree to it (A.D. 1425). In the days of King Charles VII., *The Pragmatic sanction*, as they call it, was set forth in France, against the annates, reservations, expectatives, and other proceedings of the popes (A.D. 1458). What wonder, then, if this jurisdiction of the pope's court, in excommunicating, taking appeals, and giving benefices, was *not* used in the old church of Rome, when in these latter days it has been so much resisted?

And what should I say about the form of elections now used in the church of Rome, being quite changed from the manner of the old church of their predecessors? For in those ancient days, when the church remained in the hands of the apostles and a few other disciples, the apostles then, with prayer and imposition of hands, elected bishops and ministers — just as the apostle James was made bishop of Jerusalem, Paul elected Titus to Crete and Timothy to Ephesus; also, Peter ordained Linus and Clement in Rome, etc. After the time of the apostles, when the church began to multiply, the election of bishops and ministers remained in the clergy and the people, with the consent of the chief magistrate. And so it continued during all the time of the primitive church, till the time of Constantine, who (as Platina and Sabellicus write) published a law concerning the election of the Roman bishop — that he should be taken as a true bishop, whom the clergy and people of Rome chose and elected

⁴⁴ Letters patent: (law) an official document granting a right or privilege.

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without waiting for any authority of the emperor of Constantinople or the deputy of Italy, which had ever been the custom before that day. And here the bishops first began to extricate their elections and their necks a little from the emperor's subjection. But there are many reasons to think this constitution of Constantine was rather forged and untrue. For it is taken out of the pope's library (a suspected place), and collected by the keeper of the pope's library (a suspected author), who carefully compiled whatever feigned or apocryphal writings he could find in the pope's chest of records, favoring anything on his master's side.

And as in elections, so also in judiciary power, in deciding causes of faith and of discipline, the state of the church of Rome now has no conformity with the old Roman church. For then bishops debated all causes of faith only by the Scriptures. And other questions of discipline, they determined by the canons, not of the pope, but of those which were decreed by the ancient councils of the church. Whereas now, both the rule of Scripture and sanctions of the old councils are set aside, and all things are decided for the most part by certain new and extravagant constitutions, compiled in the pope's canon law, and practiced in his courts.

The old ordinance of the common law, as well as of the sacred councils and institution of ancient fathers, gave the authority to bishops and other prelates; also to patrons and doctors of ecclesiastical benefices, each within his own precinct and dominion; also to cathedral churches and others — to have their free elections, disposing all ecclesiastical benefices whatever, according to their own wills. This appears by the first general Council of France, by the first general Council of Nice (cap. 6.), and by the general Council of Antioch (cap. 9). And besides these ancient decrees, it likewise appears in more recent years, by Louis IX of France, in his constitution — made and provided by full parliament, *against* the pope's exactions (A.D. 1228), evidenced in these words:

“All exactions and oppressive burdens of money, which the court of Rome has laid upon the church of our kingdom (by which our kingdom has been, up to now, miserably impoverished), or hereafter shall impose or lay upon us, we utterly discharge and forbid to be levied or collected hereafter for any manner of cause, unless some reasonable, godly, and most urgent and inevitable necessity comes; and that also is not to be done without the express and voluntary commandment of us, and of the church of the same foresaid kingdom,” etc.

Now, contrary to these express decrees of general councils and constitutions, those in this later church of Rome, degenerating from all the steps of their elders, has taken it upon themselves, for their own advantage, to intermeddle in disposing churches, colleges, monasteries — with the collations, exemptions, election, goods and lands belonging to them — because of which have come these impropriations,⁴⁵ first-fruits, and reservations of benefices, to the miserable despoiling of parishes and the great decay of Christian faith. These things were never known among the old Roman elders.

Likewise, advowsons⁴⁶ and pluralities of benefices were things as much unknown then, as they are now pernicious to the church, taking away from the flock of Christ all free election of ministers.

All these inconveniences, just as they first came and crept in by the pretended authority abused in this later church of Rome, so it cannot be denied that the later church of Rome has taken and attributed to itself much more than either the limits of God's word give, or

⁴⁵ *Impropriation*: A benefice, tithe etc. that has been put in lay hands.

⁴⁶ *Advowson*: the right of presenting a nominee to a vacant ecclesiastical benefice.

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can stand with the example of the old Roman church — specifically in the three things I mentioned before. So I will briefly recapitulate them.

The *first* is this: that whatever the Scripture gives and refers either to the whole church universally, or to every particular church severally, this church of Rome arrogates to itself absolutely and only. This both injures other churches, and abuses the Scriptures of God.

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For although the Scripture gives authority to bind and loose, it does not limit it either to person or place — that is, neither to the city of Rome more than to other cities, nor to the see of Peter more than to other apostles. But Scripture clearly gives it to the *church*. So that, wherever the true church of Christ is found, power is annexed to bind and loose, given and taken merely as it comes from Christ, and not mediately by the pope.

The *second* point in which this present church of Rome abuses jurisdiction, contrary to the Scripture and steps of the old Roman church, is this: it extends her authority further and more amply than either the warrant of the word, or example of time will give. For although the church of Rome has (as other particular churches have) authority to bind and absolve, yet it has no such authority to absolve subjects from their oath, subjection, and loyalty to their rulers and magistrates, to dispense with perjury, to denounce remission where no earnest repentance is seen before, to number remission by days and years, to dispense with things expressly forbidden in the word, or to restrain that which the word makes free, to burden consciences with the constitutions of men, to excommunicate for worldly matters —

such as for breaking parks, ⁴⁷ for not ringing bells at the bishop's coming, for not bringing litter for their horse, for not paying their fees and rents, for withholding the church goods, for taking their prince's side in princely cases, for not going at the pope's commandment, for not agreeing to the pope's election in another prince's kingdom, along with other such things, more and more vain than these, etc.

Again, although the Scripture gives leave and authority to the bishop and church of Rome to *minister* sacraments: yet it gives no authority to *make* sacraments, much less to *worship* sacraments. And though their authority serves to baptize men, it does not extend to christen *bells*. ⁴⁸ Nor do they have authority by the word of God to add to the word of God, or to take from it — to set up unwritten tenets under pain of damnation, to make other articles of belief, to institute strange worship, other than God has prescribed, who has told us how he would be worshipped, etc.

The *third* abuse of the pope's jurisdiction stands in this: that just as they have vehemently exceeded the bounds of Scripture in *spiritual* jurisdiction, so they have impudently intermeddled themselves in *temporal* jurisdiction, in which they had nothing to do. It has gone so far, that they have transferred their empire. They have deposed emperors, kings, princes, rulers, and senators of Rome, and set up others, or done the same again at their pleasure. They have proclaimed wars, and they have warred themselves. And whereas emperors in ancient times dignified popes with titles, enlarged them with donations, and given them confirmation, they have afterwards, like ungrateful clients to such benefactors, stamped on their necks, made them to hold their stirrups, some to hold the bridle of their horse, and caused them to seek their own confirmation at the popes' hand. Moreover, they

⁴⁷ *Breaking parks*: “park” was a kind of fishing net, and might refer to damaging one. Or, perhaps using a public park for private purposes, by opening a gap in its fencing (paling) to hunt, fish, farm, etc., thus “going beyond the pale.”

⁴⁸ The blessing of bells was said to imbue the bells with spiritual power, so that when rung, they would protect the faithful from evil spirits and natural calamities such as storms.

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have extorted into their own hands the power and jurisdiction of *both* swords (spiritual and temporal power), especially since the time of Pope Gregory VII, surnamed *Hildebrand*. This Hildebrand, deposing emperor Henry IV, made him attend at the city gate. And after him, Pope Boniface VIII showed himself to the people, on the first day like a bishop, with his keys before him; and the next day he showed himself in his imperial robes, having a naked sword carried before him, like an emperor (A.D. 1298). This inordinate jurisdiction has not only been used by them in the past, but it is still maintained at Rome to this day. Let us therefore now compare her to the old manner in times past, meaning the primitive age of the church of the Romans. In that age, the old bishops of Rome, just as *they* were then subject to their emperor, so were other bishops of other nations in like manner subject every one to his own king and prince. They acknowledged them as their lords, were ordered by their authority, and obeyed their laws — and that was not only in civil causes, but also ecclesiastical.

Thus Gregory I (the Great), was subject to Maurice, and to Phocas (even though he was a wicked emperor). So, also, both the pope and people of Rome took their laws from the emperors and submitted to them, not only in the time of Honorius, 100 years after Constantine the Great, but also in the time of Marcian (A.D. 451), and up to the time of Justinian I (A.D. 527) and of Charlemagne (A.D. 768). In all this period, the imperial law ruled and bound in Rome, both in the days of Justinian, and 150 years after. Thereby it may appear false that the city of Rome was given by Constantine to the bishop of Rome. For Pope Boniface I, writing to the emperor Honorius, calls Rome the emperor's city; and the emperor Lothaire appointed magistrates and laws in Rome.⁴⁹ Moreover, the bishop of Rome and all other ecclesiastical persons were in former times (and ought to be) subject to their emperors and lawful magistrates, in spiritual causes as well as civil. This may appear by many evidences taken out both of God's law, and man's law.

And first, by God's law, we have the example of godly King David, who numbered all the priests and Levites, and disposed them into twenty-four orders or courses, appointing them continually to serve in the ministry, every one in his proper order and turn. Good King Hezekiah afterwards renewed this institution of the clergy. It is written of him: "He did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David did. He removed the high places, and broke the images," etc., 2Kng 18.3-4. Hezekiah also reduced the priests and Levites into their orders as prescribed by David, each one according to his service, 2Chr 31.2. And this order from David still continued till the time of Zacharias, at the coming of Christ. He was of the course of Abia, which was the eighth order of the priests appointed to serve in the tabernacle, Luk 1.5. Passing over other lighter offices, such as those concerning the ordering of oblations in the temple, and the repairing of the house of the Lord, we find Solomon displacing Abiathar the high priest by his kingly power, and placing Zadok in his stead, 1Kng 2.27,35. Also, Solomon dedicated the temple of the Lord with all the people, and blessed all the congregation of Israel, 1Kng 8.55. Judas Maccabeus also elected priests, those who were without spot. He had a zeal for the law of the Lord, to purge the temple, which the idolatrous Gentiles had profaned, 1Mac 4.42. Also, King Alexander, writing to Jonathan, appointed him chief priest, 1Mac 10.18-20. Demetrius ordained Simon and Alcimus in the like office of priesthood, 1Mac 7.9; 15.1. Jehoshaphat likewise, set judges throughout the land. So also in Jerusalem he appointed Levites and priests, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, to hear causes and to minister judgment over the people, 2Chr 19.8.

By these and many other passages, it is to be seen that kings and princes in the old time had the dealing in ecclesiastical matters, such as calling the people to God's service, cutting

⁴⁹ Lothair I (795-855) - Carolingian emperor, and king of Italy and Middle Francia.

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down groves, destroying images, gathering tithes into the house of the Lord, dedicating the temple, blessing the people, casting down the bronze serpent, correcting and deposing priests, constituting the order and offices of priests, commanding things which pertained to the service and worship of God, and punishing the contrary, etc. And in the New Testament, what does the example of Christ himself mean, both giving and teaching that tribute is to be given to Caesar? to *Caesar*, I say, and not to the high priest. ^{Luk 20.22-25} What do his words to Pilate mean, not denying that power was given to Pilate from above? ^{Joh 19.11}

And again, he declared that the kings of nations have dominion over them, and commanded his disciples not to have such dominion. ^{Mat 20.25-26} Thereby He gives us to understand the difference between the regulation of his spiritual kingdom, and that of the kingdoms of this world. He commands all states to be subject under the rulers and magistrates, in whose regulation is dominion and subjection. This also accords with the doctrine of St. Paul, where it is written: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," Rom 13.1 — under whose obedience, neither pope, cardinal, patriarch, bishop, priest, friar nor monk, is excepted or exempted. In like agreement with the holy apostle St. Paul, St. Peter joins also: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors," etc., 1Pet 2.13-14. Let any man now judge whether the pope has not done open wrong to the emperor, in raising himself above the jurisdiction of his lawful prince and magistrate.

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And as it is proved by God's law, that all ecclesiastical persons owe subjection to their lawful princes, in temporal as well as spiritual matters, so it may no less be inferred from man's law, and the examples of the oldest fathers. The popes' decrees and canons are full of records testifying how the ancient church of Rome not only received, but also required of the emperors, laws and constitutions to be made that touch not only such causes, but also such persons as were ecclesiastical. Boniface I, bishop of Rome, sent a humble supplication to the emperor to provide some remedy against the ambitious contentions of the clergy concerning the bishopric of Rome. Honorius, at his request, directed and established a law, that none should be made bishop of Rome through ambition. He charged all ecclesiastical ministers to cease from ambition; appointing, moreover, that if two were elected together, neither of them should be taken, but the election was to proceed to another, to be chosen by a full consent of voices.

To this I also add the law and constitution of the emperor Justinian (r. 527-565), ratified and renewed afterwards in the Council of Paris. In these, all bishops and priests are expressly forbidden to excommunicate any man before his cause was known and proved to be such as the ancient canons of the church would have him excommunicated. Moreover, in his laws and constitutions, Justinian disposed and ordained in church matters, to have a determinate number of churchmen or clerics in churches (Const. 3). Also matters concerning monasteries and monks (Const. 5). How bishops and priests should be ordained (Const. 6). Concerning the removing of ecclesiastical persons from one church to another. Also, that the holy mysteries should not be done in private houses, and whoever attempted the contrary, would be deprived (Const. 57). Moreover, concerning clerics leaving their churches (Const..58). Also, concerning the order and manner of funerals (Const. 59). And that bishops should not keep away from their flock (Const. 67). And agreeable to the doctrine of St. Paul (Const. 123), the emperor commands all bishops and priests to sound out their service, and to celebrate the mysteries, not in a secret manner, but with a loud voice, so that everything which was said and done might not only be heard, but also be

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understood by the faithful people. By this it is to be gathered that divine prayers and service was then in the vulgar tongue (the common language).

And just as Justinian and other emperors in those days had jurisdiction and government over spiritual matters and persons, so too, like examples may be given of other kings in other countries, who had no less authority in their kingdoms than the emperors had in their empire. For example, in France, Clovis summoned a council of thirty-three bishops, at which thirty-three canons were instituted concerning the government of the church. Charlemagne called five synods, one at Mentz, the second at Rome, the third at Rhemes, the fourth at Cabilone, the fifth at Arelate, where various ordinances were given to the clergy, about 810 years after Christ. He also decreed that only the canonical books of Scripture, and none other, should be read in the church; which had also been decreed before, in the third general Council of Carthage (A. D.417).⁵⁰

Moreover, he instructs and informs the bishops and priests in the office of preaching, desiring them not to allow any to preach to the people any new doctrine of their own invention, not agreeing with the word of God; and that they themselves will preach those things which lead to eternal life, and set others to do the same.

Also, these kings and emperors forbade any freeman or citizen to enter monastic life, without having obtained a license from the government. They gave two reasons for this: first, that many gave themselves to religion not for mere devotion, but for idleness and to avoid the king's wars; secondly, many were craftily circumvented and deluded by subtle covetous persons, who sought to get from them whatever property they had. They also forbade that any young children or boys should have their heads shaved, or enter into any profession without the will of their parents; and that no young maiden should take the veil or profession of a nun before she came to sufficient years of discretion, so as to discern and choose what she should follow.

Moreover, Louis the Pious,⁵¹ with his son Lothaire, mentioned before, ordained among other ecclesiastical sanctions, a godly law for *laymen* to communicate the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord. They also enacted that no goods of the church should be alienated (sold off to foreign interests). Louis II, the son of Lothaire, who succeeded as emperor and king of France about the year 848, caused Pope Leo IV to be brought before him on a charge of treason. The pope pleaded his cause at the bar, before the emperor, and was acquitted and released. This declares that popes and bishops all that time were in subjection to their kings and emperors.

Moreover, Louis IX (A.D. 1228) made a law against the corruption of *simony* in the church; also for the maintenance of the liberty of the church of France. And he established a law or decree against the new inventions, reservations, preventions, and exactions of the court of Rome. Philip IV (A.D. 1303) also set forth a law forbidding any exaction of new tithes and first fruits, and other unaccustomed collections, to be put upon the church of France. King Charles V (A.D. 1369) commanded that no bishops or prelates, or their officials within his kingdom of France, should execute any censure of suspense, or excommunication, at the pope's commandment, over or upon the cities or towns, corporations, or commons of his realm. Charles VI (A. D 1388) provided by law, that the fruits and rents of benefices, with

⁵⁰ The third general council of Carthage was held in A.D. 397; but a compilation of its ordinances was made c. 417-19, in the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiae Africanæ*.

⁵¹ *Louis the Pious*: that is, Louis I (778-840), son of Charlemagne. He was king of Aquitaine, and later of the Franks. This references the *Code of Canon Law*, Title III (Can. 1290-1298).

other pensions, and the goods of bishops who departed, should no longer be exported to Rome by the cardinals and by other officials and collectors of the pope, but should be brought to the king, and so restored to those to whom they rightly pertained.

Similar things may also be proved by the examples of our kings in England, such as Offa, Egbert, Ethelwolf, Alfred, Edgar, Canute, Edward the Confessor, William the Conqueror, William Rufus, Henry I, Henry II, till the time of king John and after. Their dealing in ecclesiastical as well as temporal cases, is sufficient to prove what injury the popes in these latter days have done to the emperors, their lawful governors and magistrates, in usurping such power and jurisdiction over them, to whom they properly owe subjection. This was contrary to the steps and example of their ancestors, the old Roman bishops; although it is not to be denied that ecclesiastical ministers have their power committed to them, within their scope, in the Lord. Yet it becomes every man to know his own place and standing, and to stay where his own precinct confines him, and not rashly break out into other men's walks. Just as it is not lawful for a civil magistrate to intermeddle with a bishop's or a preacher's function, so it was unseemingly and unorderedly that Boniface VIII should have the temporal mace and naked sword of the emperor carried before him; or that any pope should bear a triple crown, or take it upon himself to be like a lord and king. Therefore, let every man consider the compass and limitation of his charge, and exceed no further.

2. Title Falsely Grounded

The *second* point in which the church of Rome has departed, is in the style and TITLE annexed to the bishop of that see. For example, where he is called pope, most holy father, vicar general, and vicar of Christ, successor of Peter, universal bishop, prince of priests, head of the church universal, head bishop of the world, the admiration of the world, neither God nor man, but a thing between both, etc. For all these terms are given to him in popish books. The name *pope* — being a Greek name, and equivalent to *father* — may seem more tolerable, having been used in the old time among bishops. For so Austin was called by the Council of Africa, also Jerome, Boniface and others; also Cyprian, bishop of Carthage. But that this or *any* of these terms were so peculiarly applied to the bishop of Rome, that other bishops were excluded from using it, or that any one bishop above the rest had the name *ecumenical*, or *universal*, or *head*, to the derogation of other bishops, is to be found neither in histories of the old time, nor in any example of the primitive church.

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Before the Council of Nice, it is evident that there was no respect paid to the church of Rome, but every church then was ruled by her own government, till the year 325. Then followed the Council of Nice, where it was decreed that throughout the whole church, which was now far spread over all the world, four provinces or precincts were to be appointed, each one to have its head church, and chief bishop. These were called the *metropolitan* or *patriarch*, and each had the oversight of those churches which lay about him. Among these patriarchs or metropolitans, the bishop of Rome had the first place, the bishop of Alexandria the second, the bishop of Antioch the third, and the bishop of Jerusalem was the fourth patriarch. Afterward, in the number of these patriarchs, the bishop of Constantinople also came in, taking the place of the bishop of Antioch. So that these four or five metropolitans or patriarchs had their peculiar circuits and precincts especially appointed, in such a way, that one of them would not deal within another's precinct; and also that there would be an equality of honor among them. Again, speaking of the said patriarchs or primates, we read in the second and third chapter of the Council of Constantinople, that bishops should not invade the diocese of other bishops beyond their borders, nor confound together churches,

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etc. Moreover, the old doctors (theologians), for the most and best part, accord in one sentence, that all bishops, wherever placed in the church of God, are of one merit, of like honor, and all are equally successors together of the apostles. Also, the author of the book called *Dionysius Areopagita*, says all the bishops were of equal order, and of like honor, etc. — all this while the bishop of Rome was a patriarch, and a metropolitan or bishop of the first see. But he was no ecumenical bishop, nor head of the universal church, nor any such matter. This went so far that he, with all other bishops, was debarred from that by a plain decree of the Council of Carthage (Can. 39). “That the bishop of the first seat shall not be called the prince of priests, or the high priest, or any such thing.”

And lest any take occasion here to cavil at hearing him called “bishop of the first seat,” let me expound on what is meant by “the first seat,” and why he was so called. It was not for any dignity of the person, either of the one who succeeds, or of the who is succeeded, but only of the place in which he sits. This is plainly proved by the Council of Chalcedon, cap. 28. In this it was manifestly declared the reason why the See of Rome among all other patriarchal sees is numbered as the first see by the ancient fathers. For the council says, our forefathers worthily attributed the chief degree of honor to the see of old Rome, because the principal reign or empire was in that city, etc. The same is also confirmed by Eusebius, ⁵² declaring that the excellency of the Roman empire advanced the popedom of the Roman bishop above other churches. etc. He says too, that the Council of Nice gave this privilege to the bishop of Rome, for just as the king of the Romans is named emperor above all other kings, so the bishop of the city of Rome should be called pope above all other bishops, etc. By these documents (and many more), it appears, that although these titles of superiority had been attributed to the bishop of Rome, yet it remains certain that the bishop of Rome received that preferment by man’s law, and *not* by the law of God.

Therefore, regarding these titles of pre-eminence, we will set forth and declare what history says in this matter.

1. First, we will see what titles the bishop of Rome takes and claims for himself, and what the meaning of them is.
2. When they first came in (whether in the primitive time or not), and by whom.
3. How they were first given to the Roman bishops; that is, whether it was from necessary duty, or from voluntary devotion; and whether it was in respect to Peter, or in respect to the city, or else to the worthiness of the bishop who sat there.
4. And if the aforesaid names were then given by certain bishops, to the bishop of Rome, whether all of the stated names were really given.
5. Or whether they were then *received* by all the bishops of Rome to whom they were given, or whether they were refused by some.
6. And finally, whether they should have been refused when given, or not.

And first, to begin with the names and titles that are now claimed by and attributed to the bishop of Rome — that is, the Chief Priest of the World, the Prince of the Church, Apostolical Bishop, the universal Head of the Church, the Head and Bishop of the Universal Church, the Successor of Peter, most holy Pope, Vicar of God on Earth, neither God nor man but a mixed thing between both; the Patriarch or Metropolitan of the Church of Rome, the Bishop of the first See, etc. To these titles or styles is annexed a triple crown, a triple cross,

⁵² Eusebius Pamphilius (c. 270-340): Bishop of Caesarea, advisor to Constantine I, and church historian.

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two cross keys, a naked sword, and sevenfold seals in token of the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit. Allegedly having the plenary fulness of power, of temporal as well as spiritual things in his hands, all things are his, and all those princes who have given him anything, have but given him his own, having it at his will and pleasure to preach indulgences and the cross against princes. As such, the emperor and certain other princes, it is claimed, ought to confess to him at their coronation, their subjection to him. And also confess,

“that the pope has the authority to depose; that he has deposed emperors and the king of France; that he has the authority to absolve the subjects from their allegiance to their princes; that kings have served as foot-men to lead his horse, and the emperor to hold his stirrup; that the pope may and does give power to bishops over the bodies of men, and has granted it to them to have prisons; that without the pope’s authority, no general council has any force; that appeals in all manner of causes may and ought to be made to the pope; that his decrees are equal with the decrees of the Nicene council, and are to be observed and taken to have no less force than if they had been confirmed with the heavenly voice of St. Peter himself; that the bishop of Rome may dispense above the law, and make justice of injustice in correcting and changing laws, for he has the fulness of power; that if the pope leads innumerable souls by flocks into hell with him, no man may presume to rebuke his faults in this world; and that it stands upon necessity of salvation, to believe in the primacy of the See of Rome, and to be subject to that See,” etc.

Now let us see whether these names and titles were ever attributed to anyone in the primitive time of the bishop of Rome. If our adversaries, being convicted by plain evidence from history and the example of time, will yield to us (as they must) in part if not in the whole, then let us come to the particulars. Let us see what part they will defend and derive from the ancient custom of the primitive church — that is, from the first 600 years after Christ. First, in the Council of Nice (Nicea), in the year 325, and in the sixth canon of that Council, we find that some one church was decreed in every province or precinct, and a bishop was appointed to have the inspection and government of other churches about him. This was according to the ancient custom, as the words of the council purport. So that, the bishop of Alexandria would have power over Libya and Pentapolis in Egypt, in so far as the bishop of Rome has the same power, in the same manner. And so it was also in Antioch and in other countries. Let every church have its due honor, and consequently the bishop of Jerusalem would have his due honor as well. Such order was kept, that the metropolitan cities would not be defrauded of their dignity which was due and proper to them. In this council, and in the same sixth and seventh canons, the bishops of Alexandria, of Rome, and of Antioch are joined together in like manner of dignity, and there appears no difference of honor meant in this. Also, there immediately follows that no bishop should be made without consent of their metropolitans, the city of Jerusalem included, and that the Metropolitan would have full power to confirm every bishop made in his province,

After this followed the sixth Council of Carthage (A.D. 420), at which 217 bishops were assembled, among whom were Augustine, Prosper, Orosius, and various other famous persons. This council continued for the space of five years, at which there was great contention about the supremacy and jurisdiction of Rome.

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Zosimus, the Roman bishop, had received into the communion of the church, without any examination, someone who came from Africa to complain to him. He was named Apiarius of

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Sicca,⁵³ a priest whom the metropolitan with the Council of Africa had worthily excommunicated. Upon this, Zosimus, having received and shown favor to Apiarius, who had appealed to him, sends his messengers to the Council, with these requests:

- that Apiarius, whom he had absolved, might be received back by them;
- that it might be lawful for bishops or priests to appeal from the sentence of their metropolitans, and also from the sentence of the council, *to the See of Rome*;
- that if any priest or deacon were wrongfully excommunicated by the bishops of their own province, it should be lawful for them to move the hearing and judging of their cause to their neighboring bishops;
- that Urban, their bishop, should either be excommunicated, or sent to Rome, unless he corrected those things that were to be corrected, etc.

For the proof of this, Zosimus alleged the words (as he pretended) of the Nicene council. The Council of Carthage hearing this, remembered no such thing in the Council of Nice. And yet, not suspecting the bishop of Rome would dare to wrongfully falsify the words of that Council, the Council writes to Zosimus, declaring that they never read any such canon in their common Latin copy of the Nicene council. Yet for quietness' sake, they would observe it until they might procure the original copies of that council to be sent to them from Constantinople, Alexandria, and from Antioch. In like effect, they afterward wrote to Pope Boniface I, who succeeded Zosimus (A.D. 418); and thirdly, also to Celestine, who shortly after succeeded Boniface (A.D. 422).

In the meantime, this council sent to Atticus, patriarch of Constantinople, and to Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, for the authentic copies in Greek of the Nicene council, which being sent to them, and they finding no such canon in the true originals, as the bishop of Rome had falsely forged, they wrote a sharp letter to Celestine, bishop of Rome, in which they styled him "brother bishop." They declared to him, that they had perused all the copies of the Council of Nice, and could find no such canon as he and his predecessors had falsely alleged. Reciting the sixth canon, they declared that the decrees of the Nicene council had committed all and singular ecclesiastical persons, bishops as well as others, to the charge of their metropolitans.

Therefore they declared that it was not convenient to bring their matters over to Rome; nor was it to be found in the decrees of any council, that any legates should be sent from Rome to them, to decide in their matters. And they therefore exhorted the bishop of Rome not to introduce the swelling pride of the world into the church of Christ, which shows and gives the light of simplicity and of humility to those who love God, etc. In these letters, moreover, it is signified that Apiarius, whom the bishop of Rome had absolved and received to the communion of the church, was afterwards found culpable. Therefore the council proceeded against him, brought him to open confession of his faults, and so enjoined him to due penance for his demerits, notwithstanding the absolution and inconsiderate clearing of the bishop of Rome before proceeding.

In short, these points are to be gathered from this Council of Carthage:

1. First, that the bishops of Rome were glad to receive those who came to them for succor.

⁵³ This was similar to the case of Celestius, a proponent of Pelagianism, who also appealed to Zosimus in 418, to overrule the bishop of Constantinople. But Zosimus condemned Pelagianism.

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2. That their pride was increased by it, thinking and seeking to have all churches be under their subjection.
3. The intent was to allure others to seek them, from being ready to release and acquit this Apiarius as guiltless, even though he was afterwards found culpable by his own confession.
4. That contrary to the acts and doings of the Romish bishop, this council condemned the one whom the bishop of Rome had absolved, little respecting the proceedings of the Romish church.
5. That the bishops of old time have been falsifiers of ancient councils and writings; by this, it may be suspected that those who were not ashamed to falsify and corrupt the Council of Nice, would not hesitate to abuse and falsify the decretal epistles and writings of particular bishops and doctors for their own advantage, as they have often done.
6. In this council, at which Augustine was present, and where the president, Aurelius, was called *Papa* (pope), the bishop of Rome was expressly called in their letters merely *bishop* of the city of Rome.
7. The dominion of this Roman patriarch, in this Council of Carthage, was cut so short, that it was neither permitted to those of Africa to appeal over the sea to him, nor for him to send over his legates to them for ending their controversies. By this it may sufficiently appear that the bishop of Rome in those days was not at all admitted to be the chief of all other bishops, nor the head of the universal church of Christ on earth, etc.
8. We hear causes or reasons given in this council, why it is not necessary, nor yet convenient, for all foreign causes to be brought to one universal head or judge.
9. Lastly, by this Council of Carthage, we hear a virtuous exhortation given to the bishop of Rome, that he would not induce the meek and humble church of Christ to fume and swell with the pride of the world, as has been described. In this, or in some other Council of Carthage, it was moreover provided by express law, and also specified in the pope's decrees, that no bishop of the first seat should be called the prince of priests, or the chief priest, or any such thing.

Not long before this council, there was celebrated in Africa another council, at which Augustine was also present, where it was decreed under pain of excommunication, that no minister or bishop should appeal over the sea to the bishop of Rome. By this it may appear that the bishop of Rome at this time was not universally called by the term of ecumenical or universal bishop, but bishop of the first seat. So that, if there were any preferment in this, it was in the reverence of the *place*, and not in the authority of the *person*.

We do not deny, then, that these titles, such as Bishop, Metropolitan, the Bishop of the first See, Primate, Patriarch, Archbishop — that is to say, chief bishop, or head bishop to other bishops of his province — were applied in the old time, and might be applied to the bishop of Rome, just as the same titles were also applied to other patriarchs in other chief cities and provinces.

And likewise, concerning the name of the high priest, or high priesthood, neither do I deny that it has been found in old monuments and records of ancient times. But it was in such a way and sort as it has been common to bishops indifferently, and not singularly attributed to any one bishop or see.

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And thus much regarding upon the name or title of *high priest*, or *supreme bishop*. Just as I *do not* deny that this title was used in the manner and form said before, so I *do deny* that this title, as it is now used in Rome, was used or usually received during all the primitive time of the church — that is, for 600 years after Christ. It was not used in the manner and with that authority and glory, which is given to it these days, until the time of Phocas, the wicked emperor, which was after the year 608. This title, just as it is too glorious for any one bishop in the church of Christ to use, so is it not to be found in any of the approved and most ancient writers of the church — namely these: Cyprian, Basil, Fulgentius, Chrysostom, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and Tertullian. Rather, they wrote against it. Therefore, not without cause, it is written and testified by Erasmus, who in speaking of this name, plainly denies it is to be heard among the old writers.

The same is also to be affirmed about other presumptuous titles of like ambition — such as the Head of the Universal Church, the Vicar of Christ on earth, Prince of Priests, and the like. All of these are new-found terms, strange to the ears of the old primitive writers and councils, and were not received openly and commonly before the time of Boniface III (607), and the Emperor Phocas (608).

Now the name of *pope* remains. This being a word which signifies *father*, was then used, not as proper only to the bishop of Rome, but it was common to all other bishops or personages of worthy excellency.

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But now this name is so restrained and abused, that not only is it appropriated to the bishop of Rome, but it also distinguishes the authority and pre-eminence of that bishop alone, from all other bishops. For this reason, it has now worthily come into contempt and execration.

Although it cannot be denied that some in the primitive time began to privately pretend to that proud and wicked title of *universal bishop*, such as Menna, and especially John, the patriarch of Constantinople. Calling a council at Constantinople, John set about to dignify his throne by the consent of the council, and by the emperor of Constantinople, and obtained this title. This appears in the fifth general Council of Constantinople (A.D. 553), the first act, where Menna and John are titled “Universal Patriarchs.” Although it was then used in Constantinople through the sufferance of the emperors, who were willing to have their imperial city advanced, this title was not used in Rome. And in Constantinople, it stayed in force only by man’s law. Neither the bishop of Rome, nor any of the Western churches acknowledged, but rather opposed the title; namely, Pelagius II and Gregory I, both bishops of Rome at that time. Pelagius, writing to all bishops, plainly says:

“that no patriarch should take the name of universality at any time, because if any are called *universal*, the name *patriarch* derogates from all others. But let this be far from all faithful men, to will to take that thing to him, by which the honor of his brethren is diminished.”

Therefore Pelagius charges all such bishops, that “none of them in their letters will name any patriarch *universal*.” What can be more evident than these words of Pelagius, who was bishop of Rome just before Gregory? (A.D. 583). In like manner, Gregory also writes (or even more plainly and earnestly), proving that no man ought to be called *universal bishop*. With sharp words and rebukes, detesting that title, calling it new, foolish, proud, perverse, wicked, profane, he says that to consent to it, is as much as to deny the faith. He further added that whoever goes about extolling himself above other bishops, in so doing, follows the act of Satan, to whom it was not sufficient to be counted equal to or like other angels. In his epistles, how often Gregory repeats and declares this name to be directly against the

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gospel, and the ancient decrees of councils. Thus he affirms that none of his predecessors ever usurped that style or title for himself. And he concludes that whoever does so, declares himself to be a forerunner of antichrist, etc.

But Gregory, confirming the sentence of Pelagius, had no small conflicts about this title, both with the patriarch, and with the emperor of Constantinople. The history is thus: John had been made a patriarch of Constantinople, by his flattery and hypocrisy, and obtained from the emperor, that he was to be extolled above other bishops, with the name *universal patriarch*. Afterward, he decided to write to Gregory, then bishop of Rome, for his consent concerning this. Gregory, abiding still in his constancy, set himself stoutly against the antichristian title, and would give it no place. But perceiving the Emperor Maurice to be displeased with him about the matter, Gregory writes to Constantina, the empress, arguing and declaring in his letters, that the presumption and pride of John, to be universal patriarch, was both against the rule of the gospel and decrees of the canons. Namely, it was against the sixth canon of the Nicene council. And the novelty of that new-found title, declared nothing else but that the time of antichrist was near. Upon this, the emperor Maurice, being displeased with him, calls home his soldiers from Italy, and incites the Lombards against the Romans. They, with their king, set upon the city of Rome, and besieged it for a whole year. Notwithstanding, Gregory remained in his former constancy. After these afflictions, Eulogius, patriarch of Alexandria, writes to Gregory, and in his letters names *him* the universal pope — which Gregory refuses, and answers as follows:

“Behold: in the preface of your epistle directed to me, you have used a term of a proud name, calling me *universal pope*, which I pray your holiness will cease to do hereafter. For that derogates from you whatever is attributed to another, more than right and reason require. As for me, I do not seek my advancement in words, but in manners. Nor do I account that any honor in which I see the honor of my brethren is hindered. For my honor I take to be the honor of the universal church. My honor is the whole and perfect vigor of my brethren. I am honored when no man is denied the due honor which belongs to him. For if your holiness calls me *universal pope*, in so doing you deny yourself to be that which you affirm me to be, *universal*. But that God forbid. Let these words therefore go, which do nothing but puff up vanity, and wound charity, etc.”

It would be too long to insert here all such letters of his concerning this matter, but these will appear more largely hereafter in the body of the history, when we come to the year and time of Gregory, which was well near 600 years after Christ. In the meantime, this is sufficient to declare how the church of Rome with the form and manner of their title of *universal supremacy* as now used and maintained, has utterly swerved from the ancient steps of the primitive church of Rome.

Now let us see what the adversary has to object in favor of the title of their *universality*, or rather *singularity*.

One objection of our adversaries is this: although (they say) no bishop of Rome was ever called, or would be called by the name *universal bishop*, it does not therefore follow that they are not, or ought not to be heads of the universal church. Their reason is this:

St. Peter had the charge of the whole church committed to him, even though he was not called *universal apostle*. So it is no more absurd for the pope to be called the head of the whole church, and to have charge of it, even though he is not called *universal bishop*, etc.

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A double untruth is to be noted in this. *First*, they pretend that Peter was the head, and was to have charge of the whole church. Let us take “charge” or “head” as having dominion or mastership upon or above the church in all judiciary cases, both spiritual and temporal. For the words of the Scripture are plain: “Not as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock,” 1Pet 5.3; and “But you shall not be so; rather, he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who is chief as one who serves,” Luk 22.26. Again, it is clear that the church is greater than, or rather, the head of Peter., “All things are yours, whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or death, or life, and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s,” etc. 1Cor 3.22-23. In these words, the dignity of the church is no doubt preferred above the apostles, and above Cephas also. Moreover, just as the dignity of the wife is above the servant, so must the honor and worthiness of the church (being the spouse of Christ) surmount the state of Peter or other apostles, who are but servants to Christ and to the church. The same Lord who said to Peter, “Feed my sheep,” also said to the others, “Go and preach this gospel to all nations.” Mar 13.10 And He who said to Peter, “Whatever you loose,” Mat 16.19 also said to the others, “Whatever you remit on earth.” Joh 20.21 Moreover, if the matter goes by preaching, Paul the apostle labored more in this than Peter ever did, by his own confession, 1Cor 15.10; he also suffered more for it, 2Cor 11.23; nor was his doctrine less sound. Indeed, in one point he went before Peter, and was teacher and schoolmaster to Peter, and Peter was justly corrected by him, Gal 2.11. Furthermore, teaching is not always, nor in all things, a point of mastership, but sometimes a point of service. It is as if a Frenchman went to an Englishman to teach him French, even though he excels him in that kind of knowledge. Yet it does not therefore follow, that he has full power over him, to appoint his diet, to rule his household, to prescribe his laws, to limit his lands, and other such things. In travel of teaching, in pains of preaching, in gifts of tongues, in largeness of commission, in operation of miracles, in grace of vocation, in receiving the Holy Spirit, in vehemence of torments, and death for Christ’s name, the other apostles were not at all inferior to Peter. I see no reason, then, why Peter should claim any special prerogative above the rest, as indeed he never claimed any.

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But the patrons of the apostolical See, claim for Peter what he never claimed for himself. Nor if he were here, would he less abhor it with soul and conscience, than we do now. And yet our abhorrence now is not for any malice of person, or any vantage to ourselves, but only the vehemence of truth, and of zeal for Christ and his Church. Moreover, if these men would have Peter be the curate and overseer of the whole universal church (which was too much for one man to take charge of) and be prince of all other apostles, then I would happily learn from them what the meaning is of the right hand of fellowship between Peter, Paul, and Barnabas, mentioned Gal 2.9. What handshaking is there between subjects and their prince in the way of fellowship? Or where there is fellowship, what mastership is there? Or, again, what state of mastership is it likely that Christ would give to Peter? Christ was indeed master of all, yet he took so little mastership upon Himself, not only in inward affection but also in outward act. Joh 15.15 Although I am not ignorant that in various places of the gospel Peter has Christ’s commendation; nor do I deny that Peter was worthy of it. Yet these words of commendation give him no state of superiority or jurisdiction over all others, so as to have all others under subjection to him.

These patrons produce another argument, proving that in the primitive time, the bishop of Rome was entitled “the head of Christ’s church.”

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St. Peter, they argue, was called *head of Christ's church* by the ancient fathers. And because St. Peter was bishop of Rome, the *bishop of Rome* was therefore called *head of the church* in the ancient time.

How can they prove that St. Peter — although he was at Rome, and taught at Rome, and suffered at Rome — was the bishop and proper ordinary of that city of Rome? As to the writings of the fathers to prove this, I answer concerning Orosius, Tertullian, Cyprian, Jerome, and Augustine, that where they speak of St. Peter's *chair*, or of *planting the faith* at Rome, the papist straightway argues from this that Peter was bishop of Rome. But that does not clearly follow. For the office of the apostles was to plant the faith in all places, and in every region; yet they were not *bishops* in every region. And as for the *chair*, that is not the essential difference which makes a bishop. Just as a doctor may have a chair, and yet not be a bishop, so they cannot conclude by the chair of Peter, that St. Peter was bishop of Rome. All of this proves no more than this: that Peter was at Rome, and there he taught the faith of Christ — as Paul also did, and perhaps in a chair. Yet we do not say that Paul was therefore bishop of Rome, but only that he was there as an apostle of Christ, whether he taught there standing on his feet, or sitting in a chair. In Scripture, the "chair" commonly signifies doctrine or judgment, just as "sitting" declares those who teach or judge, whether they sit in the chair of Moses, or in the chair pestilence. *Planting* likewise is an apostolical word, and does not signify the office of a bishop only. Therefore it is not a good argument to say that he *sat*, he *taught*, he *planted* at Rome, that his chair and seat was at Rome, and that *therefore* he was bishop of Rome.

As for Abdias, Ado, Optatus, and others, I answer with this distinction of a bishop, taken either generally or specially. First, generally, a bishop is whomever the public cure⁵⁴ and charge of souls is committed, without any limitation of place. And so the name of bishop is coincident with the office of apostle, or any public pastor, doctor, or curate of the universal flock of Christ. And thus Paul, Peter, or any other of the apostles may be called bishops. So Christ himself is called bishop and pastor, by this express word: 1Pet 2.25, "the Shepherd and Overseer (*episkopos*) of your souls." And thus Peter may well be named a bishop. But this public and general charge, universally over the whole without limitation, ceased after Christ and the apostles. For then bishops were appointed by places and provinces, to have special oversight of some particular flock or province, and so to be resident and attendant only upon that.

The other view of this name *bishop*, is to be taken in a more special way, which is when a person is assigned specially to some one certain place, city, or province, where he is bound to employ his office and charge, and nowhere else, according to the old canons of the apostles, and of the Council of Nice. And *this* bishop, differing from the other, bears the name of his city or diocese. Thus we deny that Peter the apostle was ever elected, installed, or intituted bishop to the city of Rome. And if Ado say that Peter was bishop of Rome for twenty-five years, until the last year of Nero, that is easily refuted both by the Scriptures and by histories. For so we understand by the declaration of St. Paul, Gal 2.1, that fourteen years after his conversion, St. Paul had Peter by the hand at Jerusalem.

Moreover, Paul witnesses that the apostolical charge was committed to Peter over the circumcised, Gal 2.7. Also, St. Paul writing to the Romans, in his salutations to those in Rome, makes no mention of St. Peter who, doubtless, would not have been forgotten if he

⁵⁴ *Cure*: having spiritual charge or care of a soul; the office of a parish priest or *curate*.

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had then been in Rome. ⁵⁵ Again, St. Peter, in dating his epistle from Babylon, was not then at Rome. ⁵⁶

Furthermore, histories record that Peter was at Pontus five years, then at Antioch seven years. How could he then be at Rome for twenty-five years? Finally, where our adversary says that St. Peter was there twenty-five years, until the last year of Nero, how can that stand when St. Paul, suffering under Nero, was put to death the same day twelve months later, that is, a whole year after Peter? But especially, how does this agree with Scripture, that Christ would make Peter a universal apostle, to walk in all the world? “Go into all the world,” Mar 16.15; and “you shall be witnesses to the uttermost part of the earth,” Act 1.8. And our papists would make him a sitting bishop, and locate him at Rome. How do these accord — *apostle* and *bishop* — to *go* and to *sit* — to *all nations* and *at Rome* — together?

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Now, the second untruth in the argument is that, because Peter was the head of the church, therefore the pope must also be the head of the church, even though he was not called *universal bishop* for along time. But we deny this; indeed, the matter denies itself by their

⁵⁵ Archbishop Tillotson says of Barrow’s celebrated *Treatise of the Pope’s Supremacy*, “He has exhausted the subject and has said enough to silence this controversy forever.” Barrow has thus expressed himself on this point.

“The discourses of those men, have evinced that it is hard to assign the time when Peter was at Rome, and that he could never long abide there. For,

“The time which old tradition assigns his going to Rome, is rejected by diverse learned men, even of the Roman party.

“He was often in other places, sometimes at Jerusalem, sometimes at Antioch, sometimes at Babylon, sometimes at Corinth, sometimes probably at each of those places to which he directs his catholic epistles. Among these, Epiphanius says, Peter often visited Pontus and Bithynia.

“And that he was seldom at Rome, may well be collected from St. Paul’s writings; for writing at different times, one epistle to Rome and diverse epistles from Rome, such as that to the Galatians — that to the Ephesians — that to the Philippians— and that to the Colossians and the Second to Timothy, he never mentions him sending any salutation to him or from him.

“Particularly, St. Peter was not there when St. Paul, mentioning Tichicus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Marcus and Justus, adds, ‘These alone, my fellow-workers for the kingdom of God, have been a comfort to me,’ Col 4.11.

“He was not there when St. Paul said, ‘At my first defense no man stood with me, but *all* men forsook me,’ 2Tim 4.16.

“He was not there immediately before St. Paul’s death, ‘When the time of his departure was at hand,’ when he tells Timothy that ‘All the brethren saluted him,’ and naming various of them, omits Peter. 2Tim 4.21.

“These things being considered, it is not probable that St. Peter would assume the Episcopal Chair at Rome, he being little capable of residing there, and other needful affairs would have forced him to leave so great a church destitute of their pastor.

“Had he done so, he must have given a bad example of non-residence, a practice that would have been very ill-relished in the primitive church.”

⁵⁶ It was during the life of our Author, John Foxe, that the Rhemish Testament was published; and though he little thought that the Papists would identify Babylon with Rome, yet his “Acts and Monuments” were scarcely before the world, when the Rhemish Annotators — finding no evidence in the Scriptures to prove that Peter was ever at Rome — actually fastened upon the dating of his first epistle from Babylon, and explained it as a mystic name for Rome!

Cartwright — who was a contemporary of Fox, and wrote his “Confutation of the Rhemists,” etc. during the lifetime of our Martyrologist — writes thus:

“That Peter did not sit at Rome is confirmed in that Peter writes from Babylon, which to be Babylon in Chaldee, and not in Italy, this is an evident reason, for this Babylon was a place of principal abode of the Jews, towards whom Peter’s charge specially lay. Gal 2.7. Whereas at this time, the Jews were not allowed to make their abode in Rome, Act 18.2. To which it may be added that, writing to the dispersed Jews, and listing the diverse countries which they were in, he leaves out Chaldea, which he would never have done, considering the great numbers that still remained there after the return into Judea out of Captivity, unless Chaldea were the place from which he wrote his epistles.-’ — Cartwright *in loc.* [Ed.]

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own position. For the title *universal bishop* was not accepted at Rome, but was refused till the time of Gregory I (r. 590-604). Then it must necessarily be granted that the bishops of Rome, before Gregory, did not have charge of the whole church, nor for that reason could they be admitted to be *heads of the church*. For, just as there can be no “head” except that which is universal to the whole body, so none can have the charge of the whole, unless he is universal to all parts of that which he has charge of. Therefore, if a bishop is the one who has charge of all souls in his diocese, whose charge extends to all churches, and who must give account for every Christian soul in the whole world, the name of *universal bishop* cannot be denied to him, for he has the *office* of a universal bishop. Or, if he is *not* a universal bishop, then he cannot have the charge of the whole, that is, of all the churches of Christ. This word *universal* in the Greek writers, signifies that which we in our English tongue call *catholic*. Yet I suppose our adversaries here will not take *universal* in that sense. For according to that meaning, just as we do not deny that the bishops of Rome may be universal bishops, so neither can they deny that other bishops may also be as universal — that is, as catholic as they are. But those who more distinctly discuss this matter, define *universal* or *catholic* by three things: to wit, by *time*, *place*, and *person*. So that, whatever extends itself to all times, all places, and all persons, *that* is properly universal or catholic. And contrariwise, what is to be called *universal* or *catholic*, either reaches to all those three, comprehending all places, times, and persons, or else it is not to be properly called universal or catholic. And thus there are three things which we most commonly call catholic or universal; that is, (1) the church, which is called the catholic church; (2) faith, which is called the catholic faith; and also (3) a man whom we call a catholic man. This is because these three things extend themselves so that no time, place, or person is excluded. These three conditions, if they altogether concur in the charge of the bishop of Rome, then it is a *universal charge*, and he is a *universal bishop*. But if not, then his charge is not universal, nor is he the head of the church, nor yet is he universal bishop. For I cannot see how these three can be separated, unless they prove it more evidently than they have yet done.

And thus much as to the objection of our adversaries, arguing that just as St. Peter, though not called *universal apostle*, was yet the head of the universal church, so too the pope, though he was not at first called *universal bishop*, did and might have the charge of the whole church, and was its universal head. Our adversaries, notwithstanding, busy themselves to prove out of Theodoret, Ireneus, Ambrose, and Augustine; that the See of Rome, having the pre-eminence and principality, has been honored above all other churches. They argue that Ireneus, Ambrose, Augustine, and Theodoret affirm that the church of Rome is the chief of all other churches; and that therefore the bishop and head of that church is chief and head over *all* bishops, and head over *all* other churches.

But this conclusion is to be denied. For the excellency of the church or place does not always argue for the excellency of the minister or bishop, nor does it necessarily cause it. For in spiritual matters of the church, all pre-eminence stands upon spiritual and inward gifts, such as faith, piety, learning, and godly knowledge, zeal and fervency in the Holy Spirit, unity of doctrine, etc. These gifts many times may excel in a church where the minister or bishop is inferior to the bishops or ministers of other churches. Just as the most famous school in a realm does not always have the most famous schoolmaster, nor does that office thereby make him more excellent in learning than all others. So, if our adversaries mean by this *pre-eminence* of the church of Rome, that it has such inward gifts of doctrine, faith, unity, and peace of religion, then, I say the excellency of it does not argue for the excellency of the bishop. But here our adversaries will reply that by the *pre-eminence* of the church of

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Rome is not meant so much the inward gifts and endowments belonging to a Christian church, as its outward authority and dominion over other churches. To which it must be asked, What necessity is there, or where did our papists learn, to bring into the *spiritual* church of Christ, this outward form of *civil* policy? Just as the Roman emperors in times past governed over all the world, so the Roman bishop must impose his monarchy upon the universal clergy, to make all other churches stoop under his subjection. And where then are the words of our Savior? — “But it shall not be so among you.” If they say there must be a distinction of degrees in the church, and superiority must be granted for the discipline of the church — for quieting schisms, for setting orders (appointing clergy), for commencing convocations and councils, etc. We do not stand against this superiority. And therefore we yield to our superior powers, kings, and princes, our due obedience — to our lawful governors under God of *both* governments, ecclesiastical and temporal. Also, in the ecclesiastical state, we do not take away the distinction of degrees, as appointed by the primitive church, or allowed by Scripture, such as patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, ministers, and deacons. In these degrees, just as we grant diversity of office, so we admit diversity of dignity. For, just as we give the minister a place above the deacon, to the bishop a place above the minister, to the archbishop a place above the bishop, so we see no cause of inequality — why one minister should be above another minister; one bishop in his degree above another bishop, to deal with him in his diocese; or one archbishop above another archbishop. And this is to keep order duly and truly in the church.

Now, here is joined the question between us and the papists, whether the metropolitan church of Rome, with its archbishop, ought to be preferred above other metropolitan churches and archbishops, throughout universal Christendom, or not? In answer to this, if the voice of order might here be heard, it would say, give to things that are equal and similar, equal honor; to things that are unequal and dissimilar, unequal honor, etc. Therefore, seeing that the See of Rome is a patriarchal see, appointed by the primitive church, and that its bishop and archbishop are limited within their own bordering churches (which the Council of Nice calls *suburban* churches), as other archbishops are, he should therefore have the honor of an archbishop, and have the same outward preeminence that is due to other archbishops. If he requires more, then he breaks the rule of right order; he falls into presumption; and he does wrong to his equals. And they also do wrong to themselves, who feed his ambition by giving more to him than the rule of order requires. The more they yield to him than is his right, that much more they take from themselves. And this is the reason why both Gregory and Pelagius reprehend those who gave to the archbishop of Constantinople that which the bishop of Rome now claims for himself, charging them with the breach of order in these words: “Lest while any singular thing is given to one person, all other priests are deprived of their due honor.” And Pelagius exhorts that no priest give to any archbishop the name of *universal bishop*, “Lest in so doing he takes from himself his due honor, while he yields that which is not due to another.” And also in the same epistle, “If he is called the chief universal patriarch, then the name *patriarch* is derogated from others,” etc. This is why, seeing that the bishop of Rome is an archbishop, order requires that he have the dignity which is due to archbishops; whatever more is added, is derogatory to the rest. And thus much concerning distinction of degrees, and order in giving to every degree his place and honor.

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Therefore, even if it is admitted that the pope sits and succeeds in the chair of Peter, and that he is the bishop of the greatest city in the world, it does not follow that he should have

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rule and lordship over all other bishops and churches in the world. For, first, regarding the succession of Peter, many things are to be considered: —

1. Whether Peter sat and had his chair in Rome or not.
2. Whether he sat there as an apostle, or as a bishop.
3. Whether sitting in the outward seat of Peter makes successors of Peter.
4. Whether one may sit in Peter's chair and seat, who does not sit in Peter's doctrine?
5. Whether the succession of Peter makes an *apostle* rather than a *bishop*, and so we should call the pope the apostle of Rome, and not the bishop of Rome.
6. Whether ecclesiastical functions ought to be esteemed by ordinary succession of place, or rather by God's private calling and sending?
7. Whether it stands by Scripture, that any succession *at all* is appointed in Christ's church, or why it is more from Peter than from other apostles.

All of these being well discussed, it would appear what little reason the pope has to take this state upon himself, above all other churches. In the meantime, just this *one* argument may suffice, instead of many arguments, for our adversaries to answer at their convenient leisure:

- All the *true* successors of Peter sit in the chair of the doctrine of Peter and of the other apostles, uniformly.
- But no popes of this latter church of Rome sit in the chair of the doctrine of Peter and of the other apostles, uniformly.

Therefore, no popes of this latter church of Rome are the true successors of Peter.

And when they have well-perused this argument, and have well-compared the doctrine taught them by St. Peter, with the doctrine now taught by the popes —

of the justification of a Christian-man, of the office of the law, of the strength and largeness of sin, of men's merits, of free-will, of works of supererogation,⁵⁷ of setting up images, of seven sacraments, of auricular confession, of satisfaction (penance), of sacrifice of the mass, of communion under one kind (wine is reserved for priests), of elevating and adoring the sacramental elements, of Latin service, of invocation, of prohibition of meats and marriage, of vowing chastity, of sects and rules of diverse religions, of indulgences and pardons: also of their doctrine now taught concerning magistrates, of the fulness of power of the See of Rome, with many other things like these,

— then I will be glad to hear what they say.

And if they would prove by Ireneus, Ambrose, Augustine, and Theodore, that the bishop of Rome is the chief of all bishops, because the city of which he is bishop is the chief and principal church above all others, then this too would follow: London is the chief city in all of England, and therefore the bishop of London is the chief of all bishops in this realm. This argument would be derogatory to the archbishops both of Canterbury and York.

Indeed, to grant yet more to our adversaries, that in giving principality to Rome, these fathers referred to the succession from Peter, and not to the greatness of the city, their argument will still fail, if their argument is rightly considered. They say,

⁵⁷ *Supererogation*: here it means exceeding what is required by Scripture for salvation (justification).

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— The apostolical See of Rome, having its succession from Peter, with its bishops, was chief of all other churches in the *primitive* time.

Therefore, the apostolical See of Rome, with its bishops, having succession from Peter, should *now* be the chief of all other churches.

This might follow if the times were alike, or if the succession which gave it pre-eminence was the same now as it was then. But the time and succession do not correspond now. For then, succession was in apostolical *doctrine* as well as in apostolical *place*. The succession of apostolical doctrine has long since ceased in the apostolical see, and nothing remains but the place alone, which is the least matter of true spiritual and apostolical succession.

Besides these objections, our adversaries object against us examples of the primitive time of the church, testimonies of general councils, and opinions of ancient writers taken out of the book of councils, and decretal epistles, by which they intend to prove that the foresaid terms (head of the church, ruler of the church, chief of all other priests) are to be applied not only to Peter, but also to *any* bishop of Rome within the compass of the primitive time. To fully and exactly answer all these objections in order, would require a whole volume by itself. I will leave that to those to whom it more properly pertains. In the meantime, I will address these and all similar places where St. Peter with his successors are called head of the church, chief of bishops, prince of the apostles, etc., with the following short distinction.

In these places, this word *head*, *chief*, and *prince* of the apostles, may be taken in two ways: to note either dominion, or else commendation. For sometimes we read *head* and *chief*, to be words, not of authority, but of excellency, by which is declared the chief and worthiest among many, and not the possessor and governor of the whole. It is like the person of a man, in which the head is the principal part of the whole body, being endued with reason and furnished with senses, by which the whole man is directed. From this is derived a metaphor that to whatever man, nature or condition has given the greatest excellency of gifts, he is called head or chief. And yet he does not always have dominion or jurisdiction of the rest. So in our common speech, we call the head or chief men of the parish, those who are most specially noted for their riches, wisdom, or place. In a like phrase of speech, we call the head man of the inquest, the one who has first place. And yet neither of these have any dominion or jurisdiction over the rest. In a school, the chief scholar in learning is not therefore the master or governor of his fellows. Nor does Cicero have any title to claim the subjection of all other orators, just because he is named the prince of eloquence. And though Homer may be also called the prince of poets, yet poets do not owe to Homer anything but fame and praise.

And so what if Peter is called and accounted the head and prince of the apostles for his excellent faith, for his divine confession, and singular affection for the Lord Jesus? What right does he have to claim authority over the other apostles, or the pope after him to claim it over all the other bishops and the whole church of Christ, even if the pope had the same excellency of Christ's faith that Peter had (as would to God he had)?

If our adversaries provoke us to numbering testimonies, and dividing the house (speaking of the writers and councils of the primitive age) for these testimonies alleged to be on their side, I could recite out of the witness of doctors, out of the examples of councils, and out of the practices of emperors, no less than sixty voices that are much more opposed to their assertion. But I refer it either to those who have more leisure at this time. Or else I will omit it to another time, if the good pleasure of the Lord grants me further leisure in another book to address it at large, and in such order as appears sufficient to prove by the doctors, general

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councils, examples, and histories, that the bishops of Rome, during the first 500 years after Christ, the bishops of Rome did not have this state of title, jurisdiction and power which they now usurp. Although, for the greatness of the empire, they were somewhat more magnified than the others, and therefore they were sought, and flattered, and showed themselves forth more than they should. Yet by the common consent of the churches, they were stopped from their purpose. So that, by the consent of most in that age, they were but taken as archbishops of equal honor, of equal merit with other archbishops and rulers of the church. And if any preference was given to them above the rest, either it was not so given by all, or even by most; or secondly, it was not so given for any such necessity of God's word as would bind them to it, nor so much out of respect for Peter and his succession, as it was for certain other causes and respects. These may gathered into thirteen.

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1. The greatness of the city and monarchy of Rome.
2. The authority of the emperor Constantine the great, the first of the emperors converted to the faith, and ruling in the same city by whom the universal liberty of the church was first promoted. And the causes of the bishops then at variance, were committed partly to the bishop of Rome, and partly to other bishops nearby, to be decided, as appears by Eusebius. (lib. 10, cap. 5.)
3. The Council of Nice, which confirmed the preeminence of that church to have the oversight of the churches bordering around it.
4. The unquiet state of the Greek church, which was much troubled in those days with sects, factions, and dissensions.
5. When synods were called by other metropolitans, if the bishops of Rome chanced to be absent, and their sentence was required, then by the occasion of this they began at length to take the sentence of the Roman church as a canon or ecclesiastical rule, and to refuse other synods where their decree or sentence was *not* required.
6. When any common matter was in hand at other places, whatever was done, the manner commonly used was to write to the Roman bishop for his approval for public unity and consent in Christ's church.
7. Also in those days the testimony of the Roman bishop was customarily desired for admitting teachers and bishops in other churches.
8. The sentence of the Roman church was not only required, but also often accepted by other bishops. When there was any dissension among the bishops of other provinces, they would, of their own accord, appeal to the bishop of Rome. They desired him to cite both parties, and to hear and decide the cause, as when Macarius and Hesychius sent to Julius, who was then bishop of Rome, etc.
9. Certain of the Arians returning from their Arianism,⁵⁸ offered up and exhibited to the bishops of Rome their evidences of repentance, and were received back, as Ursatius and Valens did to Julius. (Socrat. lib. 2, cap. 24.)
10. Gratian the emperor made a law that all men should retain that religion which was held by Damasus, the bishop of Rome, and Peter, bishop of Alexandria. (Sozom. lib. 7, cap. 4.)

⁵⁸ [Arianism: denied the divinity of Christ, teaching that he was a created being, not eternal.](#)

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11. If it happened that the bishop of Rome disallowed the appointment of any minister or ministers, the popes perceiving how diligent and ready these ministers were to seek their favor, and to send their messengers to Rome for their purgation, thereby took no little manner of exaltation for themselves. (Theodoret, lib. 5, cap. 23.)

12. The bishops of Rome also had another artful (crafty) practice, that in sending their letters abroad, they were ever harping on the greatness of their name, and of their apostolic see, and of the primacy of St. Peter their predecessor, and being prince of all the apostles, etc. They used to do this in every letter, whenever they wrote to any, as it appears in all their decretal letters; namely, in the letters of Miltiades, Marcellus, and Marcus, etc.

13. If any of the Eastern church directed any writing to the Roman bishops, in which any signification was contained of ever so little reverence given to those bishops (such as learned men commonly use for modesty's sake), that was taken by and by, and construed as plain subjection and due obedience.

Thus you have the first and original grounds by which the archbishops of the Romish See achieved their great kingdom over Christ's church. These were the beginnings of the mystery of their iniquity — by what was modestly and voluntarily given to them. Afterward it continued by use and custom, claiming it ambitiously out of duty and service. And lastly, the bishops of Rome held it fast once they had possession of it. So that now, in no case can they abide the birds calling their feathers back home, which they have so long usurped.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

And thus much concerning the life, jurisdiction, and title of the Roman bishops. In all of this (as it has been declared) they, and not we, have fallen from the primitive church of Rome. To these three things I might also join the manner of GOVERNMENT which the Romish bishops have no less altered, both from the rule of Scripture, and from the steps of the true church of Rome. This government has been and ought to be only *spiritual*. And yet the bishop of Rome has used it, of recent years, in no other way than as an earthly king or prince might have governed his realm and dominions — with riches, glory, power, terror, outward strength, force, prison, death, execution, laws, policies, promoting his friends to dignities, revenging his affections, punishing and correcting faults against his person more than other offenses committed against God. In all these things, he has been using and abusing the word of God for his pretext and cloak, to work his *worldly* purpose. Whereas indeed, the word of God ministers no such power to spiritual persons, but only that which is *spiritual*, according to the saying of the apostle: "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," ^{2Cor 10.4} but spiritual — those which do not serve against flesh and blood, nor against the weak person of man, but against Satan and the gates of hell. ^{Mat 16.18}

Just as all these weapons are spiritual, so those who deal with them should likewise be spiritual, well-furnished with all those gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit which are fit for the governance of His spiritual church —

with wisdom and knowledge in the Scripture to instruct the ignorant; with inward intelligence and foresight of the crafty operations of Satan; with the power of the Spirit to resist him; with practice and experience of temptations, to comfort those who are afflicted and oppressed by Satan; with heavenly discretion to discern spirits, ^{1Cor 12.10} and to discern truth from untruth; with judgment and knowledge of tongues and learning, to convict error; with zeal for God's glory; with fervency of prayer; with patience in persecution; with a mind contented with all cases and incidental states; with tears and compassion upon other men's griefs; with stoutness and courage against proud and stout oppressors; with

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humility towards the poor and miserable; with the counsel of the Lord Jesus by his Word and Spirit to direct him in all things; with strength against sin; with hatred of this world; with the gift of faith, and the power of the keys in spiritual causes,

— so as to minister the word, the sacraments, and excommunication when the word bids, “that the spirit may be saved;” ^{1Cor 5-5} and to reconcile again as cause requires, etc. These gifts and others like them are the matters which compose the sinews and strength of the church, and the true governing of the church.

But contrary to these, the bishop and clergy of this later church of Rome, under the name and pretense of Christ and his word, have for a long time exercised nothing else but a *worldly* dominion. Indeed, they have been seeking their own glory, not the glory of Christ; the riches of this world, not the lucre of souls; not feeding the flock, but filling the purse; revenging their own wrongs, but neglecting God’s glory; striving against man only, even killing him, but not killing the vice nor confuting the error of man; strong against flesh and blood, but weak against the devil; stout against the simple, but meek against the mighty. Briefly, they have been doing almost all things preposterously, more like secular princes than spiritual pastors of Christ’s flock, with outward enforcement and fear of punishment, with imprisoning, famishing, hanging, racking, drowning, beheading, slaying, murdering, and burning, and warring also. And on the other side, they have been seeking their own glory with riches and treasures, with guard and strength of men, with court and cardinals, with pomp and pride about them, with their triple crown, with the naked sword, with their ordinary succession, with their laws and executions, their promotions and preferments, their biddings and commandings, their threatenings and revengings, etc.

Therefore, in fine, to compare the images of a worldly kingdom, with this kingdom of the pope, we find there is no difference, except that this kingdom of the pope, under hypocrisy, makes a facade of the spiritual sword, which is the word of God; but in very deed, it does all things with the temporal sword; that is, with outward force, not differing from civil and secular government in any respect or condition.

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For as in an earthly kingdom, first a prince or some chief magistrate is appointed, having dominion over his nobles and commons, constraining all his subjects under his statutes and laws. These laws, notwithstanding, he dispenses at his pleasure. Under him all other inferior magistrates have their order and place appointed to rule over the subjects, and yet to be subject under him. So too, if the state and form of the *pope* is well considered, we see that it differs nothing at all from the earthly, except in the names of the persons. In civil government, all subjection is referred to one head ruler, whose authority surmounts all the rest, and keeps them under obedience. In like manner, the government of the popish church is committed to one man who, as chief steward, overseer, and ruler of Christ’s household, in Christ’s absence, has supreme power over all churches, to direct all its affairs. But here stands the difference: in *civil* policy he is called a king or prince; *here* he is called a pope.

The king has his dukes and earls next to him; the pope’s nobility stands in his cardinals and legates. Though they are no dukes in name, yet in pomp and pride, they will not only check them, but also checkmate kings themselves, if they might be allowed. This is what Theodore, Lanfranc, Anselm, and Thomas à Becket did; and so would Thomas Wolsey have done, had the king not checked him at times. In civil policy, next to dukes and earls, follows the order of lords, barons, knights, esquires, and gentlemen, with majors, sheriffs, constables, bailiffs, wardens, etc. A similar race is also to be seen, though under other names, in the pope’s

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policy of primates, bishops, suffragans, provosts, deans, canons, vicars, archdeacons, priests, deacons, subdeacons, acolytes, exorcists, lectors, door-keepers, singsters, with other clerics. In the other, under wardens comes the order of scavengers. So too, the pope's monarchy does not lack chanelrakers (gutter-scrapers), to whom may well be compared that rabble of abbots, provincials, priors, monks, and friars, with their convents and nunneries.

Moreover, how do justices, judges, lawyers, sergeants, or attorneys, which are necessary officers in the commonwealth, differ from the pope's inquisitors, canonists, doctors, and bachelors of the pope's law? Commissaries, officials, proctors, promoters, and other such persons, serve no less in the *spiritual court*, and in the consistory, than the others do in the *temporal court*. Now, whoever wishes to compare the glory and magnificence of the one with the glory of the other; and also the power of the one with the power of the other; and the riches of the one with the riches of the other — I suppose he will see no great odds between them, taking the pope's kingdom as it stood in his full ruff, and still stands where churches are not reformed. As for subtlety and political practice, there is no one who is impartial, that doubts or does not see that the pope's hierarchy, in upholding their state, far excels all the kingdoms of worldly princes.

Thus, in comparing the pope's government with civil governments, just as they disagree in little or nothing; so in comparing again the same government with the order of Scriptures, or with the government that was in the ancient church of Rome, we will see no resemblance between them. As we read in the apostles' time, all the armor of Christ's ministers was spiritual, and full of godly power against the spiritual enemies of our salvation. They governed the church with peace, patience, humility, true knowledge of God, the sword of the Spirit, the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, hearty charity, sincere faith, and a good conscience. So also after the apostles, in the time of Ambrose (c. 339-397), by his own testimony, it is to be understood that the armor of churchmen was then prayers and tears. Where now the armor of the pope's priesthood is nothing else but fire and sword, with which they keep all things under their subjection. And here comes the enormous and horrible abuse of excommunication, suspension, and interdiction. In many things, for which the civil magistrate will not commit any citizen to the stocks, the pope's censure will not hesitate to commit a Christian to the devil, not to mention other usurped dealings and doings in matters that belong to the civil sword. For example, in punishing immorality and adultery, in administration and probates of testaments, in bearing civil office; in making cardinals to be captains in war, and rulers of regions; bishops to be presidents or chancellors; priests to be stewards in great men's houses, or masters of mints, or clerks of the market, or gardeners to gentlemen, etc. All of this I pass over here, referring them to the consideration of those who have more leisure to mark the order of their doings, and so to judge such things with impartiality, according to the rule of truth taught in God's word, and the public examples of the ancient church of Christ in the primitive time.

3. Doctrine Heretically Corrupted.

Thus I have discoursed so much concerning the manner of life, title, jurisdiction, and government of the pope's see. In all these points, it is to be seen how this later church of Rome has receded from the true ancient church of Rome. It now remains, according to my promise, to proceed to the third and last point, which is DOCTRINE. In this consists the chief matter that is with us, and against them. So that, they are not to be reputed as true catholics, whose doctrine has altered so far; nor are we to be reputed as other than heretics, if we were now to join with them. For the proof of this, let us examine the doctrine and rites of the church of Rome as now used, and compare them with the teaching of the ancient catholics.

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This is done, that those simple souls who have been, and still are being seduced by the false appearance and image of this pretended and bastardly church, perceiving what lies within it, may be warned in time. They may either eschew the peril, if they are willing to be instructed, or if not, to blame none but themselves for their own willful destruction. And although here I could charge the new-fangled church of the pope with seven or eight heinous crimes, such as blasphemy, idolatry, heresy, superstition, absurdity, vanity, cruelty, and contradiction (in which it neither agrees with the old learning of their predecessors, nor with themselves in sundry points), yet I will and dare to boldly affirm that in this doctrine of the pope that is now taught in the church of Rome, there is neither any consolation of conscience, nor the salvation of man's soul. For there is no life nor soul's health except in Christ alone, nor any promise of salvation or comfort made except by faith in the Son of God. What assurance of perfect peace, life, or salvation can there be, then, where that which alone makes for all these is made least of, and other things which make least for these, are the most esteemed? To say the simple truth, what else is the whole course and body of the pope's law now set forth, but a doctrine of laws, a heap of ceremonies, the teaching of traditions, a mediation of merits, and a foundation of new religions? All of this does not avail one jot to the justification of our souls before the terrible judgment of God.

And, therefore, just as it may be truly said that this doctrine of the pope is void of all true comfort and salvation; so likewise it seems that those who addict themselves so devoutly to the pope's learning, were never earnestly afflicted in conscience, never humbled in spirit nor broken in heart, never entered into any serious fearing of God's judgment, nor ever felt the strength of the law and of death. For if they had, they would soon have seen their own weakness and been driven to Christ. Then they would have seen what a horrible thing it is to appear before God the Father, or to think even once upon Him, as Luther says, without Christ.⁵⁹ And on the contrary side, they would then know what a glory, what a kingdom, what liberty and life it was to be in Christ Jesus by faith, holding their inheritance, not with the bondson of Hagar, but with the free son of Sarah; Gal 4.22 by promise, and not by the law; by grace, and not by works; by gift, and not by deserving — so that God alone might be praised, and not man.

And thus the old Romans were first taught by St. Paul, writing to the Romans. Cornelius the Roman, the first baptized of all the Gentiles, learned the same from St. Peter. He received the Holy Spirit, not by the deeds of the law, but only by hearing the faith of Jesus preached. And the church of the Romans continued in the same doctrine for many years, so long as they were in affliction. And the bishop of Rome, with his Romans, would now also remain in the same doctrine, if they were such ancient catholics as they pretend, and would follow the old mother church of Rome, and retain the first liqueur with which they were first seasoned.

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But the sweet freshness and scent of that liqueur, and its pleasant perfume, has now been completely pushed out through other unsavory infusions of the pope's. So that, hardly any taste or piece remains of all that primitive doctrine which St. Paul and the other apostles first planted among the Gentiles. And what marvel is it if the Romans now, after so long a time, have lost their first sap. Consider that the church of the Galatians in the very time of St. Paul, their schoolmaster, as soon as he turned his back a little, were almost turned from the doctrine of faith, and had much ado to be recovered again. Gal 3.1 f. St. Paul expressly foretells us about this defection and falling away from the faith, in his epistles both to the

⁵⁹ Alluding to Luther's *Lectures on Galatians*, delivered in 1531, and published as a *Commentary* in 1535.

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Thessalonians, and also to Timothy. There he shows that a defection will come, and that some will depart from the faith, attending to spirits of error, etc. (1Tim 4.1-4). And to know what errors these will be, in the same place where the apostle speaks of seared consciences, the circumstance plainly leads us to understand these include forbidding men to marry, or to eat meats ordained by God to be taken with thanksgiving for man's sustenance. Most evidently, as if with his finger, he points out to us the church of Rome, which not only in these points, but also in all other conditions, has almost utterly revolted from the pure original sincerity of that doctrine which St. Paul planted in the church of the Romans, and in the churches of all other Gentiles.

Summary of St. Paul's Teachings.

1. The doctrine of St. Paul ascribes all our justification freely and only to faith in Christ, as to the only means and cause by which the merits of Christ's passion can be applied to us, without any respect to work or works of the law whatever; Eph 2.8-9; and in this doctrine, the church of the Romans was first planted.
2. The same doctrine of St. Paul, cutting off and excluding all man's deserving, rests only upon God's promise, and upon grace, not man's merits: upon mercy, not man's laboring or running; upon election and calling, not upon man's willing, etc., Rom 9.16.
3. The same doctrine casting down the strength of man and his natural integrity, as they call it, imprisoned all flesh under sin, and makes them destitute of the glory of God, Rom 3.9-23.
4. It distinguishes between the law and the gospel, declaring their use and end to be different — the one to kill, the other to make alive; the one to condemn, the other to justify; the one to have an end, the other to be perpetual, etc.: Rom 5.20; 7.4. Gal 3.10-13.
5. The same doctrine of St. Paul, just as it distinguishes between the law and the gospel, so it makes no less distinction between the righteousness of God and the righteousness of man, abhorring the one — that is, man's own righteousness, coming by the law and works — and embracing the other, which God imputes freely and graciously to us for Christ his Son's sake, in whom we believe, Phi 3.9; Rom 4.24.
6. It wipes away all traditions, and constitutions of men, especially from the binding of our conscience, calling them beggarly elements of this world, Gal 4.9; Col 2.20-22.
7. Likewise it rejects and wipes away all curious subtleties, and superfluous speculations, and knows nothing else but Christ and Him crucified, which is the only object to which our faith looks, 1Cor 2.1-2.
8. Furthermore, the same doctrine of St. Paul declares that all men are transgressors by the disobedience of one man, Adam; even though they never touched the apple, they own his stock by nature. So too, this doctrine proves that all men are justified by the obedience of one man, Christ; even though they did not perform his obedience, they are likewise born of Him by spiritual regeneration and faith, Rom 5.17-19.
9. And therefore, just as all men coming from Adam are *condemned* originally, before they grow up to commit any sin against the law; so all men regenerated by faith in Christ are *saved* originally before they begin to do any good work of charity, or any other good deed, Rom 5.18-19.
10. The doctrine of St. Paul, considering the high glory of a Christian man's state in Christ Jesus by faith, [establishes that such faith does the following]:

First, it sets him in a perfect peace with Almighty God, Rom 5.1.

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Secondly, exempts him from all condemnation, Rom 8.1.

Thirdly, it matches him with angels; makes him equal with saints and fellow-citizens of heaven; numbers him with the household of God; and makes him heir with Jesus Christ himself. Eph 2.19; Rom 8.17.

Fourthly, it adopts him from the state of a servant, to the state of *a son of God*, crying, “Abba, Father:” Gal 4.6.

Fifthly, it opens to him a bold access and entrance to the high Majesty and throne of grace, Eph 2.18; Heb 4.16.⁶⁰

Sixthly, it subjects all things under him, such as ministers — yes, the apostles themselves, in their highest office — death, life, things present, things to come, with the whole world besides; and it assigns to him no spiritual head but Christ alone, saying, “And you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s,” 1Cor 3.21-23.

Seventhly, it advances and sets him in a spiritual liberty or freedom, above all terrors of spirit, either of God’s law, or man’s law; above all dreadful fears of sin, damnation, malediction, rejection, death, hell, or purgatory; above all servile bondage of ceremonies; above men’s precepts, traditions, superstitions, vices, yokes, customs, or whatever else oppresses and entangles the spiritual freedom of a conscience which Christ has set at liberty; and it requires, moreover, that we walk and stand stoutly in that liberty wo which we are brought with the free son of Sarah; and no longer allow ourselves to be clogged with any such servile bondage — that is to say, although we must be content to subject our bodies to all service, and to all men, yet we must not yield our spiritual consciences and souls as slaves and servants, to be subject to the fear or bondage of anything in this world, for we are made lords and princes over all things whatsoever that can harm, bind, or terrify us. Gal 4.9.

11. The right vein of St. Paul’s doctrine makes no distinction between days and times to be observed. Gal 4.10; Col 2.16; Rom 14.5-6.

12. It leaves all foods as indifferent, eaten with thanksgiving; they are to serve the necessity of the body, and not the body to serve them, Col 2.16; 1Tim 4.4.

13. It permits marriage without restraint or exception, as lawful and also expedient for all men having need of it, 1Cor 7.2; Heb 13.4.

14. It admits no other sacrifice for sin, but the sacrifice of Christ alone, and that was done once for all with blood. For without blood there is no remission of sin, which is applied to us by faith alone, and by nothing else, Heb 9.22.

15. Regarding the holy communion, we understand from the first epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, 1Cor, 11.23-26, that the use then among them, was to have the partaking of the bread, called the Lord’s body, *and* of the cup, called the Lord’s blood, administered not at an altar, but at a plain board or table, the congregation meeting there together after the time of their supper. The minister did not receive it alone, as the others looked on; but the whole congregation together communicated with reverence and thanksgiving — not lifting it over the priest’s head, nor worshipping it, nor kneeling before it, nor beating their breasts; but either sitting at the supper, or standing after the supper.

⁶⁰ Foxe, like most reformers, accepts Paul as the author of Hebrews; hence he cites that letter here.

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16. The apostle, besides the sacramental supper, mentions baptism, or the “washing of regeneration,” Tit 3.5 although he himself baptized but few, 1Cor 1.14; he makes no mention of other sacraments.

17. By the same doctrine of St. Paul, no tongue (language) is to be used in the congregation, which is not known, and does not edify, 1Cor 14.2.

18. The rule of St. Paul’s doctrine subjects every creature to the obedience of kings and princes, and ordinary magistrates. Such are ordained by God to have the sword and the authority of public government, to order and dispose in all things that are not contrary to God — whatever pertains to the maintenance of the good, or to the correction of the evil. There is no exemption from their jurisdiction, regardless of vocations or persons, whether they are ecclesiastical or political.

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And therefore it pertains to this office to preserve peace, to set things in lawful order, to preserve Christian discipline in the church of Christ, to remove offenses, to bridle the disobedient, to provide and procure wholesome and faithful teachers over the people, to maintain learning and set up schools, to have oversight not only of the people, but also of all ecclesiastical ministers, to see everyone do his duty, and to remove or punish those who are negligent; also, to call councils and synods, and to provide that the church goods are faithfully dispensed by the hands of true dealers, to the sustenance of the church and of true teachers, and to the public needs of the poor, etc. Rom 13.1,4,6; Tit 3.1.

19. Furthermore, by St. Paul’s doctrine, the ministers of Christ’s church have their authority and armor likewise limited; this armor is spiritual only and not carnal, by which they fight, not against flesh and blood, but against the power of darkness, error, and sin; against spiritual seduction and craftiness in heavenly things; against the works and proceedings of Satan the prince of this world; in comforting weak consciences against the terrors of the devil and desperation; and finally against every thought lifted up against Christ — to subdue every lofty thing to the subjection and power of Christ Jesus the Son of God. Eph 6.13-18.

To briefly reduce the whole doctrine of St. Paul, it consists chiefly in *these five points*:

First, in setting forth the grace, great love and good will, and free promises of God the Father in Christ Jesus his Son, to mankind. God so loved the world that he has given his own Son for the redemption of it, Joh 3.16. He gave his Son to die for us, who were His enemies, Rom 5.8. He has made us alive, who were dead in sin, Eph 2.1. He has so mercifully reconciled the world to himself by his Son; and also by his ambassadors, He desires us to be reconciled us to Him, 2Cor 5.18-20. He has given his own Son to be sin for us, 2Cor 5.21, and to be accursed for us, Gal 3.13. By firm promise, He has assured us of our inheritance, Rom 4.16. Not by the works of righteousness that we have done, but of his own mercy He has saved us by the washing of regeneration, Tit 3.4-5.

The **second** point consists in preaching and expressing the glorious and triumphant majesty of Christ Jesus the Son of God, and the excellency of his glory; who being once dead in the infirmity of the flesh, rose again with power, and ascending up with majesty, has led captivity captive, Eph 4.8. He sits and reigns in glory at the right hand of God in heavenly things, above all principalities, and powers, and dominions, and above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come, Eph 1.21. At His name every knee will bow both in heaven and in earth, and under the earth, and every tongue will

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confess our Lord Christ Jesus to the glory of God the Father, Phi 2.10. In Him and by Him all things are made both in heaven and in earth, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers — all are created by him and for him, and he is before all, and all things consist in him who is the head of his body, the church, the beginning and firstborn from the dead, in whom dwells all fulness, Col 1.16. The Father has given all judgment to him, and no longer judges any man Himself, Joh 5.22. The Father has given all things into his hands, Joh 13.3. The Father has given him authority over all flesh, Joh 17.2. All authority in heaven and earth has been given to him, Mat 28.18. In Him all the promises of God are yes and amen, 2Cor 1.20.

Thirdly, Paul declares the virtue of Christ's cross and passion, and what exceeding benefits proceed to us by them. By Christ's blood we have redemption and the remission of our sins, Eph 1.7. By His stripes we are healed, Isa 53.5. By His cross all things are made peace, both in heaven and in earth, Col 1.20. By His death we are reconciled to God, Rom 5.10. He has destroyed death and brought life to light, 2Tim 1.10. By His death He has destroyed the one who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and He has delivered those who all their life lived in bondage, for fear of death, Heb 2.14-15. By His obedience we are made righteous; by His righteousness we are justified to life, Rom 5.18. By His curse we are blessed, and are delivered from the curse of the law, Gal 3.13. By His blood we who once were far off, are made near to God, Eph 2.13 In one body He has reconciled to God both Jews and Gentiles, Eph 2.16. By his flesh He has taken away the division and separation between God and us, abolishing the law which was set against us in precepts and decrees, Eph 2.14-15. He is our peace, our advocate, and the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, 1Joh 2.2. He was accursed, and made sin for us, that we might be the righteousness of God in him, 2Cor 5.21., He became for us, from God, our wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, 1Cor 1.30. By Him we have boldness and access with all confidence through faith in him, Eph 3.12. He forgives all our sins, and has torn in pieces the obligation or hand-writing which was against us in the law of the commandments; He has crucified it on the cross, and utterly dispatched and abolished it, and has spoiled principalities and powers, as in an open show of conquest, triumphing over them openly in himself, Col 2.14-15. He justifies the wicked by faith, Rom 4.5. In Him we are made full and complete. Col 2.10, etc.

The **fourth** branch is to teach us and inform us, to whom these benefits of Christ's passion and victory pertain, and by what means they are applied to us. There is only one means, which is by faith in Christ Jesus, and no other thing. It pleases Almighty God to accept this faith for righteousness. And it is this righteousness alone which stands before God, and none other, as we are plainly taught by the Scriptures, and especially by the doctrine of St. Paul. This righteousness thus rising from *faith in Christ*, St. Paul calls the righteousness of God. He speaks of himself utterly refusing the other righteousness which is of the law, so that he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness of Christ, which is of faith, Phi 3.9. Again, in writing of the Jews who sought righteousness and did not find it, and of the Gentiles who did not seek it and yet found it, the apostle shows the reason why: Because, he says, the one sought it by the works of the law, and not knowing the righteousness of God, and seeking to set up their own righteousness, they did not submit themselves to the righteousness which is of God. The other, which were the Gentiles, who did not seek it, obtained righteousness — *that righteousness which is of faith*, etc., Rom 9.30-32. Also, in another place from the same epistle, St. Paul writes of this righteousness which comes from faith, calling it *the righteousness of God*. He says of Christ, “whom God has set forth for a propitiation by faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the

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forbearance of God,” Rom 3.25. By this *righteousness*, it is evident that St. Paul means the *righteousness of faith*, which Almighty God now reveals and makes manifest by the preaching of the gospel. Would you see still more plainly this *righteousness of God* — how it is taken in St. Paul for the *righteousness of faith*, and is therefore called the righteousness of God, because it is imputed by God only to faith, and is not deserved by man? Look in the same epistle to the Romans, third chapter. Paul’s words are manifest: “the righteousness of God,” he says, “is by faith in Jesus Christ, to all and upon all who believe,” etc., Rom 3.22.

Therefore, whoever studies to be accepted by God and to be found righteous in His sight, let him learn diligently, by the doctrine of St. Paul, to differentiate as far as heaven is from earth, between the righteousness of *works*, and the righteousness of *faith*. Bring no other means for his justification, or for the remission of his sins, but faith alone, apprehending the body or person of Christ Jesus crucified. For just as there is no way into the house but by the door, so there is no coming to God but by Christ alone, ^{Joh 14.6} which is by faith. ^{Gal 2.16}

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And just as the mortal body, without bodily sustenance of bread and drink, can but perish, so the spiritual soul of man has no other refreshing by which to be saved, except by faith alone in the body and blood of Christ. With this faith, the idolatrous Gentiles apprehended Jesus Christ, and thereby received righteousness. As soon as Cornelius (the first baptized Roman) heard Peter preach Christ, he received straightway the Holy Spirit, Act 10.44. Peter himself confessed, and for his confession had the keys of heaven, Mat 16.19. Zaccheus received the person of Christ into his house, and with this he received salvation both for himself and his whole household, Luk 19.9. What a sinner Mary was, who had no less than seven devils in her; and yet, because she set her heart and affection upon that person of Christ, many sins were forgiven her, Luk 7.47. The thief at Christ’s right hand on the cross, how far he was from all works of the law; and yet by faith he entered into Paradise *justified*, the same day as Christ, Luk 23.43. In like manner, although the poor publican came to the church with less holiness after the law, yet he went home to his house more justified than the Pharisee with all his works, and all because of faith, Luk 18.14. Consider the parable of the prodigal son who was lost, and yet revived again; also of the lost piece of silver; and of the lost sheep which went astray and was found again. Luk 15.11f, 9f, 6f. What do these declare, if not that what is lost by the law, is to be recovered by faith and grace?

And how often do we read in the gospels, “Your faith has saved you,” etc., Luk 18.42; “Jesus, seeing their faith,” etc., Mat 9.2; “Whoever believes in me, I will raise him up at the last day,” etc., Joh 6.40; “Believe also in me,” etc., Joh 14.1; “He that believes in me has everlasting life,” etc., Joh 3.36; “Without me you can do nothing,” etc., Joh 15.5; “He that is in me,” etc., Joh 15.4; “He that loves me,” etc., Joh 14.23; “He that hears me,” etc., Joh 5.24; “He that abides in me,” etc., Joh 15.5; “He that receives me,” etc., Luk 9.48; “Unless you eat my flesh, and drink my blood,” etc., Joh 6.53; “That they may receive forgiveness of sins by faith in me,” etc., Act 26.18; “To Him all the prophets witness, that through his name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins,” etc., Act 10.43; “Whoever believes and is baptized,” etc., Mar 16.16; “Whoever believes in me, the works that I do he will do also, and greater than these,” etc., Joh 14.12. And likewise in the writings of St. Paul, how often do we hear the name of Christ in almost every third or fourth line, where he still repeats, In Christ Jesus — by Christ Jesus — through Jesus Christ our Lord, etc. Who believe in him, etc. All who believe in him, etc. Believing on him, in him, in his name, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc. St. Paul says to the jailor, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, and your house,” etc., Act 16.31.

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Thus you see then, that just as the passion of Christ is the only efficient or personal cause immediate to our salvation; so faith is the only instrumental or mean cause that makes the merits of Christ available. For just as the passion of Christ serves none but those who believe, so neither does faith itself justify (as it is only a bare quality or action in man's mind), unless it is directed to the body of Christ crucified as its *object*, from whom it receives all His virtue. And therefore, these two must always jointly concur together: faith, and Christ Jesus crucified. For example, when the children of Israel were bid by Moses to look up to the bronze serpent, the serpent could not have helped them unless they looked up, nor could their looking up have profited them unless they had directed their eyes to the serpent as the only object for them to behold. So too, our faith directed to the body of Jesus our Savior, is the only means by which Christ's merits are applied to us, and we are justified before God, according to the doctrine of St. Paul. In express words, he defines for us what this faith is, and how it justifies. He says, "if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved," etc. Rom 10.9. Besides this, whatever action or quality there is in man, either hope, charity, or any other kind of faith and believing, however true it is, unless it apprehends this object, which is the body of Christ the Son of God, it does not serve for justification. That is the reason why we add this particle (*only*) to faith, and say that *only* faith in Christ justifies us. It is to exclude all other actions, qualities, gifts, or works of man, from the cause of justifying. For there is no other knowledge or gift given by God to man, however excellent, that can stand before the judgment of God for justification, nor to which any promise of salvation is annexed. There is only *this* faith: looking up to the bronze serpent — that is, to the body of Christ Jesus crucified for us.

For example, when the Turk says that he believes in one living God who made heaven and earth, his belief in this is true, yet it does not justify him, because it lacks the right object, which is Christ. So too, when the Jew says that he believes in one God maker of heaven and earth, and also believes the same God to be omnipotent, merciful, just, and true of promise, and that He has elected the seed of Abraham, it is true that he believes this. And yet all this does not serve him, because Christ the Son of God is not joined with it. And though the said Jew is ever so devout in his prayers, or charitable in alms, or precise in keeping the law, and believes ever so steadfastly that he is elected to be saved, yet he is never any nearer to salvation for all this — so long as his faith is not grounded upon the chief cornerstone, which is the person and body of Jesus Christ, the true Savior. In the same way, it may be said of the papist, when he says that he is baptized, and believes in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, three persons, and one God, and also confesses Jesus Christ to be the Son of God who died for our sins, and rose again for our righteousness, etc., his belief in this is true. And indeed it would save him, if he stayed his salvation in this faith, and upon Christ alone as his Savior according to the promise and grace of God, and goes no further. But this he does not do. Nor does he admit that Christ alone is his perfect Savior, without the help of the patrons, heads, advocates, and mediators. Nor yet does he permit his faith in Christ to be the only means of his justification, but he sets up other by-means, such as hope, charity, the sacrifice of the mass, confession, penance, satisfaction, merits and pardons, supposing thereby to work his justification before God, *contrary* to both the word of promise, the gospel of grace, and the doctrine of St. Paul.

And thus much in the fourth branch, of the **true causes of our justification** according to St. Paul's doctrine. Now, concerning these causes, this distinction is to be added: that regarding the original causes of our salvation, which are various, some are *external* and outside us; some are *internal* and within us.

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Of the EXTERNAL causes which are outside us, the first and principal cause is the mercy and grace of God. Predestination and election follow this. Then comes vocation (the gospel call). The last and next cause is the death and bloodshed of Christ, by which we are redeemed. All these are external causes, because they are outside us.

Of the INTERNAL causes that are in man through the gift of God, there is but one, and no more are appointed in Scripture; and that is our *faith in Christ*, which is the gift of God in us. Eph 2.8 Besides this, there is no gift of God given to man — whether virtue, work, merit, or anything else — that is any part or cause of salvation, but only this gift of faith: *to believe in Christ Jesus*. And this is the reason why we hold that faith alone justifies, meaning that among all the works, deeds, actions, labors and operations whatsoever, that man does or can do, there is nothing in man that works salvation, but only his faith given to him by God to believe in Christ his Son. And therefore, in the epistle to the Romans, St. Paul reasons about the glory of justifying, and asks this question: How is our boasting of this glory excluded? Is it excluded by the law of *works*? And he concludes no; he ascribes the glory of it only to the law of *faith*. And consequently he infers this: “We conclude that a man is justified by faith *without* the deeds of the law,” Rom 3.27-28.

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How then can that, which St. Paul utterly debars and excludes, be counted as any part of our justification? Of which the whole course of St. Paul’s doctrine is full, where he still concludes; “It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast,” etc., Eph 2.8-9; “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us,” etc. Tit 3.5; “Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given to us,” etc., 2Tim 1.9; “A man is not justified by works,” etc., Gal 2.16; “To him who does not work, but believes on him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,” etc., Rom 4.5. What does he mean by these plain declarations, if not to utterly exclude all kinds of man’s merits and works of the law, from the office and dignity of justifying? And, although he does not expressly use the word *only*, based on his exclusives and negatives, this exceptive must be inferred.

And thus much concerning faith in Christ proved to be the only means, or instrument, or conditional cause of our salvation. And no other means besides faith alone, was taught by the doctrine of St. Paul to the ancient Romans.

The *fifth* branch, which I note in St. Paul’s doctrine, is this: that after he has thus established us in the certainty of our salvation through faith in Christ, then he vehemently exhorts us to **good works**, showing the true use and end of good works. This is, *first*, to show our obedience and dutiful service to God, who has done such great things for us. *Secondly*, to relieve our neighbors with our charity and kindness, just as God has been kind to us, His enemies. *Thirdly*, to stir up others by our example, to praise God, to embrace the same religion, and to do the same. For it is requisite, that just as God has been so merciful to us, and gracious in eternal gifts, we should likewise be merciful in temporal things. And seeing that it has pleased him of his Fatherly goodness to call us to so high a calling, to give the blood of his Son for us, to forgive us all our sins, to deliver us from this present wicked world, to make us citizens of heaven, indeed, His children more than servants — little then can we do, and well may we think those benefits are ill-bestowed, if we do not forgive our neighbors, and do not show something worthy of that holy calling with which he has called us, in mortifying our worldly lusts here, and pursuing heavenly things. And, *finally*, if being provoked with such love and kindness, we do not render back some love for love, some kindness for kindness, seeking how to walk in the steps which He has prepared for us to

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walk in, serving him (as much as we may), in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. And though our obedience will always be imperfect, yet we should show obedience, as loving children to such a loving father.

And this is the reason why St. Paul so vehemently and urgently calls upon us to do good works: not that works should justify, but that we being justified so mercifully and tenderly through the grace of God, should not abuse his grace in vain. Rather, we should endeavor to our uttermost, to render our service back to Him, in such a conduct of life as may most make to His glory, and the profit of our neighbor. And though the words of our Savior seem, in some places, to attribute great rewards in heaven to our obedience and charity here on earth, that is of His own free grace and goodness to thus impute small matters for great deserts. And it is not for us to claim any reward thereby, or thanks from his hand, as if any there were any worthiness in our doings. This is no more than the servant can do, when he comes from the plough, and serving the cattle in the field, first serves his master at home, and waits upon his table. The master is not bound (says Christ) to thank his servant because he did the things that were commanded of him: “So likewise you,” he says, “when you have done all those things which are commanded of you, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants; we have done only what was our duty to do,’” Luk 17.10.

Again, here also is to be understood that where such rewards are ascribed to men’s deeds, it is not the worthiness of the deed itself, but the faith of the doer, which makes the work to be good in God’s sight. For if an infidel were to do the same work that the Christian does, it would be nothing but mere sin before God. Therefore, if the Christian man’s work is accepted, however small (such as to give a cup of cold water), it is only for his faith’s sake that God does it, and not for the work which is done. By this, again, we may learn how faith alone justifies a man, and that is in three ways: —

First, it justifies the person in making him accepted, and the child of God by regeneration, before he begins to do any good work.

Secondly, it justifies a man from sin, in procuring remission and forgiveness of the same.

Thirdly, it justifies the good deeds and works of man, not only in bringing forth good fruits, but also in making the same works to be good and acceptable in the sight of God, which otherwise would be impure and execrable in his sight.

Therefore, the offices of faith and of works are different, and must not be confounded. Faith goes before, and regenerates a man, and justifies him in the sight of God, both in covering his ill deeds, and making his good deeds acceptable to God — in a sense, climbing up to heaven, and there wrestling with God and his judgment for righteousness, for salvation, and for everlasting life. Works and charity *follow* faith. They are exercised here on earth, and have glory only before man, but not before God, in showing forth obedience both to God and to man. Our good works do not reach further than this, nor do they have anything to do in the judgment of God, regarding salvation. I speak of our good works (as St. Paul speaks of them in Romans 7). as they are ours, and imperfect. For if our works could be perfect according to the perfection of the law, as Christ wrought them in the perfection of his flesh — that is, if we could perfect them — then as it is said: “The man who does those things shall live by them,” Rom 10.5. But now, seeing that the weakness of our flesh cannot attain that, it follows that all glory of justifying is taken away from works, and transferred to faith alone.

And thus much concerning the principal contents of St. Paul’s doctrine. The church of the ancient Romans was first grounded and planted in this, and so continued, or at least it did not alter much during the primitive state of the church. Likewise, the later Romans should

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have maintained the same form of doctrine, and not have fallen away for any man's preaching, but should have held him accursed — “even if he were an apostle or angel from heaven, teaching any other doctrine than that which we have preached to you ,” Gal 1.8. For so they were warned before to do by the apostle St. Paul. And yet, notwithstanding all this forewarning and diligent instruction by this blessed apostle of the Gentiles, what a defection of faith has fallen among the Gentiles, especially among the Romans, which the apostle also foretold them so long before, prophesying that the day of the Lord “will not come unless a falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed,” etc., 2The 2.3. This meant a departing and a falling from that faith which the Holy Spirit had then planted by his ministry among the Gentiles — as we see it has now come to pass in the church of Rome. That church has so gone from the faith that St. Paul taught, that if he were now alive and saw these things.

— the decrees and decretals of the bishop of Rome, these heaps of ceremonies and traditions, these mass-books, these festivals and legends, these processions, hymns, and sequences, these beads and graduals, and the manner of their invocation, their canons, censures, and later councils, such swarms of superstitious monks and friars, such sects, and so many diverse religions — the testament of St. Francis, the rule of St. Benedict, of St. Bridget, of St. Anthony, etc. — the intricate subtleties and labyrinths of the schoolmen, the infinite cases and distinctions of the canonists, the sermons in churches, the assertions in schools, the glory of the pope, the pride of the clergy, the cruelty of persecuting prelates with their officials and promoters —

he would say this was not a defection, but rather a plain destruction and ruin of faith. Nor would he say that this was any true church of Christ, but a new-found religion, or rather paganism, brought in under the shadow of Christianity, in which remains almost nothing besides the name of Christ, and the outward form of his religion. The true vein and effect of it, however, is utterly decayed; as will soon appear to those who examine all the parts of this new Romish religion.

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Except that they pretend the solemn form and words of the creed, and are baptized by confessing the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in all other points, and in true sincerity of the Christian faith — which they profess only outwardly — they are utterly degenerated from that which St. Paul and the word of God had first taught them.

For they confess the Father in word, but they renounce his will as expressed in his word; they do not acknowledge his grace; they do not receive his benefits and promises given to us in his Son; they do not feel the vigor of his law; they do not fear the terror of his judgments; and they observe his commandments by traditions and commandments of their own.

Likewise they confess the name of Christ his Son in word, but in deed they deface and diminish his office; they do not seek his glory, but under his name they seek their own glory; they do not know the power of his blood and passion, for they neither admit that He is the head of his church alone, nor Savior alone, nor our only patron and advocate. Rather, they place him with the Virgin Mary and other patrons, so that almost every parish in Christendom has its peculiar patron, besides Christ.

In like manner, they confess the name of the Holy Spirit, but God knows how far they are from the comfort, knowledge, and taste of the Holy Spirit. This may well appear by their councils, by their expounding of Scripture, by their superstitious ceremonies, by their outward worshipping, and idolatrous invocation to stocks and stones, and to dead creatures,

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by their scrupulous observation of days, times, places, numbers and gestures; and no less also by their *doctrine*, which defrauds the poor hearts of simple Christians, of their due consolation, joy and liberty in the Holy Spirit. It keeps them in a servile bondage, and a doubtful uncertainty of their salvation, contrary to the working of the Holy Spirit of God.

And thus the church of Rome, only pretending the name of Christ and of his religion, is so far altered from the truth of what it pretends, that under the name of Christ, it persecutes both Christ and his religion. It works more harm to the church of Christ than the open tyrants and persecuting emperors among the heathen ever did. It is not unlike the old synagogue of the scribes and Pharisees who crucified the Son of God in the name of God; and fought against the gospel under pretense of the law; and persecuted the children of Abraham under the title of Abraham's children. They destroyed the true temple of the Lord, boasting so highly of the physical temple of the Lord. So too, these pretended catholics in these days, after they raised up a catholic church of their own, and armed it with laws, and gathered a multitude of priests, prelates, abbots, priors, monks, cardinals, and also secular princes, to take their part — now, under the *name* "catholic church," they persecute the *true* catholic church. Still coloring their proceeding with the name of the Lord, they most cruelly put to death those who die for the name of the Lord, condemning them as heretics, schismatics, and rebels — those who deny no part of the creed which these catholics profess themselves, and whom they cannot convince by any Scripture — who will not join with their errors and heresies which are contrary to the honor of God, and truth of his word.

And lest any think that our protest against the corrupt errors and manifold deformities of this later church of Rome proceeds more from rancor or affection, rather than being grounded on necessary causes and demonstration, my purpose is to take some little pains in addressing this. A little earlier, I collected the contents of ST. PAUL'S DOCTRINE, with which the old church of Rome was first seasoned and acquainted.⁶¹ So now, in a similar summary table, I will describe the particular branches and contents of the POPE'S DOCTRINE, so that all true Christian readers, comparing one with the other, may discern what great alteration there is between the church of Rome that now is, and the church of Rome that then was planted by the apostles in the primitive time. And to open to the simple reader some way by which he may better judge in such matters of doctrine, and not be deceived in discerning truth from error, we will first propound certain *Principles* or *General Propositions*. These are infallible rules or truths of the Scripture, by which all other doctrines and opinions of men may be tried and examined, as with a touchstone,⁶² to more easily judge whether they are true or false, and whether they contradict the Scripture, or not.

Twenty Biblical Principles.

1. Just as sin and death came originally by the disobedience of one to all men of his generation by nature, so righteousness and life came originally by the obedience of one to all men regenerated of Him, by faith and baptism, Rom 5.15.
2. The promise of God was freely given to our first parents, without their deserving, that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, Gen 3.15.
3. The promise was given freely to Abraham, before he deserved anything, that in his seed all nations would be blessed, Gen 12.3.
4. We must neither add to, nor diminish from the word of God, Deu 4.2.

⁶¹ See above, those nineteen doctrinal points, reduced to five branches.

⁶² *Touchstone*: a basis for comparison; a reference point or standard against which other things can be evaluated.

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5. Whoever does the works of the law, shall live by them, Lev 18.5; Gal 3.12.
6. Accursed is the one who does not abide in everything that is written in the book of the law, Deu 27.26; Gal 3.10.
7. God alone is to be worshipped, Deu 6.13; Luk 4.8; [Isa 45.6]
8. All our righteousnesses are like filthy rags, Isa 64.6.
9. In all my holy hill they shall not kill nor slay, says the Lord, Isa 11.9; 65.25.
10. God loves mercy and obedience more than sacrifice, Hos 6.6; 1Sam 15.22.
11. The law brings about wrath, condemns and exposes sin, Rom 4.15; 3.19-20.
12. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes, Rom 10.4.
13. Whoever believes and is baptized, shall be saved, Mar 16.16.
14. A man is justified by faith without works of the law, freely by God's grace, and not of ourselves, Gal 2.16; Eph 2.8-9.
15. There is no remission of sins without shedding of blood, Heb 9.22.
16. Whatever is not of faith is sin, Rom 14.23. Without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb 11.6.
17. There is one mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, 1Tim 2.5; And he is the propitiation for our sins, 1Joh 2.2.
18. Whoever seeks to be justified by the law, has fallen from grace, Gal 5.4.
19. In Christ all the promises of God are yes and amen, 2Cor 1.20.
20. Let every soul be subject to the higher powers (governing authorities), giving to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's, Rom 13.1; Mar 12.17.

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Just as no man can deny these principles and infallible rules of the Scripture, so if they are granted, the doctrine of the pope's church must be found not to be catholic, but rather full of errors and heresies. In the sequel, ⁶³ by the grace of Christ, this remains to be proved more expressly and particularly. For now, I proceed to give a summary account of the errors, heresies, and absurdities that are contained in the pope's doctrine, which are contrary to the rules of God's word, and the first institution of the church of Rome.

⁶³ Foxe uses *sequel*, throughout, to mean the aftermath of the things he lists, *i.e.*, their consequences or results.

Doctrinal Errors of this Roman Church
OF FAITH AND JUSTIFICATION

First, as to the only means and cause of our justification, by which the merits of Christ's passion are applied to us and made ours, we saw before how St. Paul ascribes it only to faith. This appears in all his epistles, especially to the Romans, where he excludes all kinds of works, and ascribes all our salvation, justification, righteousness, reconciliation, and peace with God, only to faith in Christ. Contrary to this doctrine, the pope and his church have set up diverse and sundry other means of their own devising, by which the merits of Christ's passion (as they say) are applied to us and made ours, to the putting away of sins, and for our justification — such as hope, charity, sacrifice of the mass, auricular confession, satisfaction, merits of saints and holy orders, the pope's pardons, etc. So that, according to this teaching, Christ's sacrifice, stripes, and suffering do not heal us, however well we may believe, unless we also add these works and merits recited above. If this is true, then what Isaiah the prophet promises is false, "by his stripes we are healed," etc. (chapter 53.5). At first sight, this error and heresy of the church of Rome, seems to the natural reason of man to be but of small importance. Yet if earnestly considered, it is indeed one of the most pernicious heresies that ever crept into the church. All or the greater part of the errors, absurdities, and inconveniences of the pope's church, are grounded upon this heresy, as their foundation. For once this is admitted, that a man is *not* justified by his faith in Christ alone, but that other means must be sought by our own working and merits to apply the merits of Christ's passion to us, there is neither any certainty left of our salvation, nor any end to setting up new means and merits of our own devising for the remission of sins. There has not been any heresy that has rebelled more presumptuously against the high majesty of God the Father, nor more perniciously injured the souls of the simple, than this doctrine.

First of all, it subverts the will and testament of God. For almighty God, of his mercy, has given us his Son to die for us. And with him, God has given his full promise that whoever believes in him will be saved by faith. He assigns no other condition either of the law or of works, but only of faith, to be the means between his Son and us. However, these men take it upon themselves to alter this testament that God has set, and to add other conditions which the Lord in his word never appointed or knew. The words of Jerome's commentary on the epistle to the Galatians, may be well applied to them: "They make of the gospel of Christ, the gospel of men, or rather the gospel of the devil," etc.

Secondly, the Christian reading in the gospel, of the great grace and sweet promises of God given to mankind in Christ his Son, might thereby take much comfort of soul, and be at rest and peace with the Lord his God. But then comes the pestiferous doctrine of these heretics, with which they obscure this free grace of God, choke the sweet comforts of man in the Holy Spirit, oppress Christian liberty, and bring us into spiritual bondage.

Thirdly, in their impious doctrine, they show themselves to be manifest enemies to God's grace. And they are no less injurious to Christian men, whom they leave in doubtful distrust of God's favor and of their salvation, contrary to the word and will of God, and the right institution of the apostolic doctrine. And whereas they object to us, that we rather leave men's conscience uncertain, for if life (they say) were not a due reward, it would be uncertain. And to the extent that the due debt is *certain*, and mercy or favor is *uncertain*, we are therefore (they say) leaving men's consciences to the mercy of God, and in doubtful uncertainty of their salvation. To this I answer that due debt, if it is proved to be duly deserved by the law, it must be certain. But if the law proves it to be imperfect, or not due, then it is *not* certain, nor can there be anything duly claimed.

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Now, regarding mercy, for so long as it remains secret in the prince's will, and is not known to his subjects, it is uncertain. But when this mercy is openly published by proclamation, ratified by promise, conferred by will and testament, established in blood, and sealed with sacraments, then this mercy no longer remains doubtful, but should be firmly believed by every true faithful subject. And therefore, to establish our hearts in this assurance, and to answer this doubt, in his epistle to the Romans, St. Paul teaches us, saying, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed," Rom 4.16. Meaning by this, that works have nothing to do in this case of justifying, and he states the reason why: for then our salvation would stand in doubt, because in working, we are never certain whether our deserts are perfect and sufficient in God's judgment or not. And therefore (says St. Paul), with the intent that our salvation should be beyond all doubt, and certain, it does not stand by works in *deserving*, but by faith in *apprehending*, and by God's free grace in *promising*.

Fourthly, just as their sinister doctrine breaks this principle of Christian religion, that *a man is justified by faith without works*, so again, it breaks another principle repeated above. For this rule being granted, *that nothing is to be added to God's word, nor taken from it*, these men have done wickedly in adding (as they do) to God's word. For the word of God limits our justification to no condition but faith: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, and your household," etc. Act 16.31. These men add other conditions besides, which the word excludes, such as hope, charity, the sacrifice of the mass, the work of the priest, auricular confession, satisfaction, meritorious deeds, etc. And thus much concerning the doctrine of faith and justification. By this it may appear to what horrible blindness and blasphemy the church of Rome has now fallen, where such false doctrine is not only permitted, but also publicly professed.

OF WORKS AND THE LAW

As regarding the doctrine of good works and the law, we have seen before what the teaching of St. Paul was to the Romans. Although he excludes good works from the office of justifying, he does not exclude them from the practice and conduct of Christian life. Rather, he most earnestly calls upon all faithful believers in Christ to walk worthy their calling, to lay down their old conduct, to make their members servants of righteousness, to offer their bodies up to God as a living sacrifice, etc. The reformed churches follow his teaching, as their sermons, preachings, writings, exhortings, and lives bear record. Although they cannot say with Christ, "Which of you convicts me of sin?" yet they may say to their adversaries, whichever of you is without fault, cast the first stone of reproach against us. ^{Joh 8.7}

Regarding this part of doctrine, what the errors of the church of Rome are, remains to be stated.

First. Their first error stands in this: that misunderstanding the nature of good works, they call good works, not what are properly commanded by the law of God, but what are agreeable to the pope's law — such as building abbeys and churches, giving to the high altar, founding trentals (paid requiem masses), finding chantries (endowments for singing masses), gilding images, hearing masses, going on pilgrimage, fighting for the holy cross, keeping vows, entering into orders, fasting vigils, creeping to the cross, praying to saints, etc. All of these are not only reputed to be good works, but they are so preferred above all other works, that pardon is given from the pope for these, double and triplefold, more than to any other good work of charity commanded in the law of almighty God.

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Secondly. Another error too may be noted in the papists, regarding the efficient or formal cause of good works. Although they all confess in their books, that “the grace of God truly given” is the chief and principal cause of it, and works in us “the first justification” (as they call it), yet they refer the good works *after* regeneration to other subordinate causes, under God — such as free-will, or “a habit of virtue,” or “natural integrity,” and nothing at all to faith. Whereas faith alone, next under God, is the root and fountain of well-doing. In the fruits of a good tree, even though the planter or the husbandman is the principal agent, and some cause also may be found in the good ground, yet the *immediate* cause is the root that makes the tree fruitful. In like manner, the grace of God, in a soft, repentant, and mollified heart, plants the gift of faith. And faith, like a good root, cannot lie dead or unoccupied, but springs forth, and makes both the tree fruitful, and the fruit good. They would have no goodness in them, if not for the goodness of the root from which they spring. So St. Paul, though he had certain works in him before his conversion, yet had he no good works before the grace of Christ had rooted faith in him. So too with Mary Magdalene, the sinner, and Zaccheus the publican. So the nations of the Gentiles began to bring forth fruit, and especially good fruit, when they began to be ingrafted into Christ, and to receive the root of his faith. Their fruits before that were all damnable and unsavory. Therefore, regarding the *cause* of good works, there is no other cause in man but faith. Just as it is the office of faith to justify us in heaven, so the nature of it here on earth is to work by love, just as the root works by the sap. For as a man sees and feels by faith the love and grace of God toward him in Christ his Son, he begins to love again both God and man, and to do for his neighbor as God has done to him. And from this properly springs the running fountain of all good works and deeds of charity.

Thirdly, just as they err in the *cause* of good works, so they err much more in the *end* (the purpose) of the law, and of good works. For St. Paul teaches that the law is given to this use and end: to convict us of our transgressions, to prove us sinners, to show and condemn our infirmity, and to drive us to Christ. But they take and apply no other end to the law, than to make us perfect, to keep us from wrath, and to make us just before God! And likewise, where St. Paul proves that all our good works are imperfect, and he utterly excludes them from justifying, they contrariwise teach as though the end of good works was to merit remission of sins, to satisfy God, to deserve grace, and to redeem souls from purgatory — that by these things, the regenerate man pleases God, and is made just before God. For so they teach most wretchedly and horribly, saying that Christ suffered for original sin, or sins preceding baptism; but the actual sins which follow baptism, must be removed by men’s merits. And so they assign to Christ the beginning of salvation, or obtaining the first grace (as they call it), but the perfection or consummation of grace they give to works and our own strength. Neither can they bear the doctrine that we are justified freely by the mercy of God through faith alone apprehending the merits of Christ. However, all papists do not agree in this error. For some make a distinction, and say that we are justified by Christ principally; and by the dignity of our own deeds, less principally. Others hold that we are made righteous before God, not by our works that go before faith, but by our virtues that follow after. Some again expound the saying of St. Paul this way: “We are justified by faith,” (they say) — that is, by faith *preparing* us, or setting us in a good way to be justified. Others expound it as faith conjoined together with other virtues. Others expound the term *by faith*, as being formed with charity, etc. Thus, all these derogate from the benefit of Christ, and they attribute to works a great or the greatest part of our justification. This is directly against the true vein of St. Paul’s doctrine, against first institution of the ancient church of Rome, and against all the principles of holy Scripture.

Fourthly, as to the doctrine of the law and good works, they err in misunderstanding the nature of the law and works. For where St. Paul argues that the law is spiritual, and requires perfect obedience of us, who being carnal we are never able to accomplish, they affirm otherwise. They say that the law requires only the *outward* obedience of man, and is contented with that. And (they say) man is not only able to perform this obedience, but also to do more and greater things than the law requires. From this arise the works of *supererogation*. There are also (they say) certain works of the law which do not pertain to all men, but are counsels left for perfect men, as matter for them to gain merit, and these they call “works of perfection,” or “works of supererogation.” They also add new devices to these, to serve God following their own traditions outside of the word of God — such as monastical vows, willful poverty, taking on different foods and garments, pilgrimages to relics and saints, worshipping the dead, superstitious ceremonies, rosaries, etc. with other such things. And these they call “works of perfection,” which they prefer before the other works commanded in the law of God. They go so far, that in comparison to these, the other necessary duties commanded and commended by the word of God (such as holding office in the commonwealth, living in the godly state of matrimony, having the office of a servant in a household) are contemned, and accounted as profane in comparison to these.

OF SIN

They do not rightly teach about sin, nor do they follow the institution of the apostles, and the ancient church of Rome. They do not consider the deepness and largeness of sin, supposing it still to be nothing else but the inward actions with consent of will, or the outward actions that are against will; whereas the strength of sin extends not only to these, but also comprehends the blindness and ignorance of the mind, lack of knowledge and true fear of God, the untowardness of man’s mind to God-ward, the privy rebellion of the heart against the law of God, the undelightful will of man to God and his word. The sense of flesh St. Paul also calls an enemy against God, and feels in himself, that is, in his flesh, nothing dwelling but sin.

Also, regarding the original sin in which we are born. This is the destruction of original righteousness, and of God’s image in us (remaining in us, and bringing forth in us wicked thoughts, affections, and motions of sin against the law of God, and never ceasing so long as man lives). The pope’s doctrine does not deny this original sin, yet it much extenuates it, and holds that this inward concupiscence, and these vicious affections, are not mortal nor damnable sins, and that this concupiscence in us is no depravation of the higher, but only of the lower parts of man. It is an indifferent thing, and no less natural in us than the appetite to eat and drink. And it remains in the saints after baptism, to be to them an occasion of more meriting.

OF PENANCE OR REPENTANCE

This later church of Rome has made a sacrament of penance, which they say consists of three parts: Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction. Contrition (as they teach) may be had by strength of free-will, without the law and the Holy Spirit, through man’s own action and endeavor. This *contrition* must be sufficient, and so it merits remission of sin. In *confession* they require a full reciting of all sins, by which the priest, knowing the crimes, may minister satisfaction accordingly; and this recitation of sins is said to deserve remission. *Satisfactions* they call “works not due,” enjoined by the spiritual father. And this satisfaction (they say) takes away and changes eternal punishment into temporal pains, which are then mitigated by this satisfaction. And in turn, these satisfactions may be taken away by the pope’s indulgence, etc.

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This unsavory and heathenish doctrine of penance differs much from the true teaching of holy Scripture, which says that repentance properly contains three parts: contrition, faith, and new life. Scripture calls contrition the sorrow of heart, rising upon the consideration of the sin that was committed, and the anger of God that was provoked. This sorrow drives a man to Christ for succor, from which faith arises. Faith afterward brings amendment or *newness of life*, ^{Rom 7.6} which we call new obedience, bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance. ^{Luk 3.8}

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

There is nothing more necessary and comfortable for troubled consciences, than to be well instructed in the difference between *The Law* and *The Gospel*. But the church of Rome is much to blame for confounding those two things together, which are so diverse in nature, and contrary to one another. For example, confounding threatenings (the law) with promises (the gospel) — things temporal with things eternal— sorrowful things with glad tidings — death with life — bondage with freedom, etc. The church of Rome teaches the people that whatever the law says, the gospel confirms; and whatever the gospel says, it is agreeable to the law. And so they make no distinction between Moses and Christ, except that Moses was the giver of the *old* law, and Christ was the giver of the *new* and a more perfect law. And thus they imagine the gospel is nothing else but a new law given by Christ, binding to its promises the condition of our doings and deservings, no different than the old law. Accordingly, they divide the whole law into *three parts* — to wit, THE LAW OF NATURE, THE LAW OF MOSES, and THE LAW OF CHRIST. And as for the gospel, it is revealed for no other reason (they say), than to show the world more perfect precepts and counsels than were in the old law. They attribute JUSTIFICATION to the fulfilling of this law. And so they leave the poor consciences of men in perpetual doubt, and induce other manifold errors. They bring the people into a false opinion of Christ, as though He were not a remedy *against* the law, but came as another Moses, to give a *new* law to the world.

Furthermore, not distinguishing between the nature of the law and the nature of the gospel, they confound Moses and Christ together. Nor do they keep the time of the law, and the time of the gospel apart. St. Paul, however, brings in the law as a schoolmaster, ^{Gal 3.24} and limits its time until Christ. He says that Christ is the end of the law; ^{Rom 10.4} that is, where the law ceases, Christ begins; and where Christ begins, the law ends. Those of this Roman church, on the other hand, make out the law to have no end or ceasing, but give it immortal life and a kingdom equal with Christ, so that Christ and the law reign together over the soul and conscience of man. *This is untrue*; for either Christ must give way and the law stands, or else the law (I mean the condemnation and malediction of the law) must end, and Christ reigns. For both of these, Christ and the Law, grace and malediction, cannot reign and govern together. But Christ the Son of God, who once died, can die no more, but must reign forever. This is why the law with its strength, sting, and curse must cease and have an end. And this is what St. Paul says, speaking of the triumph of Christ — that ascending up he led captivity captive, and has set man at liberty; ^{Eph 4.8} not at liberty to live as the flesh lusts, nor freeing him from the use and exercise of the law, but only from the dominion and power of the law. So that “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk after the flesh, etc.” Rom 8.1, 4. And in another place, St. Paul speaking of the same power and dominion of the law, says that Christ “Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross,” Col 2.14. So that, as the kingdom of Christ first began upon the cross, even

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so — upon the same cross, and at the same time — the kingdom of the law expired. And the malediction of the law was so crucified upon the cross, that it shall never rise again, to have any power against those who are in Christ Jesus. As St. Paul says, it is like a woman who is discharged from her first husband who died, and has married another man. The first husband no longer has power over her, Rom 7.2. In the same way, being espoused to Christ, (our second husband) we are utterly discharged from the law (our first husband). “We are no longer under the law, but under grace” (Rom 6.14), that is, we are no longer under the dominion and malediction of the law; but we are under grace, that is, under perpetual remission of sins, committed not only before our baptism, but after baptism as well, and all during our lifetime. For the grace of God properly consists in not imputing sin to us, so often as the repenting sinner, rising up by faith, flies to Christ and apprehends God’s mercy and remission promised in him. This is according to the testimony of the Psalmist, “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord inputes no sin,” Psa 32.2, etc.; and also of “all the prophets, who witness that through His name, all who believe in him will receive remission of their sins,” as St. Peter says, Act 10.43.

This being so, and it cannot be denied, what need is there for these private and extraordinary remissions to be brought into the church by ear-confession, by meritorious deeds, and by the pope’s pardons? For if there is no condemnation except by the law, and if this law itself, which was the first husband, is made captive, crucified, abolished, and departed, then what condemnation can there be to those who are in Christ Jesus, or by whom would it come? If there is no condemnation, but a free and general deliverance for all men, gotten once by the victory of Christ from the penalty of the law, ^{Rom 6.10} then what need is there for any particular remission of sins to be sought at various times at the priest’s hands or the pope’s pardons? Whoever has a *general* pardon, needs no *particular* pardon. If remedy for sin is general and perpetual, once gotten forever for all those who are in Christ Jesus, then what need is there for any other remedy by auricular confession?

If it is *not* general and perpetual, then how is it true when St. Paul says that the law is crucified, and condemnation is abolished? Or how does redemption stand perpetual and general, if remission is not general? For what else is redemption, if not remission of sin, or sins bought out (paid for)? Or what else does it mean to kill the law, if not to discharge us from condemnation forever? The one who delivers his friend out of his enemy’s hand for a time does him good; but if he kills that enemy, once out of the way, he gives his friend perpetual safety. So too, if remission of sins by Christ were for *some* sins, and not for *all* sins, then the law must still live. But the killing and crucifying of the law imports full and absolute remission, and that our safety is perpetual. But here someone will object, How is remission of sins certain and perpetual, seeing that new offenses, being committed daily, require new remission daily? I answer that although sins do grow daily, by which we must daily desire God to “forgive us our trespasses,” yet notwithstanding, the *cause* of our remission stands ever one and perpetual. Nor is it to be repeated anymore, nor is any other cause to be sought besides that alone. This cause is the body of Christ sacrificed once upon the cross for all sins that either have been or ever shall be committed. Besides this cause there is no other that remits sins, neither confession nor men’s pardons.

Furthermore, just as the *cause* is one and ever perpetual, which works remission of sins for us, so the promise of God is ever one, once made, and it stands perpetual, offering remission to the faith of the repenting sinner. And because the promise of God is always sure and cannot fail, which offers remission to all those who believe in Christ — limited neither to time nor number — we may therefore boldly conclude that whenever a repenting sinner

believes, and by faith applies to himself the sacrifice of Christ, he has by God's own promise, the remission of his sins, whether they were done before or after baptism.

Moreover, the promise of God offers remission to the repentant sinner by no other means or condition but one, which is by faith in Christ. Therefore, excluding all other means and conditions of man's own working, we say that whatever repenting sinner believes in Christ, has already in himself (and need not seek any priest) perpetual assurance of remission — not for this time or that time only, but *forever!* For the promise does not say that whoever believes in Christ will be pardoned *this* time, so he sins no more; nor does it say that the law is stayed or the sentence reprieved.

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But it says plainly that the law, with her condemnation and sentence, is itself condemned and crucified, and will never rise again for those who are in Christ Jesus, and it promises remission of sins, without limitation, "To all who believe in His name," etc. Act 10.43. Likewise in another place, the Scripture, speaking absolutely, says, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." And it adds the reason why, saying, "Because you are not under the law but under grace," Rom 6.14 — thus adding this lesson: not that sinners should sin more because they are under grace, [but the promise is made] only that weak infirmities might be relieved, broken consciences be comforted, and repenting sinners be preserved from desperation, to the praise of God's glory. For just as God does not forgive sinners because they would sin, neither does our infirmity of falling diminish the grace of Christ, but rather illustrates it. As it is written, "My strength is made perfect in weakness," 2Cor 12.9. And again, "Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more," Rom 5.20.

In remission of sins, therefore, these four things must concur together: *first*, the cause that works (which is the sacrifice of Christ's body); *secondly*, the promise that offers; *thirdly*, faith that apprehends and applies; and *fourthly*, the repenting sinner who receives. And although sins grow daily, which provokes us to I crave remission daily. Yet, regarding the *cause* that works the remission of our daily sins, and the means which apply that cause to us, these remain always one and perpetual. Besides them, no other cause or means is to be sought by man. So that to those who are repenting sinners, and in Christ Jesus, there is no law to condemn them, even though they have deserved condemnation. But they are under a perpetual kingdom, and a heaven full of grace, with remission to cover their sins and not to impute their iniquities, through the promise of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And therefore the doctrine is wicked and impious of those, *first*, who seek any other cause of remission than the blood of our Savior alone; *secondly*, who assign any other means to apply the blood-shedding of Christ to us, besides faith alone; *thirdly* and especially, who limit and restrain the eternal privilege of Christ's passion, as though it served only for sins done without and before faith, and that the rest that are committed after baptism, must be done away by confession, pardons, and deeds of satisfaction. And all of this arises because the true nature of the law and the gospel is not known, nor the difference rightly considered between the times of the one and of the other. Neither, again, do they make any distinction between the *malediction* of the law, and the *use* of the law. And therefore, whenever they hear us speak of the law (meaning the *malediction* of the law) being abolished, they maliciously slander us, as though we spoke against the good exercises of the law, and gave liberty to carnal men to live as they like. More will be said about this (by the Lord's grace) as place and time hereafter require.

OF FREE-WILL

Concerning free-will, it may perhaps be admitted that in some cases, men without grace may do some outward functions of the law, and keep some outward observances or traditions. It may also be admitted that, as to things which are spiritual and pertain to salvation, the strength of a man who is not regenerate by grace, is so infirm and impotent, that he can perform nothing well, neither *doing* nor *willing* well. After he is regenerated by grace, he may work and do well, and yet there still remains a great imperfection of the flesh, and a perpetual conflict between the flesh and the spirit. ^{Gal 5.17} And thus the original church of the ancient Romans was first instructed. From this we may see how far this later church of Rome has degenerated, which holds and affirms that men without grace may perform the obedience of the law, and prepare themselves for grace by working, so that those works may be meritorious, and obtain grace by congruity [with the law]. This grace, being obtained, men may then (they say) perfectly perform the full obedience of the law, and accomplish those spiritual actions and works which God requires. And so those works of condignity *deserve* everlasting life. As for the infirmity which still remains in our nature, they do not regard it nor once speak of it.

OF INVOCATION AND ADORATION

Besides these uncatholic and almost unchristian absurdities and departures from the apostolical faith, let us consider the manner of their invocation — not to God alone, as they should, but to dead men — saying that saints are to be called upon as mediators of *intercession*; and Christ as the mediator of *salvation*. And they affirm, moreover, that Christ was a mediator only in the time of his passion. This is repugnant to the words of St. Paul, writing to the old Romans in Rom 8.34. He speaks of the intercession of Christ, and says, “He is on the right hand of God, and also makes intercession for us,” etc. And if Christ is a mediator of salvation, then why do we need any other intercession of the saints for our petitions? For once salvation is had, what more can we require? Or what more does a believer want to be obtained by other saints, who is sure to be saved only by Christ? And then in their devotions, if salvation belongs only to Christ, why do they teach us to pray to the blessed Virgin this way: “Save all those who glorify You” — unless they purposely study to appear contrary to themselves?

To this also pertains the worshipping of relics, and the false adoration of sacraments; that is, the outward signs of the things signified. Add to this also, the profaning of the Lord’s Supper by using it contrary to the use for which it was ordained — in storing it after the communion (in the *sacristy*), in selling it for money, and falsely persuading both themselves and others, that the priest derives merit for himself as the speaker, and also for the one who hears it, by merely partaking of the elements, even without having devotion in him (faith). ^{1Cor 11.29}

OF SACRAMENTS, BAPTISM AND THE LORD’S SUPPER

Regarding the sacraments, their doctrine is likewise corrupt and erroneous.

First, they err falsely in the number; for where the institution of Christ ordains but two, they have added five other sacraments.

Secondly, they err in the use; for where the word has ordained those sacraments to excite our faith, and to give us admonitions about spiritual things, they contrariwise teach that the sacraments not only stir up faith, but also that they avail and are effectual *without* faith, as we find in the writings of Thomas Aquinas, Scotus, and others.

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Thirdly, they fail in the operation and effect of the sacraments, where contrary to the mind of the Scriptures, they say that the sacraments give grace, and not only signify, but also contain and exhibit what they signify — to wit, grace and salvation.⁶⁴

Fourthly, they also err in application, by applying their sacraments both to the living and the dead, and also to those who are absent, for remission of sins, releasing pain, etc.

They are to be reprov'd in the sacrament of baptism, not only for adding to the simple words of Christ's institution diverse other new found rites and the fancies of men, but also where the use of the old church of Rome was only to baptize men, they also baptize bells, and apply the words of baptism to water, fire, candles, stocks and stones, etc.

But especially in the Lord's Supper their doctrine most filthily swerves from the right mind of the Scriptures, from all order, reason and fashion, and is most worthy to be driven out of all Christian churches. Regarding this sacrament, the first error is their idolatrous abuse by worshipping, adoring, censing, knocking, and kneeling to it; also in storing and carrying the elements about with pomp and procession in towns and fields. Secondly, also their teaching is monstrous in the substance of it: they say there is no substance of bread and wine remaining, but only the real body and blood of Christ, making no distinction between *calling* and *making*. Because Christ *called* the bread His body, they say he therefore *made* it his body; and so they make a perilous idol of a wholesome sacrament.

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And what the old church of Rome always took to be a *mystery*, they turn into a blind mist of mere incidentals to blur the people's eyes, making them believe they see what they do not see, and not see what they do see; and to worship a made thing as their Maker, a creature for their Creator. What was threshed out of a sheaf of wheat, they set up in the church and worship as a savior. And when they have worshipped "him," then they offer him to his father. And when they have offered "him," they eat him up, or else close him tight in a pit (the sacristy) where, if "he" corrupts and putrifies before he is eaten, then they burn him to powder and ashes, despite knowing full well by the Scriptures, that the body of Christ can never corrupt and putrify. Yet for all this corruption, they need to make it the body of Christ, and burn all those who do not believe what is against true Christian belief, Act 2.27.

OF MATRIMONY

The order and rule which St. Paul set for marriage is manifest in his epistle to the Corinthians where, as he prefers single life in those who have the gift of continence (celibacy) before the married estate, so again, in those who do not have the gift, he prefers the married life before the other, willing every such man to have a wife, to avoid fornication, 1Cor 7.2. Furthermore, the apostle allows a bishop to be the husband of one wife (so he did not follow the practice of the Jews, who were permitted to have many), and he vehemently reproves those who restrain marriage, as his Epistle to Timothy records, 1Tim 3.2 and 4.1-3. Moreover, what degrees (blood relations) are permitted by the law of God to marry, is to be seen in Lev 18.6-20. Also, it is apparent by manifest examples in the Scriptures, how children ought not to marry without the consent of their parents.

Contrary to these ordinances of the Scripture, the new catholics of the pope's church repute and call marriage a state of imperfection, and prefer single life, however impure, pretending that where the one replenishes the earth, the other fills heaven. Furthermore, through

⁶⁴ The reformed view is that the sacraments are indeed a means of grace, but only through faith, not of themselves.

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compulsory vows they keep nearly a third of Christendom from marriage (if not more), both men and women, having no respect whether they have the gift of continence or not. Those ministers and priests who are found to have wives, they not only remove from office, but also pronounce sentence of death upon them, and account their children illegitimate. Again, they exempt and suspend as much as a third of the year from the liberty of marriage; they extend the degrees of forbidden marriage further than the law of God ever did, even to the fifth or sixth degree. Notwithstanding, they waive this degree whenever they choose, in return for money. Over and besides all this, they have added a new-found prohibition of spiritual kindred — that is, those who as have been gossips, or are godfathers and godmothers together in christening another man's child, must not marry together. And finally, in this doctrine of matrimony, they gain and rake in much money for themselves from the people; they augment horrible crimes; they nourish adultery; they fill the world with offenses; and give great occasion for murdering infants [of banned marriages].

OF MAGISTRATES AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We have seen before what rules and lessons St. Paul gave to the old Romans concerning magistrates, to whose authority he would have all human creatures be subject, and how they are the ministers of God, having the sword given to them, with which they ought to repress false doctrine and idolatry, and maintain what is true and right, Rom 13.1-7. Now let us survey a little the pope's proceedings, and mark how far he transgresses in this (as he does in almost all other points) from true Christianity.

1. The pope, with all his clergy, exempt themselves from all civil obedience.
2. They arrogate to themselves authority to ordain and constitute, without leave or knowledge of the magistrate.
3. Indeed, they take it upon themselves to depose and set up rulers and magistrates whom they choose.

OF PURGATORY

The paradoxes, or rather the fancies of the later church of Rome concerning purgatory, are monstrous; they are neither old nor apostolical.

1. They say there is a purgatory, where souls burn in fire after this life.
2. The pain of purgatory does not differ at all from the pains of hell, except that it has an end; the pains of hell have none.
3. The painful suffering of this fire frets and purges away the sins committed before in the body.
4. The time of these pains endures longer in some, less in others, as their sins deserve.
5. After the time of their pains is expired, the mercy of God translates them to heavenly bliss, which the body of Christ has bought for them.
6. The pains of purgatory are so great, that if all the beggars in the world were seen on the one side, and but one soul in purgatory on the other side, the whole world would pity that one more than all the others.
7. The whole time of punishment in this purgatory must continue till the fires have thoroughly fretted and purged away the rusty spots of every sinful soul burning there, unless some release comes.

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8. The helps and releases that may shorten the time of their purgation are the pope's pardons and indulgences, sacrifice of the altar, dirges and trentals, prayer, fasting, meritorious deeds out of the treasure-house of the church, alms and charitable deeds of the living, in satisfying God's justice for them, etc.

9. Lack of belief in purgatory, will bring that person to hell.

Many other false errors and great deformities, heresies, absurdities, vanities, and follies, besides their blasphemous railings and abuses, may be noted in the later church of Rome, in which they have manifestly departed from the old faith of Rome. These include depriving the church of one kind of sacrament; in taking from the people the knowledge and reading of God's word; in praying, speaking to the people, and administering the sacraments in an unknown language; in mistaking the authority of the keys; in their unwritten tenets; in making the authority of the Scripture insufficient; in the untrue judgments of the church and the wrong notes of those proceedings, in the supremacy of the See of Rome, and in their wrong opinions about antichrist.

But because these, with all other parts of doctrine, are comprehended more copiously and at large in other books which are published in our days, both in Latin and English, I will not travel further in this. Especially seeing that the contrariety between the pope's church and the church of Christ, between the doctrine of the one and the doctrine of the other, is so evident, one must be blind not to see it, and have no hands not to feel it.

For the doctrine of Christ is altogether spiritual, consisting wholly in spirit and truth, and it requires nothing outward to make a true Christian man, except baptism (which is the outward profession of faith), and receiving the Lord's Supper. Let us examine the whole religion of this later church of Rome, and we will find from top to toe, that it consists in nothing but outward and ceremonial exercises — such as outward confession, absolution at the priest's hand, outward sacrifice of the mass, buying pardons, purchasing obits (burial rites), worshipping images and relics, pilgrimages to this place or that, building churches, founding monasteries, outward works of the law, outward gestures, garments, colors, choice of foods, observing times and places, ^{Gal 4.10} peculiar rites and observances, set prayers and a prescribed number of prayers, fasting vigils, keeping holidays, coming to church, hearing a service, external succession of bishops, and of Peter's See, external form and notes of the church, etc

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Summation

So that, to make a true Christian and a good catholic by this religion, no working of the Holy Spirit is required. For example, to make this matter plainer, let us here define a Christian man according to the pope's construction, by which we may better see what is to be judged from the scope of his doctrine. According to the pope's catholic religion, a true Christian man is thus defined:

First, it is to be baptized in the Latin tongue (where the godfathers profess they know not what); then confirmed by the bishop; the mother of the child is to be purified. After the child is grown in years, he is to come to the church to keep his fasting days; to fast during Lent; to come under the priest's blessing (confess to the priest); to do his penance; to take his rites at Easter; to hear mass and Divine service; to set up candles before images; to creep to the cross; to take holy bread and holy water; to go on procession; to carry his

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palms and candle, and to take ashes; to fast in the ember days, rogation days,⁶⁵ and vigils; to keep the holidays; to pay his tithes and offering days; to go on pilgrimage; to buy pardons; to worship his Maker over the priest's head; to receive the pope as his supreme head, and to obey his laws; to have his beads, and to give to the high altar; to take orders if he will be a priest; to say his matins, to sing his mass; to lift up fair (the vestment); to keep his vow, and not to marry; when he is sick, to be absolved and anointed, and take the rites of the holy church; to be buried in the church-yard, to be rung for; to be sung for; to be buried in a friar's cowl; to find a soul-priest, etc.

All of these things being observed, who can deny that this is a devout man, and a perfect Christian catholic, and sure to be saved, as a true, faithful child of the holy mother church?

Now, look at this definition, and tell me, good reader, what faith or spirit, or what working of the Holy Spirit is required in all this doctrine? May the grace of our Lord Jesus give the true light of his gospel to shine in our hearts. Amen.

⁶⁵ *Rogation days*: one of the three days before Ascension Day; observed as days of supplication.

ACTS AND MONUMENTS

BOOK I.

CONTAINING

The 300 years after Christ – Ten Persecutions

A.D. 64-324

THE TEN PERSECUTIONS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

Having thus prepared the way, let us now (by the grace of Christ our Lord) enter into the matter. As we have set forth the state of the primitive as well as of the later times of this church of Rome; so now we may discourse about the Acts of every age, each by itself.

First, To declare the suffering time of the church, about 300 years after Christ.

Secondly, The flourishing and growing time of the church, another 300 years.

Thirdly, The declining time of the church, and of true religion, another 300 years.

Fourthly, The time of antichrist, reigning and raging in the church, in two parts.

Lastly, The reforming time of Christ's church, in these later 300 years.

In treating all these things, our chief purpose will not be so much to intermix the outward affairs of princes or civil matters, as to specially mind prosecuting those things which pertain to the state of the church. Such as, first, to treat the establishing of Christian faith; then of the persecutions of tyrants; the constancy and patience of God's saints; the conversion of Christian realms to the faith of Christ — namely, of this realm of England and Scotland; to declare the maintenance of true doctrine, the false practice of prelates, and the creeping in of superstition and hypocrisy; and the manifold assaults, wars, and tumults of the princes of this world against the people of God. In this may appear the wonderful operation of Christ's mighty hand, ever working in his church, and never ceasing to defend it against his enemies, according to the verity of his own word, promising to be with his church while the world stands.

In the treatment of all these things, I chiefly commend two special points to the reader, as most requisite and necessary for every Christian man to observe and to note for his own experience and profit. *First*, the disposition and nature of this world; and *secondly*, the nature and condition of the kingdom of Christ — the vanity of the one, and establishment of the other; the unprosperous and unquiet state of the one, ruled by man's violence and wisdom, and the happy success of the other, ever ruled by God's blessing and providence; the wrath and revenging hand of God in the one, and His mercy upon the other. "The world" I call all those who are without or against Christ, either by ignorance (not knowing him), or by heathenish life (not following him), or resisting Him by violence. On the other side, "the kingdom of Christ" in this world, I take to be all those who belong to the faith of Christ, and here take His part in this world, *against* the world. The number of these, though it is much smaller than the other, and is always hated and molested by the world, yet it is the number which the Lord peculiarly blesses and prospers, and ever will. And this number of Christ's subjects is what we call the VISIBLE CHURCH here on earth. This visible church, having in itself two different sorts of people, so is it to be divided into two parts. The one is comprised of those who have an outward profession only. The other, which is by election inwardly, are joined to Christ. The first sort, in words and lips, seem to honor Christ. They are in the visible church only, but not in the INVISIBLE CHURCH. They partake the outward sacraments of Christ, but not the inward blessing of Christ. The other sort are in the visible church, and

also in the invisible church of Christ. They truly serve and honor Christ, not only in words and outward profession, but also in heart. They partake not only of the sacraments, but also of the heavenly blessings and grace of Christ.

It happens many times, that between these two parts of this visible church a great variance and mortal persecution grows, insomuch that sometimes the true church of Christ has no greater enemies than of her own profession. This happened not only in the time of Christ and his apostles, but also from time to time almost continually, and especially in these later days of the church, under the persecution of antichrist and his retinue.

At the first preaching of Christ, who should have known and received him more than the Pharisees and scribes? And yet, who persecuted and rejected him more than they did? What followed? In refusing Christ as their king, and choosing to be subject to Caesar instead, they were destroyed by their own Caesar. From this is to be learned what a dangerous thing it is to refuse the gospel of God.

A similar example of God's wrathful punishment is to be noted no less in the Romans. For when Tiberius Caesar, having heard by letters from Pontius Pilate, of the doings of Christ, of his miracles, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, and how Christ was received by many as God, he was himself moved with belief in this.

[33] A.D. 36.

He proposed to the senate to have Christ adored as God. They refused him, because contrary to the law of the Romans, Jesus was consecrated as God (they said), before the senate of Rome had so decreed (Tertul. *Apol.* cap. 5). Thus the vain senate was content to have the emperor reign over them, and not to have the meek King of Glory, the Son of God, be their king. Like the Jews, they were scourged for their refusal, by the same power which they themselves had preferred. For as they preferred the emperor, and rejected Christ, so by the just permission of God, their own emperors were stirred up against them. The senators themselves were nearly all devoured, and the whole city most horribly afflicted for almost 300 years. This same Tiberius, who was a moderate prince for a great part of his reign, was afterwards a sharp and heavy tyrant, who neither favored his own mother, nor spared his own nephews, nor the princes of the city. Of twenty of them, he left not more than two or three alive. Suetonius reports that he was so stern and tyrannical, that in his reign, many were unjustly accused, and condemned with their wives and children. In one day, he records, twenty persons were drawn to execution. By Tiberias also, through the just punishment of God, Pilate (under whom Christ was crucified), was accused at Rome, deposed, and then banished; at length he slew himself. Neither did Herod and Caiaphas long escape; and Agrippa also was cast into prison. In the reign of Tiberius, the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, through the malice of the Jews, suffered his blessed passion for the conquering of sin, and death, and Satan, the prince of this world; and he rose again the third day. After his blessed passion and resurrection, this Tiberius lived six years, during which time no persecution was yet stirring against the Christians.

In the next year after the passion of our Savior, or somewhat more, St. Paul was converted to the faith. Tiberius, having reigned twenty-three years, was succeeded by Caius Caesar Caligula (A.D. 37), Nero Claudius (A.D. 41), and Nero Domitius (A.D. 54). These three were likewise scourges to the senate and people of Rome. Caligula commanded himself to be worshipped as God, and temples to be erected in his name. He used to sit in the temple among the gods, requiring his images to be set up in all temples, and also in the temple at Jerusalem, His cruel displeasure was such towards the Romans, that he wished that all the

people of Rome had but one neck, that he might destroy such a multitude. Herod, the murderer of John Baptist, and the condemner of Christ, was condemned by Caligula to perpetual banishment, where he died miserably. Caiaphas also, who wickedly sat in judgment upon Christ, was removed from the high priests' role, and Jonathan was set in his place. The raging fierceness of this Caligula against the Romans would not have ceased so soon, had he not been cut off by the hands of a tribune and other officers, who slew him in the fourth year of his reign (A.D. 41).

But what Caligula had only conceived of, the other two who came after him, brought to pass. Nero Claudius reigned thirteen years with great cruelty, and then died by poison. But especially Nero Domitius, who succeeding Claudius, reigned fourteen years, with such fury and tyranny, that he slew most of the senators, and destroyed the whole order of knighthood in Rome. He was so prodigious a monster — more like a beast, indeed a devil than a man — that he seemed to be born to the destruction of men. Such was his wretched cruelty, that he caused his mother, his brother-in-law, his sister, his wife, all his instructors, Seneca and Lucan, with many more of his own kindred and consanguinity, to be put to death. Moreover, he commanded Rome to be set on fire in twelve places. It continued burning six days and seven nights (A.D. 64), while he, to see this example of how Troy burned, sung the verses of Homer. And to avoid the infamy of it, he laid the fault upon the Christians, and caused them to be persecuted. So this miserable emperor continued to reign fourteen years, till the senate proclaimed him a public enemy to mankind, and condemned him to be drawn through the city and whipped to death. For fear of this, he fled in the night to the country, where he was forced to slay himself. In the latter end of this Nero Domitius, Peter and Paul were put to death for the testimony and faith of Christ (A.D. 67).

Thus we see how the just scourge and indignation of God ever follows where Christ Jesus is contemned and not received. This may appear both by the Romans who were thus consumed and plagued by their own emperors, and by civil wars and other casualties. And also by the destruction of the Jews. In A. D, 73, they were destroyed by Titus and Vespasian, to the number of 1,100,000, besides those whom Vespasian slew in subduing Galilee, and those also who were sold into vile slavery, to the number of 17,000; also 2000 were brought with Titus in his triumph. He gave part of them to be devoured by the wild beasts, and a part were most cruelly slain. All nations and realms may thus take this example of what it means to reject the visitation of God's truth, and much more to persecute those who are sent by God for their salvation.

And as this vengeance of God has thus been shown upon both the Jews and the Romans for their contempt of Christ, so neither the emperors themselves escaped without their just reward, for persecuting Christ in his members. For among those emperors who put so many Christian martyrs to death, few of them escaped either being slain themselves, or being worthily punished by some miserable end or other. The slaughter of the three Neroes was declared before. After Nero, Domitius Galba was slain by Otho, within seven months. And so Otho afterward slew himself, being overcome by Vitellius. And was not Vitellius shortly after drawn through the city of Rome, and thrown into the Tiber after he was tormented? Titus, a good emperor, is thought to be poisoned by Domitian his brother. Domitian, after he had been a persecutor of the Christians, was slain in his chamber, with the consent of his wife. Commodus was murdered. The like end was suffered by Pertinax and Julian. After Severus died here in England (and lies at York), did not his son Caracal slay his brother Geta, and then was slain afterward by Martial? Macrinus with his son Diadumenus were both slain by their own soldiers. Heliogabalus was slain by his own people, and drawn through the city and cast into the Tiber. Alexander Severus was a worthy and learned emperor. Although he

was unlike other emperors in life and virtues, yet he experienced the like end, being slain with his godly mother Mammaea, by Maximin. Maximin also after three years was himself slain by his soldiers. What should I say of Maximus and Balbinus who in like sort, were both slain in Rome? Of Gordian, slain by Philip; of Philip, the first christened emperor, slain; of wicked Decius drowned, and his son slain at the same time in battle; of Gallus, and Volusianus his son, emperors after Decius, both slain by Aemilianus, who within three months after, was himself slain. Valerianus was taken prisoner by the Persians, and there made a fool of by Sapores their king, who used him for a stool to leap upon his horse, while his son Galienus sleeping at Rome, either would not, or could not once proffer to avenge his father's ignominy. At length Galienus was killed by Aureolus. It would take too long here to speak of Aurelian, another persecutor, slain by his secretary; of Tacitus and Florinus his brother – the first slain at Pontus; the other murdered at Tarsis; Probus, although a good emperor, was yet killed by his soldiers. After him, Carus was slain by lightning. Next to Carus followed the impious and wicked persecutor Diocletian, with his fellows, Maximin, Valerius, Maximinus, Maxentius, and Licinius. Under all of these at one time, the greatest and most grievous persecution (the tenth) was waged against the Christians for ten years. Diocletian and Maximian deposed themselves from the empire. Galerius, the chief minister of the persecution, afterward fell into a shocking sickness, and was swarmed with worms. Being curable neither by surgery nor medicine, he confessed that it happened for his cruelty towards the Christians, and so he rescinded his proclamations against them.

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Maximinus being tormented with pain in his bowels, died there. Maxentius was drowned in the Tiber. Licinius, being overcome by Constantine the Great, was deposed and afterward slain by his soldiers. But on the other side, after the time of Constantine, when the faith of Christ was received into the imperial seat, we read of no emperor of the like sort being destroyed or molested, unless it was Julian, or Basil, or Valens.

And thus have we briefly collected out of the chronicles, the miserable state of the emperors of Rome, until the time of Christian Constantine, along with the examples, no less terrible than manifest, of God's severe justice upon them, for their contemptuous refusing and persecuting the faith and name of Christ their Lord.

Moreover, if leisure would allow me to come nearer home, I could also infer similar examples in our own country of England, concerning the terrible plagues of God against refusing or abusing the benefit of his truth. We read how God stirred up Gildas to preach to the old Britons, and to exhort them to repentance and amendment of life, and to warn them of plagues to come if they did not repent. What did it avail? Gildas was ridiculed, and taken as a false prophet and malicious preacher. What followed? God sent in their enemies on every side and destroyed them, and gave the land to other nations. Not many years past, God seeing idolatry, superstition, hypocrisy, and wicked living used in this realm, He raised up that godly learned man John Wycliffe, to preach to our fathers, and to exhort them to amend their lives, to forsake their papistry and idolatry, their hypocrisy and superstition, and to walk in the fear of God. His exhortations were not regarded. He, with his sermons, were despised, and his books and himself (after his death) were burnt. What followed? They slew their king, and set up three wrong kings, under whom all the noble blood, and half the commons, were slain in fighting among themselves for the crown. The cities and towns were decayed, and the land nearly brought to a wilderness, compared with what it was before. Since that time, even in recent years, God again had pity of this realm of England, and raised up his prophets; namely, William Tyndale, Thomas Bilney, John Frith, Doctor

Barnes, Jerome Garret, Anthony Person, with others, who earnestly labored to call us to repentance, so that the fierce wrath of God might be turned away from us. But how were they treated? They themselves were condemned and burnt as heretics, and their books were condemned and burnt as heretical. “The time will come,” says Christ, “that whoever kills you, will think that he does God a service,” Joh 16.2. If God has deferred his punishment, or forgiven us our wicked deeds, as I trust he has, let us not therefore be proud and high minded, but most humbly thank Him for his tender mercies, and beware of similar ungodly proceedings hereafter. I need not speak of our later times, in King Henry’s and King Edward’s days, seeing that the memory of it is still fresh and cannot be forgotten. But I am sure of this: that God has yet come once again to this church of England, yes, and more lovingly and beneficially than He ever did before. For in this visitation, he has redressed many abuses, and cleansed his church of much ungodliness and superstition, and made it a glorious church.

We will now declare the persecutions that were raised up against the servants of Christ, within the space of 300 years after Christ. These persecutions are commonly numbered ten, besides the persecutions by the Jews in Jerusalem against the apostles — in which St. Stephen was put to death, along with many others.

After the martyrdom of Stephen, James suffered. He was the apostle and brother of John. James is mentioned in Act 12.1-2. There it is declared how Herod stretched out his hand to afflict certain of the church. The apostle James was among of these; Herod slew him with the sword. The church historian Eusebius mentions James, saying that when he was brought to the tribunal, the one who brought him (and was the cause of his trouble) saw him condemned, and that he would suffer death. As this accuser went to the execution, being moved in heart and conscience, he confessed himself to be a Christian. And so they were led out, and were beheaded together (A.D. 36).⁶⁶

Dorotheus testifies, that Nicanor, one of the seven deacons, with 2000 others who believed in Christ, also suffered the same day, when Stephen suffered.

Dorotheus also witnesses that Simon, another of the deacons, was burned. Parmenas, who was also another of the deacons, suffered.

Thomas preached to the Parthians, Medes, and Persians, also to the Germans, Hiraconies, Bactries, and Magies. He suffered in Calamina, being slain with a spear.

Simon Zelotes (the Zealot) preached at Mauritania, in Africa, and in Britain; he was crucified.

Judas, brother of James, preached to the Edessens, and all Mesopotamia; he was slain in Berito.

Simon, brother to Jude and to James, all sons of Mary Cleopas, and of Alpheus, was bishop of Jerusalem after James, and was crucified in a city of Egypt.

Mark the evangelist, and first Bishop of Alexandria, preached the gospel in Egypt, and there being drawn with ropes to the fire, was burned.

Bartholomew is said to have preached to those in India, and to have translated the gospel of St. Matthew into their tongue, where he continued a long time, doing many miracles. At last

⁶⁶ The 1856 ed. by John Milner (no friend of Foxe’s work), places James’ death in A.D. 44, as most historians do. But because Seymour’s dates are integral to this edition, they have not been altered.

in Albania, after diverse persecutions, he was beaten down with staffs, then crucified, and after being flayed, he was at length beheaded.

Andrew, the apostle and brother to Peter, preached to the Scythians, Saxons, etc. When Andrew, through his diligent preaching, had brought many to the faith of Christ, Egeas the governor travelled there to constrain many who believed Christ to be God, to sacrifice to the idols. Andrew thinking it good at the beginning to resist the wicked doings of Egeas, went to him, saying that, “It behooved him to know his judge, who dwells in heaven, and to worship him, and in so worshipping the true God, to revoke his mind from false gods and blind idols.”

But Egeas demanded of him whether he was the same Andrew who overthrew the temple of the gods, and persuaded men of that sect which the Romans had commanded to be abolished. Andrew plainly affirmed that the princes of the Romans did not understand the truth, and that the Son of God, coming into the world for man’s sake, had taught and declared how those idols, whom they so honored as gods, were not only *not* gods, but also most cruel *devils*, enemies to mankind, teaching the people nothing else but what offended God; and being offended, God turns away and does not regard them.

The proconsul commanded Andrew not to teach and preach such things anymore; or if he did, that he would be fastened to the cross. Andrew answered that he would not have preached the honor and glory of the cross, if he had feared the death of the cross; whereupon the sentence of condemnation was pronounced. Andrew seeing the cross prepared afar off, neither changed countenance nor color, as the imbecility of mortal man is prone to do. Nor did his blood shrink, or his speech fail. His body did not faint, nor was his mind molested; his understanding did not fail him. But out of the abundance of his heart, his mouth spoke, and fervent charity appeared in his words; he said, “O cross, most welcome and long looked-for; I come to you with a willing mind, joyfully and desirously, being the scholar of Him who hung on you: because I have been always your lover, and I have coveted to embrace you.” So being crucified, he yielded up the ghost and fell asleep.

Matthew (named Levi) wrote his gospel to the Jews in the Hebrew tongue, as Eusebius records.⁶⁷ Diverse things are recorded concerning this apostle and evangelist, but in such a way that they may greatly suspected of being some crafty forgery to support later decretals, and other Romish doctrine regarding merits, consecration of nuns, the superstitious prescription of Lent-fast — not only in abstaining from all fleshly meats, but also separating man and wife during the time of Lent.

[35] A.D. 36-64.

Also, the strict prohibition not to taste any bodily sustenance before receiving the Lord’s Supper; in ordaining the mass; and requiring that no nun may marry after the vow of her profession, with other similar doctrines.

It is recorded about Matthias, that after he had preached to the Jews, he was at length stoned and beheaded. (Joan. de Monte Regali)

Philip, the apostle, after he had labored much in preaching the word of salvation, suffered in Hierapolis, being crucified and stoned to death.

After Festus had sent the apostle Paul to Rome, and the Jews had lost their hope of performing their malicious vow against him, they fell upon James, the brother of our Lord,

⁶⁷ Eus. lib. 3. cap. 24.39; lib. 5. cap. 8, 10; also Ireneus, lib. 3. cap. 1.; Hieronymus (Jerome) in Cat. scrip. Eccl.

who was bishop at Jerusalem, and required him to deny the faith of Christ before all the people; but he freely, and with great constancy before all the multitude, confessed Jesus to be the Son of God, our Savior, and our Lord; whereupon they killed him.

Egesippus thus describes the manner of his death:

When many of the chief persons believed in Christ, there was a tumult made by the scribes and Pharisees. Therefore they gathered together, and said to James, “We beseech you to restrain the people, for they believe in Jesus, as though he were the Christ. We pray you to persuade the people that they not be deceived. Stand upon the pillar of the temple that you may be seen from above, and that your words may be heard by all the people.” And thus the scribes and Pharisees set James upon the battlements of the temple; and he said, with a great voice, “What, do you ask me about Jesus the Son of Man, seeing that he sits on the right hand of God in heaven, and shall come in the clouds of heaven?” Many, persuaded of this, glorified God upon the witness of James, and said, “Hosannah in the highest to the Son of David!” Then the scribes and the Pharisees said among themselves, “We have done evil, that we have caused such a testimony of Jesus. But let us go up, and let us take him, so that the people, being compelled with fear, may deny that faith.” Therefore they went up, and threw down the just man. And they took him to strike him with stones, for he was not yet dead when he was cast down. But turning, he fell down upon his knees, saying, “O Lord God, Father, I beseech you to forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

This James was so notable a man, that he was held in honor by all men, insomuch that the wise men of the Jews, shortly after his martyrdom, imputed the cause of the besieging of Jerusalem and other calamities, to the violence and injury done to this man.

These things being thus declared as to the martyrdom of the apostles, and the persecution of the Jews, let us now, by the grace of Christ our Lord, narrate the persecutions raised by the Romans against the Christians, till the coming of godly Constantine. These persecutions are reckoned by most writers, to number ten. It is marvellous to see and read the incredible numbers of Christian innocents who were slain and tormented, some one way, some another. As Rabanas says,

“Some slain with the sword; some burnt with fire; some scourged with whips; some stabbed with forks: some fastened to the cross or gibbet;⁶⁸ some drowned in the sea; some their skins plucked off; some their tongues cut off; some stoned to death; some killed with cold; some starved with hunger; some their hands cut off, or otherwise dismembered.”

Augustine also says about this, “They were bound— imprisoned— killed — tortured — burned — butchered — cut in pieces,” etc. Although these punishments were diverse, yet the manner of constancy in all these martyrs was one. And notwithstanding these torments and the cruelty of the tormentors, such was the number of these constant saints who suffered, or rather, such was the power of the Lord in his saints, that as Jerome says, “there is no day in the whole year, to which the number of 5000 martyrs cannot be ascribed, except the first day of January.”

⁶⁸ Gibbet: a wooden scaffold, like gallows, to which the accused was strapped for torture, beheading, or hanging.

The First Persecution.

The first of these ten persecutions was stirred up by the Emperor Nero Domitius (A.D. 64). His rage was so fierce against the Christians, as Eusebius records, that a man might then see cities full of the dead bodies of men and women, cast out naked in the open streets. Likewise, Orosius writes of Nero, that he was the first in Rome to raise persecutions against the Christians, and not only in Rome, but throughout the provinces, thinking to destroy the whole name of Christians.

In this persecution, the apostle Peter was condemned and crucified, as some write, at Rome – although others doubt it. Because his life and history is sufficiently described in the gospel and in the Acts, I need not repeat it. There are many who relate the cause and manner of his death, although they do not all precisely agree in the time. Jerome says that in the second year of the Emperor Claudius (A.D. 44), after Peter had been bishop of the church of Antioch, and had preached to the dispersed of those who believed, and to those of the circumcision, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Peter came to Rome to withstand Simon Magus. And there he kept the priestly chair for twenty-five years, until the last year of Nero, by whom he was crucified. His head was down, and his feet upward, as he himself requested, because he was, he said, unworthy to be crucified in the same form and manner as the Lord. ⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Foxe here has a marginal note; “This report seems neither to come from Jerome, nor to be true of Peter.”

The manner in which later editions of ‘the Fathers’ have been corrupted, and the prodigious extent to which they were interpolated in the monastic libraries, before the discovery of printing, has rendered it a matter of exceeding difficulty to ascertain whether any statement be truly the genuine opinion of the father to whom it is ascribed. And in subsequent times the *Index expurgatorius* has erased so many important sentences, and sometimes whole paragraphs, that we cannot be certain of anything in those ancient writings. There is at this moment in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, a copy of Chrysostom’s works, which had passed through the hands of one of the Inquisitors of the Index, and his pen has been drawn over every sentence that seemed to conflict with the peculiar views of the Roman church, and not unfrequently is the word *dele* and *deleatur* inserted in his handwriting in the margin.

Foxe seems to regard as an interpolation this passage in Jerome which describes Peter as being twenty-five years at Home, but whether it be genuine or otherwise, this much at least is certain, that it was both a moral and physical impossibility that the statement could be true in reference to that apostle, as will thus appear:

1. St. Paul was converted in the year 35; three years afterwards he visited Jerusalem, where he found Peter (Gal 1.18.) this was about the year 38, so that at this time St. Peter was not at Rome.
2. In three years after this, we find St. Peter visiting the regions about Jerusalem, and justifying his proceedings before the apostles and brethren in that city (Act 11.2). This was about the year 41, so that at this time St Peter was not at Rome.
3. In about three years afterwards we find St. James beheaded (Act 12.2), and immediately after we find St. Peter imprisoned at Jerusalem (Act 12.3). This was about the year 44. So that St. Peter could not have been at Rome at this period.
4. St. Paul preached at Antioch in about the year 42, remaining there a whole year. He preached there again some years after, namely, about 46; and it is not improbable that it was during this visit that he had the contention with St. Peter (Gal 2.11). So that Peter was not at that time at Rome.
5. The assembly of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, to determine the question of the observance of the Jewish rites, or as the Papists call it, the Council of Jerusalem, was in the year 52. Now Peter was there and spoke at it (Act 15.7). So that he could not have been at Rome at this time.
6. The Epistle of Paul to the Romans was written in the year 60, and it contains internal evidence that Peter was not at Rome at that period.
7. There is no further mention made of St. Peter in the sacred history, but we find St. Paul at Rome for two whole years (Act 28.30). These were the years 64 and 65, as nearly as they can be computed. It is certain that Peter was not at Rome during those two years, for in the several epistles which St. Paul wrote during his residence there, he never mentions that apostle as being even at Rome, much less being bishop or pope of it (See note, page 16).

[36] A.D. 64-98.

Paul the apostle, after his great and unspeakable labors in promoting the gospel of Christ, also suffered in this first persecution under Nero, and was beheaded.

Among his other manifold labors and travels in spreading the doctrine of Christ, he won Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus, to the faith of Christ, whereupon he took his name, as some suppose, and turned from Saulus to Paulus.

And because it is sufficiently comprehended in the Acts of the Apostles concerning the wonderful conversion, and conversation of this most worthy apostle, what remains of the rest of his history, I will briefly add here how he was sent up in bonds to Rome where, remaining two years together, he disputed daily against the Jews, proving Christ had come. And here it is to be noted that after his first answer, or defense, he was discharged and went to preach the gospel in the western parts, and around the coasts of Italy.

But afterwards being brought the second time before Nero, this worthy preacher and messenger of the Lord, on the same day in which Peter was crucified (although not in the same year, but in the year following) was beheaded at Rome for the testimony of Christ.

The Second Persecution.

The first Roman persecution ceased under Vespasian who gave some rest to the poor Christians. After his reign, the second persecution was begun by the emperor Domitian (about A.D. 94). Eusebius and Orosius write of him, that beginning mildly, he afterwards so far outraged in intolerable pride, that he commanded himself to be worshipped as God, and that images of gold and silver in his honor should be set up in the capitol. He caused to be put to death the chief nobles of the senators, either upon envy, or for their goods, some openly, and some he sent into banishment, causing them to be slain there secretly.

And just as his tyranny was unmeasurable, so the intemperance of his life was no less. He put to death all the nephews of Jude, called the Lord's brother, and caused all who could be found of the stock of David to be slain (as Vespasian also did before him). This was for fear, lest he who would enjoy the kingdom were yet to come of the house of David. ^{1Kng 8.25} In the time of this persecutor, Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, was crucified after other torments.

In this persecution, John the apostle and evangelist, was exiled to Patmos. His various memorable acts are reported in sundry chronicles, such as how he was put in a vessel of boiling oil by the proconsul of Ephesus. Also, how he raised up a widow and a certain young man from death to life. How he drank poison and it did not hurt him, also raising to life two who drank it before him. These and such other miracles, though they may be true, yet because they are not articles of our Christian belief, I will let them pass, and only content myself with what I read in Eusebius declaring of John, that in the second persecution he was banished to Patmos for the testimony of the word, (A.D. 97). And after the death of Domitian, John was released, and came to Ephesus (A.D. 100). There he continued and governed the churches in Asia. This is where he also wrote his gospel, And so he lived, says Jerome, till sixty-eight years after the passion of our Lord, at age one hundred (A.D. 101). ⁷⁰

8. The martyrdom of Peter was about the year 66, or 67 at the latest, so that his visit to Rome must have been after 65, and before 67; and this is the probable account of the matter. He perhaps visited Rome at that time, after Paul's imprisonment and preaching there. And he then, perhaps, was seized and martyred.

Thus Foxe was fully justified in saying that it cannot be true of Peter, that he was 25 years at Rome. [ED.]

⁷⁰ If Jesus was crucified in A.D. 30, plus 68 years is A.D. 98. Foxe puts the crucifixion in A.D. 33, hence A.D. 101.

As we now have in hand the story of John the evangelist, here comes a great doubt and difficulty which has occupied all the catholic, subtle, illuminate, and seraphical doctors of the pope's catholic church, these 500 years! The difficulty is this: as auricular confession has been and still is received in the pope's catholic church as a holy and necessary sacrament, extending universally to all Christians, a question arises here: who was the Virgin Mary's confessor or spiritual father? But it is decreed and confessed to be St. John, with full consent of all the Catholics. Whoever denies or doubts this is straightway a heretic! From this, then, so determined, arises another question or doubt. Seeing that our lady was without all original sin, and also without actual or mortal sin (they claim), what need did she have of any confessor? Or what would she confess to him? For if she had confessed any sin when she had none, then she would have made herself a liar, and thus sinned indeed. Here, therefore, gentle reader, in this perplexity, these illuminate doctors stand in need of your aid to help them at a pinch. Albert, the "great" divine,⁷¹ does not deny that indeed, though most pure, she yet confessed to her spiritual father in order to keep the observance of the law appointed for those who had that need, which she did not. And therefore (he says) it was necessary that she confess with her mouth. But then, here it is to be asked, What did she say in her confession, when she had nothing to confess? To this Albert answers and tells us plainly what she said in her confession: that she had received that great grace, not from any worthiness of her own. And this is what she said in her confession. (Albert, cap. 74. *super Evang. Missus est*, etc.)

Moreover, to help this case out of all doubt, comes the famous Thomas of Watring,⁷² who thus looses the knot, saying that just as Christ, although he owed nothing to the law, received circumcision to give others an example of humility and obedience; in like manner our lady would show herself obedient to the observance of the law, even though she had no need of it. And thus, gentle reader, you have this doubtful question raised and solved, with the intent that I might reveal to you some part of the "deep divinity" of our catholic masters who have ruled and governed the church in these later popish days!

But I return again to this second persecution under Domitian, in which, besides those godly martyrs mentioned before, and other innumerable ones suffering for the testimony of the Lord Jesus, there was Flavia, the daughter of one of the Roman consuls. With many others, she was banished out of Rome for the testimony of Christ.

Domitian feared the coming of Christ, as Herod did. And therefore he commanded that those who were of the stock of David in Judea, were to be killed. Remaining alive at that time were certain of the Lord's kindred who were the nephews of Jude, who was called the Lord's brother after the flesh. When the lieutenant of Judea had brought them to Domitian, the emperor demanded to know whether they were of the stock of David? When they had answered, he then asked what possessions and what substance they had. They answered that they had no more between them in all but thirty-nine acres of ground, and that they got their living and sustained their families with the hard labors of their hands. They showed their hands to the emperor, which were hard and rough, worn with labor, to witness that what they had spoken was true. Then the emperor, inquiring of them concerning the kingdom of Christ, asked what manner of kingdom it was — how and when it would appear.' They answered that His kingdom was no worldly thing, but a heavenly and angelical kingdom, and that it would appear in the consummation and end of the world, when coming

⁷¹ Albertus Magnus, or Albert the Great (c. 1200-1280): Dominican friar and prominent Catholic theologian.

⁷² Apparently an allusion to *St. Thomas-a-Watering*, a place of pilgrimage for those honoring Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, executed by king Henry II in 1170.

in glory, he would judge the quick and the dead, and render to everyone according to his deservings. Domitian, upon hearing this, let them go, and stayed the persecution that was then moved against the Christians.

By this story, the cause may appear why the emperors so persecuted the Christians. The causes were chiefly these: *First*, **Fear**. for the emperors and senate, not knowing the nature of Christ's kingdom, feared it would subvert the empire. And therefore they sought by all possible means — by death and all kinds of torments — to utterly extinguish the Christians. *Secondly*, **Hatred**. For the Christians, in serving only the true living God, despised the Romans' false gods, spoke against their idolatrous worshippings, and many times stopped the power of Satan that was working in their idols.

Upon these and such causes, rose up those malicious slanders, false surmises, infamous lies, and slanderous accusations of the heathen idolaters against the Christian servants of God, which incited the princes of this world to persecute them more. For whatever crimes that malice could invent, or rash suspicion could minister, were imputed to the Christians. And whatever happened to the city or provinces of Rome, whether famine, pestilence, wars, earthquake, wonders, unseasonable weather, or whatever other evils happened, it was imputed to the Christians.

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Also among these causes crept in some **Covetousness**. So that wicked promoters and accusers were ready to accuse them even more, for lucre's sake and to seize the possessions of the Christians.

Thus, Christian reader, you have *first*, the causes of these persecutions; and *secondly*, the cruel law of their condemnation. Now, *thirdly*, hear what the form of INQUISITION was. As witnessed in the second apology of Justin, they would swear to declare the truth, whether they were indeed Christians or not. And if they confessed, then the sentence of death proceeded by the law.

Nor were these tyrants content with death only. The *kinds* of death were various and horrible. Whatever the cruelty of man's invention could devise for the punishment of man's body, was practiced against the Christians — cunning trains, outcries of their enemies, imprisonment, stripes and scourgings, drawings, tearings, stonings, burning hot plates of iron laid to them, deep dungeons, racks, strangling in prison, the teeth of wild beasts, gridirons, gibbets and gallows, or tossing them on the horns of bulls. Moreover, when they were thus killed, their bodies were laid in heaps, and dogs were left there to keep them so that no man might come to bury them. Nor would any plea succeed for them to be interred and buried.

Just as it is impossible to comprehend the names and number of all the martyrs who suffered in these persecutions, so it is hard in such a variety of matter, to keep a perfect order and course of years and times, especially as the authors themselves, whom we follow in this present work, disagree both in the times, names, and also kind of martyrdom of those who suffered. For example, the common reading and opinion of the church takes Anacletus to succeed Clement as bishop of Rome, next before Evaristus. Eusebius makes no mention of *Cletus*, but of *Anacletus*, and says that Evaristus succeeded Clement. Likewise, Ruffinus and Epiphanius, saying nothing of *Anacletus*, mention Linus and *Cletus* next before Clement. By this it may appear that Cletus and Anacletus were the same person. Moreover, Antoninus, Vincentius, Jacobus, Simoneta, Aloisius, and others, declare of Linus, Cletus,

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Clement, Anacletus, Evaristus, and Alexander, bishops of Rome, that they died martyrs. Eusebius, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, writing about them, makes no mention of it.

And first, as regarding Clement (whom Marianus Scotus calls the first bishop of Rome after Peter) they say that he was sent into banishment with 2000 Christians: but Eusebius only says that after he had governed the church of Rome for nine years, Clement left the succession of it to Evaristus.

Concerning this Evaristus, the “next bishop of Rome,” we find in Ireneus (lib. 3. cap. 3.) that Peter and Paul (he says) committed the charge of that church to Linus; after whom came Anacletus, then succeeded Clement, and next after Clement followed Evaristus. Little or nothing remains of the acts and monuments either of this, or of other bishops of Rome in those days. By this it may appear that no great account was then made of Roman bishops, whose acts and deeds were then either lightly regarded, or slenderly committed to history. Notwithstanding, however, certain decretal epistles are remaining, or rather thrust upon us in their names, containing in them little substance of any doctrine, but altogether stuffed with laws, injunctions, and stately decrees that are little to the purpose, and still less savoring of their time. Among these are also numbered the two epistles of Evaristus. When he had given these orders, and made six priests, two deacons, and five bishops for sundry places (says the history) he suffered martyrdom. But what kind of death, for what cause he suffered, what constancy he showed, and what was the order or conduct of his life, is not touched. And therefore, what our new histories say seems more to be doubted, because the old ancient writers have no remembrance of them. They would not have passed over such things in silence, if they had been true.

After him succeeded Alexander in the governance of that church, of whose time and death there is the like discrepancy among the writers. Those who write of the deeds and doings of this bishop, declare that he had converted a great part of the senators to the faith of Christ, among whom was Hermes, a great man in Rome.

And then (says the history) about the second year of Adrian, Aurelian the ruler took Alexander, along with Hermes, his wife, children, and his whole household, numbering 1250 persons, and threw them in prison. And not long after, Alexander with Euentius his deacon, and Hermes, and the rest, were burned in a furnace. Theodulus, another deacon of Alexander, seeing and rebuking the cruelty of the tyrant, suffered the same martyrdom. Quirinus also, at the same time having first his tongue cut out, then his hands and feet, was beheaded and cast to the dogs.

Various miracles are reported of this Alexander, in the *Legends and Lives of Saints*. I do not deny them; but because I cannot avouch them by any serious testimony of ancient writers, I dare not affirm them. But I refer such things to their authors and patrons, where they are found. Notwithstanding, whatever is to be thought of his miracles, this is to be affirmed and not doubted: that Alexander was a godly and virtuous bishop.

The Third Persecution.

Between the second persecution and the third there was but one year under the Emperor Nerva, ⁷³ after whom succeeded Trajan; and under him followed the third persecution (A.D. 98). Trajan might seem, in comparison to others, a worthy and commendable prince, familiar with inferiors, and behaving himself towards his subjects as he himself would have the prince behave toward him, if he were a subject. He was noted to be a great observer of justice. But toward the Christian religion, he was impious and cruel, and caused the third persecution of the church. In this persecution, Pliny the second (the Younger), a learned and famous man, seeing the lamentable slaughter of Christians, and moved with pity, wrote to Trajan the following epistle: —

“It is my property and manner (my sovereign) to relate to you of all those things in which I doubt. For who can better either correct my slackness or instruct my ignorance, than you? I have never been present myself at the examination and execution of these Christians; and therefore what punishment is to be administered, and how far, or how to proceed in such inquisitions, I am ignorant. I am not able to resolve in the matter whether any difference is to be had in age and person; whether the young and tender ought to be treated with like cruelty as the elder and stronger; whether repentance may have any pardon, or whether it may profit him or not, to deny he has been a Christian; whether merely bearing the name of Christian, without other offenses, or whether offenses joined with the name of Christian, ought to be punished. In the meantime, regarding those Christians who have been presented to me, I have kept this order. I have inquired the second and third time of them whether they were Christians, menacing them with fear of punishment; and those who persevered, I commanded to be executed. For thus I thought, that whatever their profession was, yet their stubbornness and obstinacy ought to be punished. Those who were of the same madness, because they were also citizens of Rome, I thought to send back again to the city. Afterward, in further process and handling of this matter, as the sect further spread, so more cases ensued.

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“There was a paper offered to me, bearing no name, in which were contained the names of many who denied they were Christians, and were contented to do sacrifice with incense and wine to the gods, and to your image (which image I caused to be brought for that purpose) and to blaspheme Christ. Those I discharged and let go, for none who were true Christians indeed, could be compelled to this. Others confessed that they had *been* Christians, but afterwards denied it, etc., affirming to me the whole sum of that sect or error to consist in this: that they were in the habit, at certain appointed times, to meet before daylight, and to sing certain hymns to one Christ their God, and to confederate among themselves, to abstain from all theft, murder, and adultery, to keep their faith, and to defraud no man. This being done, they then departed for that time, and afterward returned again to take food in company together, both men and women, one with another, and yet without any act of evil.

“To be further certified whether the truth of this were so or not, I caused two maidens to be laid on the rack, and to be examined with torments. But finding nothing in them but immoderate superstition, I thought to cease further inquiry till I might be further advised from you. For the matter seemed to me worthy and needful of advice, especially for the great number of those who were in danger of your statute. For there were very many of all ages and states, both men and women, and more are likely to incur the same peril of condemnation hereafter. For that infection has crept not only into cities, but also villages and boroughs about. For as much as we see in many places that the temples of our gods, which were usually desolate, now begin to be frequented, and that they bring sacrifices from every part to be sold,

⁷³ [Nerva freed the Apostle John from his exile at Patmos.](#)

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which very few were found willing to buy before. It may easily be conjectured what multitudes of men may be amended, if space and time are given them, in which they may be reclaimed.”

To the above epistle the emperor returned the following answer: —

“The statute concerning Christians you have rightly executed. For no such general law can be enacted in which all special cases can be particularly comprehended. Let them not be sought for, but if they are brought and convicted, then let them suffer execution. Notwithstanding, whoever denies being a Christian, and does it unfeignedly in open audience, and does sacrifice to our gods, however he may have been suspected before, let him be released upon promise of amendment. Those writings that have no names, do not suffice to any just crime or accusation; for that would give an evil precedent; nor does it agree with the example of our time.”

Tertullian writing upon this letter of Trajan, says this: “O sentence of a confused necessity; he would not have them *sought* as innocent men, and yet he causes them to be *punished* as guilty persons!” Thus the rage of that persecution ceased for a time, although many men and cruel officers did not cease to afflict the Christians in various provinces. Especially if any occasion were given, or if any commotion were raised in the provinces abroad, the fault was laid upon the Christians. As in Jerusalem, after the Emperor Trajan had sent down his command that whoever could be found of the stock of David, should be put to death, certain sectaries of the Jews accused Simeon, the bishop of Jerusalem, to have come from the stock of David, *and* that he was a Christian. Of these accusers, it also happened that some of them were likewise apprehended and taken as being of the stock of David, and so they were justly executed themselves, having sought the destruction of others. The blessed bishop was scourged for many days, though a hundred years of age. In his martyrdom he endured so constant in his faith, that both the consul and the multitude marvelled at his age. And so at last being crucified, he finished his course in the Lord, for whom he suffered.

In this persecution, Phocas, bishop of Pontus, also suffered. Because he would not do sacrifice to Neptune, Trajan cast into a hot lime-kiln, and afterward put him into a scalding bath where the constant godly martyr, for the testimony of Christ, ended his life — or rather entered into life.

In the same persecution Sulpitius and Servilian also suffered. Their wives having been converted by Sabina to the faith of Christ, were also martyred. Sabina was beheaded in the days of Adrian, under whom Seraphia also suffered, a maiden of Antioch.

In this persecution, besides many others, Ignatius also suffered, the blessed martyr of Christ, who to this day is held in great reverence. Ignatius was appointed to the bishopric of Antioch, next in succession after Peter. Being sent from Syria to Rome because he professed Christ, he was given to the wild beasts to be devoured. It is said of him that when he passed through Asia, he strengthened and confirmed the churches through all the cities as he went, both with his exhortations, and the preaching of the word of God. Thus when he came to Smyrna, he wrote one epistle to the church of Ephesus, and another to the church of Magnesia; also another to the church of Trallis, in which he says: —

“Being exercised and now well acquainted with their injuries, I am taught every day more and more. Yet, I am not justified by this. And I would to God that I would at once come to the beasts which are prepared for me, which I also wish were ready to come upon me with gaping mouths. I would also provoke them, so that they may devour me without delay, and forbear me nothing at all, as beasts before which I am not touched with fear nor hurt! And if they will not do this unless provoked, then I will force them against myself. Pardon me, I pray you. How beneficial it is to me, I know. Now I begin to be a scholar. I esteem no visible things, nor yet invisible things, so that I may obtain Christ Jesus. Let the fire, the gallows, the devouring of

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wild beasts, the breaking of bones, the pulling asunder of my members, the bruising or pressing of my whole body, and the torments of the devil or hell itself come upon me, so that I may win Christ Jesus.”

Besides this godly Ignatius, many thousands also were put to death in the same persecution, as appears by the letter of Pliny. Jerome mentions one Publius, bishop of Athens, who was martyred for the faith of Christ during this persecution,.

Next after this, Trajan succeeded the Emperor Adrian, (A.D. 118).

It is stated in the histories, that in the time of Adrian, Zenon, a nobleman of Rome, with 10,203 other persons, were slain for Christ; 10,000 were crucified at Mount Ararat, crowned with crowns of thorn, and thrust into the sides with sharp spears, following the example of the Lord's passion.

There was one Eustachius, a captain, sent out to war against the barbarians. After he had valiantly subdued his enemies by God's grace, and was returning home with victory, Adrian for joy met him on his journey to bring him home with triumph. But first, along the way he would do sacrifice to Apollo for the victory, requiring Eustachius to do the same. But Eustachius could by no means be forced to do so. Being brought to Rome, he suffered martyrdom with his wife and children.

We read also of Faustinus and Jobita, who suffered with grievous torments. At the sight of which, one Calocerius, seeing their great patience in such great torments, cried out with these words, “Truly, great is the God of the Christians.” These words being heard, he was immediately apprehended. And being brought to the place of execution, was made partaker of their martyrdom.

Symphorissa, the wife of Getulus the martyr, with her seven children, is said to suffer at about the same time. She was first beaten and scourged several times, afterwards was hung up by the hair of her head. At last, having a huge stone fastened to her, she was thrown headlong into the river. And her seven children in like manner, with various kinds of punishment, were martyred by the tyrant.

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Sophia, with her three children; also Seraphia and Sabina, also Anthia and her son, who was bishop of Apulia; also Justus and Pastor suffered (A.D. 130).

While Adrian was at Athens, he purposed to visit Elusina, and did so. While sacrificing to the Gentiles' gods, he gave free leave and liberty to persecute the Christians. Upon which, Quadratus, a man of no less excellent zeal than of famous learning, being then bishop of Athens, exhibited to the emperor a learned and excellent apology in defense of the Christian religion. In this he declared that the Christians, without any just cause, were cruelly treated and persecuted. Aristides did the same; he was another no less excellent philosopher in Athens. Being noticed by the emperor for his singular learning and eloquence, and coming into the emperor's presence, Aristides made an eloquent oration before him. Moreover, he exhibited to the emperor a memorable apology for the Christians, so full of learning and eloquence, that as Jerome said, it was a spectacle and admiration to all men in his time, who loved to see wit and learning. Besides these, there was also another named Serenus Granius, a man of great nobility, who wrote very pithy and grave letters to Adrian, showing that it was not consonant with right or reason, for the blood of innocents to be given to the rage and fury of the people, and to be condemned for no fault, only for the name and sect that they followed.

Thus the goodness of God being moved with the prayers and constant labor of these excellent men, so turned the heart of the emperor, that being better informed concerning the order and profession of the Christians, he became more favorable to them.

In the days of this Adrian, the Jews rebelled again, and spoiled the country of Palestine. The emperor sent Julius Severus against them. He overthrew fifty castles in Judea, and burnt and destroyed 980 villages and towns, and slew 50,000 of the Jews with famine, sickness, sword, and fire; so that Judah was almost desolate. But at length Adrian, who was also named Aelius, repaired and enlarged the city of Jerusalem, which was called after his name, Aeliopolis, or Aelia. He granted only to the Gentiles and Christians, the right to live in it, utterly forbidding the Jews to enter the city.

After the death of Adrian, Antonius Pius succeeded him, about the year 140. He reigned for twenty-three years. For his clemency and modest behavior he had the name of *Pius*. His saying was that he would rather save one citizen, than destroy a thousand of his adversaries. At the beginning of his reign, although there was no edict to persecute the Christians, yet the rage of the heathen multitude did not cease to afflict the people of God — imputing and ascribing to the Christians whatever misfortune happened contrary to their desires; moreover, inventing false crimes by which to accuse them. Because of these, some were put to death, although not by the consent of the emperor. He was so mild and gentle, that either he raised no persecution against the Christians, or else he soon stayed it from being moved. This may well appear by his letter sent down to the countries of Asia, in which he writes these things about the Christians:—

“This is their joy and desire, that when they are accused, they covet to die for their God rather than to live. By this they are victorious, and overcome you, giving their lives, rather than doing what you require of them. And here it will not be inconvenient to notify you of the earthquakes which have and do happen among us, that when you tremble and are afraid at the sight of them, then you may compare your case with theirs. For, upon a sure confidence of their God, they are bold and fearless, much more than you, who in the time of your ignorance, both worship other gods, and neglect the religion of immortality. Such Christians who worship him, you drive out, and persecute unto death. Many presidents of our provinces previously wrote of these matters to our father of famous memory. He directed his answer to them, desiring that in no case were they to molest the Christians, unless they were found in some prejudicial trespass against the empire. And many write to me also, signifying their mind in like manner; and I have answered them to the same effect and manner as my father did. Therefore, if any hereafter offers any vexation or trouble to them, having no other cause except that they are Christians, let him who is impeached be released and discharged free — yes, even though he is found to be such (that is, a Christian), and let the *accuser* sustain the punishment,” etc.

This godly edict of the emperor was proclaimed at Ephesus, in the public assembly of all Asia. By this means, persecution began to be appeased, through the merciful providence of God, who would not have his church to be utterly overthrown.

The Fourth Persecution.

After the decease of Antonius Pius, followed his son-in-law Marcus Aurelius Antonius, with Lucius Verus, his adopted brother (A.D. 161). Marcus was a stern and severe man, in whose time a great number of Christians suffered cruel torments and punishments, both in Asia and France. Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, was among their number. In the great rage of this persecution in Asia, he was martyred. Of his end and martyrdom I thought it not inexpedient here, to commit to history so much as Eusebius declares to be taken out of a

certain epistle, written by those of his own church to the brethren of Pontus. The tenor of this epistle follows here:

“The church which is at Smyrna, to the church which is at Philomilium, and to all the churches throughout Pontus, mercy to you, peace and the love of God our Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied. Amen. We have written to you, brethren, about those men who have suffered martyrdom, and of blessed Polycarp, who has ended and appeased this persecution, as it were, by the shedding his own blood.”

And in the same epistle, before they enter into further matter of Polycarp, they discourse about other martyrs, describing what patience they showed in suffering their torments.

“This was so admirable (says the epistle) that the on-lookers were amazed, seeing and beholding how they were so scourged and whipped, that the inward veins and arteries appeared, yes, even so much, that the very entrails of their bodies were seen. And after that, they were set upon with sharp shells taken out of the sea, and certain nails and thorns were placed for the martyrs to walk upon, which were sharpened and pointed. Thus they suffered all kinds of punishment and torment that might be devised. And lastly, they were thrown to the wild beasts to be devoured.”

Now we will return to Polycarp. The aforesaid letter declares the following about him. That in the beginning, when he heard of these things he was not at all afraid nor disquieted in mind, but purposed to have tarried still in the city, till being persuaded by the entreaty of those who were about him, he hid himself in a village not far from the city. There abiding with a few more, he did nothing, night or day, but abide in supplication. In this he made his humble petition for obtaining peace for all the churches throughout the world. It is further mentioned that when those who so narrowly sought him were near at hand, he was forced for the affection and love of his brethren, to flee into another village. A little while after, the pursuers came to this place notwithstanding, and found him in the house. He might have escaped from there if he wanted to, but he would not do it, saying, “The will of God be done.” Furthermore, when he knew that they had come, he came down and spoke to them with a cheerful and pleasant countenance, so that it was a wonder to see them now beholding his age, and his grave and constant countenance, lamenting that they had so employed their labor, and that so aged a man should be apprehended. To conclude, he commanded that straightway without any delay, the table should be laid for them. He persuaded them to eat and dine well, and boldly requested of them, that he might have an hour’s respite to pray. This being granted, he arose and went to pray, and was so replenished with the grace of God, that those who were present, hearing his prayers, were astonished. Many were sorry that so godly and aged a man should be put to death.

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After he had made an end of his prayers, and the hour had come in which they should set out, they set him on an ass, and brought him to the city. There he was met by Irenarch Herod and his father Nicetes. They caused him to come into the chariot where they sat, and tried to persuade him. They said, “What hurt, I pray you, will come of this, if you say (by way of salvation) ‘my lord Caesar,’ and do sacrifice to him, and thus save yourself?” But Polycarp made no answer till they forced him to speak. He then said, “I will not do as you counsel me.” When they saw he could not be persuaded, they gave him very rough language, and purposely molested him, so that in going down from the chariot, he might hurt or break his legs. But he treated the matter very lightly, as if he felt no hurt, and went merrily and diligently forward, making haste to the place appointed. The proconsul, when he had come, counseled him to deny Christ’s name, and said to him, “Be good to yourself, and favor your

old age; take your oath, and I will discharge you: defy Christ.” Polycarp answered, “Eighty-six years I have been His servant, yet in all this time he has not so much as once hurt me. How then may I speak evil of my King and sovereign Lord, who has thus preserved me?” Upon this, the proconsul stood up. “I have,” he said, “wild beasts to whom I will throw you, unless you take a better course.” To this Polycarp answered, “Let them come. We have determined with ourselves, that we will not turn from the better way to the worse, but rather turn from things that are evil to those which are good.” “Again,” said the proconsul, “I will tame you with fire.” Then Polycarp said, “You threaten me with fire, which will burn for the space of an hour, and in a little while be extinguished; but you do not know the fire of the judgment to come, and of everlasting punishment, which is reserved for the wicked and ungodly. But why do you make all these delays? Give me whatever death you wish.” These and many other such things being spoken by him, he was filled with joy and boldness. His countenance appeared so full of grace and favor, that he was not only *not* troubled with those things which the proconsul spoke to him, but contrarily, the proconsul himself began to be amazed. He sent for the crier, who in the middle of the stage was commanded to cry three times, “Polycarp has confessed himself to be a Christian.” These words of the crier were no sooner spoken, than the whole multitude desired that he let loose the lion at Polycarp. The proconsul answered that he could not do so, because he already had his prey. Then they cried out again, all together with one voice, that he should burn Polycarp alive. And the proconsul had no sooner spoken, than it was at once performed, for the multitude had brought out from their shops, workhouses and barns, wood and other dry matter for that purpose.

And thus the pile being laid, and when Polycarp had now put off his garments and undone his girdle, straightway those instruments requisite to such a bonfire were brought to him. And when they would have nailed him to the stake with iron hoops, he said, “Let me alone as I am, for He that has given me strength to suffer and abide the fire, shall also give me power that, without your provision of nails, I will abide and not stir in the midst of this fire.” When they heard this, they did not nail him, but bound him. Therefore, when his hands were bound behind him, he was sacrificed, saying,

“O Father of your well-beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have attained the knowledge of you, the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and of all just men who live before you, I give you thanks that you have promised to grant me this day that I may have my part among the number of the martyrs in the cup of Christ, unto the resurrection of eternal life, both of body and soul, through the operation of your Holy Spirit. Among them I will this day be received into your sight as an acceptable sacrifice. Just as you prepared and revealed this beforehand, so you have accomplished it, O you most true God, who cannot lie. Therefore in like case, and for all things, I praise you and bless you, and glorify you by our everlasting bishop, Jesus Christ, to whom be glory evermore, amen.”

The subtle adversary saw the worthiness of Polycarp’s martyrdom, and that his conduct even from his younger years could not be reproved, and that he was adorned with the crown of martyrdom, and had now obtained that incomparable benefit. The [centurion] charged that we not take and divide Polycarp’s body, for fear that the remnants of the dead corpse might be taken away and worshipped by the people. Upon this, some whispered to Nicetes, the father of Herod, and to his brother Dalces, that the proconsul be admonished that in no case should he deliver Polycarp’s body to them, lest they leave Christ, and begin to worship Polycarp. They said this because the Jews had secretly warned them, and provoked them to it. They also watched us, so that we would not take Polycarp’s body out of the fire. They were not ignorant that we meant at no time to forsake Christ, who gave his life for the salvation of

the whole world (I mean as many as are elected to salvation by him), nor could we worship any other. Why then? We worship Jesus Christ as the Son of God, but we love the martyrs as disciples of the Lord (and worthily so), for their abundant love towards their king and master, of whom we also desire and wish to be companions, and to be made His disciples. Therefore, when the centurion saw and perceived the object of the Jews, the corpse being laid out, they burnt it to ashes, as was their manner.

Thus good Polycarp, with twelve others who came from Philadelphia, suffered martyrdom at Smyrna. Polycarp especially is held above the rest in memory. So that, in all places among the Gentiles he is most esteemed. He was a very aged man, and had served Christ eighty-six years since his first knowledge of Him, and also served in the ministry about the space of seventy years. He was the student and hearer of John the evangelist (the Apostle), and was placed by John in Smyrna.

It is witnessed by Ireneus, that Polycarp came to Rome in the time of Anicetus, bishop of Rome, about the year 157. The cause of his coming there appears to be about the controversy concerning Easter day, in which the Asians and the Romans disagreed. Therefore Polycarp, in behalf of the brethren and church of Asia, took his long journey there to come and confer with Anicetus. Nicephorus also writes of this (lib. 4.), declaring that Polycarp and Anicetus varied somewhat in their opinion and judgment about that matter. Notwithstanding, they communicated with one another in a friendly way, in so far that Anicetus gave way to Polycarp to minister the communion and sacrament of the Lord's supper in his church, for honor's sake. This may be a notable testimony to us now, that the doctrine concerning the free use and liberty of ceremonies, was retained at that time in the church, without any offense or breach of Christian peace in the church.

In this fourth persecution, besides Polycarp and the others mentioned before, we read of various others who, at the same time, suffered at Smyrna.

Metrodorus, a minister, was given to the fire, and consumed. Pionius, after much bold speech, as his apologies were exhibited, and his sermons were given to the people in defense of Christian faith – after he had given much relief and comfort to those who were in prison and otherwise discomfited – he was at last put to cruel torments, then given to the fire. And so he finished his blessed martyrdom.

And just as these suffered in Asia, so Felicitas with her seven children suffered in Rome. Her first and eldest son, after he was whipped and scourged with rods, was pressed to death with leaden weights; two had their brains beaten out; another was cast down headlong, and had his neck broken; the rest were beheaded. Last of all, Felicitas the mother was slain with the sword.

[41] A.D. 161.

In this fourth persecution, Justin suffered. He was a man of learning, and philosophy, and a great defender of the Christian religion. He presented a book in defense of our doctrine to the Emperor Antoninus (Antonius) Pius, and to the Senate. After this he was crowned with the same martyrdom as those whom he had defended in his book.⁷⁴

Under Antoninus also suffered Ptolomy and Lucius for the confession of Christ, in Alexandrina.

⁷⁴ Justin Martyr (100-165) was martyred under Marcus Aurelius, who succeeded Antonius Pius in 161. His first Apology was indeed written between AD 155 and 157, during the reign of Antonius Pius.

Concordus, a minister of the city of Spolet, because he would not sacrifice to Jupiter, but spat in the face of the idol, after diverse and sundry punishments, was at last beheaded with the sword.

A little before, mention was made of Symphorosa, wife of Getulus, with her seven sons, whom the chronicle of Ado declares were put to death, being fastened to seven stakes, and racked up with a pulley. At last they were thrust through – Crescens in the neck, Julianus in the breast, Neraesius in the heart, Primitivus in the stomach, Justinus cut in every joint of his body, Statteus run through with spears, Eugenius cut asunder from the breast to the lower parts, and then cast into a deep pit. After their martyrdom, Symphorosa, the mother, likewise suffered.

Under Marcus Antoninus, in the same persecution, suffered the glorious and most constant martyrs of Vienne and Lyons. These two cities in France gave to Christ a glorious testimony, and to all Christian men a spectacle or example of singular constancy and fortitude in Christ our Savior. And because their history is written and set forth by their own churches where they suffered (Euseb. lib. 5. cap. 2), I thought it good to give it in their own words, as in the following epistle to their brethren in Asia and Phrygia.

“The servants of Christ inhabiting the cities of Vienne and Lyons, to the brethren in Asia and Phrygia, having the same faith and hope of redemption with us: Peace, grace, and glory from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord.

“The greatness of this our tribulation, the furious rage of the Gentiles against us, and the torments which the blessed martyrs suffered, we can neither in words, nor yet in writing, set forth as they deserve. For the adversary in every place practiced, and instructed his ministers how to set them in most spiteful manner, against the servants of God. So that not only were we restrained in our houses, shops, and markets, but also universally commanded that none of us should be seen in any place. But God always has mercy in store, and took out of their hands those who were weak among us. Others he set up as firm and immovable pillars. By suffering, these were able to abide and valiantly withstand the enemy, enduring all the punishment they could devise. They fought this battle for Christ, esteeming their great troubles but as light. Thereby they showed that all that may be suffered in this present life, is not to be compared with the great glory which will be shown upon us after life. They patiently suffered railings, scourgings, drawings and haulings, flinging of stones, imprisoning, and whatever the rage of the multitude is prone to use against their enemies – then being led into the marketplace, and there judged. After their confession, made openly before the multitude, they were sent back to prison. One Vetius Epagathus, one of the brethren, having within him the fervent zeal of love and spirit of God, could not permit that wicked judgment which was given upon the Christians. But being vehemently displeased, he desired that the judge hear the excuse which he was minded to make in behalf of the Christians, in whom, he said, no impiety is found. The justice did not grant him his request, but only asked him whether he himself was a Christian? He immediately, with a loud and bold voice, answered and said, I *am* a Christian! And thus he was received into the fellowship of the martyrs, and called the advocate of the Christians. By this man’s example, the rest of the martyrs were more animated with all courage of mind. Some there were unready and not so well prepared, and as yet weak – not well able to bear so great a conflict. Of these, ten fainted, ministering to us much heaviness and lamentation. Their example caused the rest, who had not yet been apprehended, to be less willing of it. Along with these, certain men-servants were also apprehended. Fearing the torments which they saw the saints suffer, also being compelled by the soldiers, they charged that we kept the feastings of Thyestes, and of Oedipus, and many such other crimes. These are neither to be remembered nor named by us, nor yet is it to be thought that any man would ever commit the like.

“These things being noised abroad, every man began to show cruelty against us, in that those who were gentler before, now vehemently disdained us, and grew mad against us. Thus was fulfilled what was spoken by Christ, saying, “The time will come, that whoever kills you, will think that he does God a service.” Then the martyrs of God suffered such bitter persecution as is passing to be told. Satan still shooting at this mark: to make them utter some blasphemy by all possible means. Therefore the rage both of the people and prince was marvellous, especially against one Sanctus, who was deacon of the congregation of Vienne, and against Maturus, who had been baptized but a little before, yet was a worthy soldier of Christ; and also against Attalus, who was the foundation and pillar of that church; and also against Blandina. Blandina was so filled with strength and boldness, that those who had been tormenting her from morning to night, gave up out of weariness. They were themselves overcome, confessing that they could do no more against her, and marvelled that she still lived, having her body so torn and rent. They testified that any one of those torments alone, without any more, had been enough to have plucked the life from her body.

“Sanctus also, another of the martyrs, who in the midst of his torments endured more pains than the nature of a man might bear, abode in such constancy of mind, that he neither told them his name, nor what countryman he was, nor in what city he was brought up, nor whether he was a freeman or a servant. But every question that was asked him, he answered, ‘I am a Christian,’ and this was all that he confessed, both of his name, city, kindred, and all other things in the place of execution. Upon this, both the governor and tormentors were more vehemently bent against him. They clapped plates of red-hot brass to the most tender parts of his body, yet he never shrunk, but was bold and constant in his confession, being strengthened and moistened with the fountain of living water flowing out of Christ’s side. Truly his body was a sufficient witness of what torments he suffered. For it was all drawn together and most pitifully wounded and scorched, so that it had lost the proper shape of a man, in whose suffering Christ obtained unspeakable glory. For he overcame his adversaries, and to the instruction of others, he declared that nothing else is terrible, or ought to be feared, where the love of God is. And nothing is grievous in which the glory of Christ is manifested.

“Also Satan, now thinking to have settled himself in the heart of one Biblias, being one of those who had denied Christ. Thinking to cause her — a weak and feeble woman in faith — to damn her soul in blaspheming the name of God, he brought her to the place of execution. But in the middle of her torments, returning to herself, and waking as it were out of her dead sleep by that temporal pain, she called to her remembrance the pains of hell-fire. And against all expectations, she answered the tormentors, saying, ‘How should we Christians eat young infants (as you report of us) for whom it is not lawful to eat the blood of any beast?’ Upon that, as soon as she had confessed to being a Christian, she was martyred. Thus when Christ had ended those tyrannical torments, by the patience and suffering of the saints, the Devil yet invented other engines and instruments. For when the Christians were cast into prison, they were shut up in dark and ugly dungeons, and were drawn by the feet in a rack or engine made for that purpose.

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“Very many of them were strangled and killed in prisons. But in this manner, the Lord would have them enjoy everlasting life, and set forth His glory. And surely these good men were so pitifully tormented, that if they had all the helps and medicines in the world, it was thought impossible for them to live, and to be restored. And thus remaining in prison, destitute of all human help, they were so strengthened by the Lord, and confirmed both in body and mind, that they comforted and stirred up the minds of the rest.

“Photinus, who was deacon to the bishop of Lyons, was about eighty-nine years old, and a very feeble man. Yet he was of a lively courage and spirit when he was brought to the judgment-

seat. Although his body was feeble and weak, both because of his old age, and also through sickness, his life was preserved, that Christ might triumph and be glorified. It was demanded by the chief ruler, what was the Christian man's God. He answered, If you are worthy to know, you shall know. The ruler being somewhat offended by these words, caused Photinus to be beaten. Those who stood next to him did him all the spite and displeasure that they could, both with hand and foot, having no regard at all for his old age or white hairs. Those who were further off threw at him whatever came next to hand. And every man thought that whoever withheld his hand from doing the same, very wickedly refrained. Photinus was then thrown into prison, and within two days he died.

“Then Maturus and Attalus were brought together to the common scaffold, there in the face of the people to be cast to the beasts. They suffered the tearing of wild beasts, and whatever else the frantic people on every side cried for and willed. And above all the rest they brought an iron chair, in which their bodies being set, were fried and scorched, as on a gridiron fried on the coals. And yet for all that, the tormentors did not cease, but grew fiercer and madder against them, laboring to overcome the patience of the saints. Notwithstanding all this, they could not get out of Sanctus' mouth anything else but the confession which he declared at the beginning. And thus these holy men, after they had long continued alive in most horrible conflict, were at length slain. That whole day they were made a spectacle to the world, in place and instead of the games and sights which were usually exhibited to the people.

“Now the emperor had written that all the confessors should be punished, and the others let go. The governor therefore caused all the holy martyrs to be brought to the sessions, that the assembled multitude might behold them. He again examined them; as many of them as he thought had the freedom of Roman citizenship, he beheaded, the remainder he gave to the beasts to be devoured. Truly Christ was much glorified by those who a little before had denied him, but who now, contrary to the expectation of the infidels, confessed him even to the death. While they were being examined, one Alexander, standing somewhat near to the bar, by signs encouraged those who were examined to confess Christ. So that his countenance, sometimes rejoicing and sometimes sorrowing, was observed by the bystanders. The people who were not pleased to see those who had recanted again, stick to their first confession of Christ, cried out against Alexander as the one who was the cause of this. And when he was forced by the judge, who demanded to know what his religion was, he answered, ‘I am a Christian.’ He had no sooner spoken the word, than he was condemned to be devoured by the beasts.

“The blessed Blandina was the last who suffered, after she had, as a worthy mother, exhorted her children, and sent them before her as conquerors to their heavenly King. She called to her remembrance all their battles and conflicts, and so rejoiced at her children's death, that she hastened her own. It was as though she had been called to a bridal feast, and not thrown to the wild beasts. After her pitiful whipping, her delivery to the beasts, and her torments upon the gridiron, at length she was put in a net, and thrown to the wild bull. When she had been sufficiently gored and wounded with the horns of the beast, and heeded nothing of all that happened to her for the great hope and consolation she had in Christ and heavenly things, she was thus slain. The heathen men themselves confessed that there was never a woman put to death, who suffered so much as this woman did. Yet their furious cruelty was not assuaged against the Christians. For this cruel and barbarous people, like wild beasts, did not know when it was time to make an end of it. But they invented new and sundry torments every day against our bodies. Nor did it content them when they had put the Christians to death. For those whom they strangled in their prisons, they threw to the dogs, setting keepers to watch them both day and night, so that their bodies would not be buried. They brought out the remnant of their bones and bodies, some half burned, some left by the wild beasts, and some all mangled. They also brought out the heads of others which were cut off, and committed them to the charge of the keepers to see them remain unburied.

Bk. I. The 300 years after Christ – Ten Persecutions (64-324)

“Thus the bodies of the martyrs were made a wondering stock, and lay six days in the open streets. At length they burned them, and threw their ashes into the river Rhone, so that there might appear no remnant of them upon the earth. And they did this, as if they had been able to pull God out of his seat, and had hindered the regeneration of the saints, and taken from them the hope of the resurrection.”

Such was the epistle of the brethren of France to those of Asia.

Among others who suffered under Antoninus, previous mention was made of Justin, who submitted two apologies in defense of Christian doctrine, the one to the senate and the other to the emperor.

He wrote the first of these apologies to the senate; when with great liberty he declared that he was of necessity compelled to write and utter his mind to them. For in persecuting the Christians they highly offended God, and therefore needed to be admonished. And writing to the lieutenant of the city, he said he had “put men to death and torments, not for any offense committed, but only for the confession of the name of Christ. These proceedings and judgments were neither becoming to the emperor, nor to his son, nor to the senate.” Thus in his apology, he moreover cleared the Christians of those crimes which were falsely laid and objected against them.

Likewise in his second apology, writing to the emperor with like gravity and free liberty, he declares to them how they had the *name*, being reputed and taken as virtuous philosophers, maintainers of justice, lovers of learning. But whether they were so, their acts declared. As for him, he was constrained to write to them this way, neither for flattery, nor favor at their hands. And then in plain words, he charges the emperor as well as the senate with manifest wrong, for not granting the Christians what is not denied to all other malefactors — judging them to death, only for the hatred of the *name* Christian. He said,

“Other men who are accused are not condemned in judgment before they are convicted. But on us, you take our name alone as the crime, when indeed you ought to see justice done upon our accusers. And again, if a Christian being accused will only deny that name, you release him, not being able to charge him with any other offense. But if he stands to his name, you condemn him only for his confession — where indeed it is your duty to examine their manner of life, rather than whatever they confess or deny, and to see justice done according to their demerits.”

I find that all his apologies stand upon the strongest and firmest proofs, denying that the Christians should sacrifice to the idols at the will and commandment of the emperor and the senate. Being condemned for this, they affirm that they suffer open wrong — affirming moreover, that the true and only religion is the religion of the Christians. Although Justin did not so prevail with the emperor as to cause him to love Justin’s religion and become a Christian, yet he obtained this much: that Antoninus writing to his officers in Asia, commanded them that only those Christians who were found guilty of any trespass should suffer, and those who were not convicted, should not therefore be punished only because they were called Christians.

[43] A.D. 161—193.

Besides Justin, there were at the same time in Asia, Apollinaris, bishop of Hieropolis, and Melito, bishop of Sardis. They submitted learned and eloquent apologies in defense of Christ’s religion, just as Quadratus and Aristides (mentioned above) did to the emperor. Thereby they moved him somewhat to stay the rage of his persecution. In like manner

Apollinaris and Melito defended the cause of the Christians. Eusebius mentions Melito in his fourth book, and quotes certain parts of his apology in these words,

“The godly suffer persecution by occasion of certain proclamations and edicts proclaimed throughout Asia, for villainous sycophants, robbers, and spoilers of other men’s goods, grounding themselves upon those proclamations, and taking occasion of them, rob openly night and day, and spoil those which do no harm. Which if it be done by your commandment, be it so; for a good prince will never command but good things, and so we will be contented to sustain the honor of this death. This only we most humbly beseech your majesty, that calling before you and examining the authors of this tumult and contention, your grace would justly judge whether we are worthy of cruel death, or quiet life. And then if it be not your pleasure, and that it proceeds not by your commandment (which indeed against your barbarous enemies were too bad) the more a great deal we are petitioners to your highness, that hereafter you will grant to hear us, who are so vexed and oppressed with this kind of villainous robberies.”

Thus much out of the apology of Melito, who in writing to Onesimus, gives us the benefit of knowing the true catalogue and names of all the authentic books of the Old Testament, received in the time of the primitive church. Concerning the number and names of these, Melito in his letter to Onesimus declares how, returning into the parts where these things were done and preached, he diligently inquired there concerning the books of the Old Testament, the names of which he subscribes, and sends to him as follows: the five books of Moses, (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy), Joshua, the Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings (Samuel and Kings), two books of Chronicles, the Psalms, Proverbs of Solomon, the book of Wisdom, the Preacher, the Song of Songs, Job, the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Twelve Prophets in one book, Daniel, Ezekiel, Ezra. And thus much of this matter which I thought to record here. For it is not unprofitable for these later times, to understand what in the first times was received and admitted as authentic, and what otherwise.

To return to the apologies of Apollinaris and Melito, it is uncertain whether the persecution at that time was stayed by the occasion of these apologies, or whether it was through the writing of Athenagoras, a philosopher and legate of the Christians. But this is certain, that after the death of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, his son Lucius Antoninus Commodus succeeded (A.D. 180), who reigned thirteen years.

In the time of Commodus, although he was an incommodious prince to the senators of Rome, there was notwithstanding, some rest from persecution through the whole church of Christ. By what occasion is not certain. Some think that it came through Marcia, the emperor’s concubine, who favored the Christians. But however it came, the fury of the raging enemies was then somewhat mitigated, and peace was given by the grace of Christ to the church throughout the whole world. At this time the doctrine of the gospel influenced the hearts of all sorts of people, and drew them to the true religion of God, insomuch that many, both rich and noble personages of Rome, with their whole families and households, joined themselves to the church of Christ.

The Emperor Commodus, upon one of his birthdays, having called the people of Rome together, clothed himself with great royalty. He had his lion’s skin upon him, and offered sacrifices to Hercules and Jupiter, causing it to be proclaimed through the city, that Hercules was the patron and defender of the city. There was at the same time in Rome, Vincentius, Eusebius (not the historian), Peregrinus, and Potentianus. These were learned men and instructors of the people. Following the steps of the apostles, they went about from place to place where the gospel was not yet preached, converting the Gentiles to the faith of

Christ. Hearing of the madness of the emperor and of the people, they began to reprove their idolatrous blindness. In the villages and towns, they taught all who heard them, to believe upon the true and only God, to come away from such worshipping of devils, and to give honor to God alone, who alone is to be worshipped. They exhorted them to repent and be baptized. One Julius, a senator, upon hearing their preaching, was converted with others to the religion of Christ. But hearing of this, the emperor caused these new converts to be apprehended, and compelled to sacrifice to Hercules. When they stoutly refused to do so, after diverse and grievous torments, they were at last pressed to death with leaden weights.

Julius, being a senator of Rome, and now won by the preaching of these blessed men to the faith of Christ, soon invited them home to his house. Being more fully instructed by them in the Christian religion, he believed the gospel, and was baptized with all his family. He did not keep his faith close and secret, but with a marvellous and sincere zeal, openly professed it, wishing and praying that it might be given to him by God, not only to believe in Christ, but also to hazard his life for him. The emperor, hearing that Julius had forsaken his old religion and become a Christian, immediately sent for him. He said, “O Julius, what madness has possessed you, that you fall from the religion of your forefathers, who acknowledged and worshipped their gods, and now embrace a new and foolish kind of religion of the Christians?” Julius, having a good occasion to show his faith, gave an account of it to the emperor, and affirmed that Hercules and Jupiter were false gods, and how those who worship them would perish with eternal damnation. The emperor, hearing how Julius condemned and despised his gods, was very angry. He immediately committed him to the master of the soldiers, a very cruel and fierce man. He charged him either to see Julius sacrifice to Hercules, or if he still refused, to slay him. Julius, continuing steadfast in the faith, was beaten to death with cudgels.

The Fifth Persecution.

After the death of Commodus, Pertinax reigned but a few months, after whom succeeded Severus (A.D. 193), under whom the fifth persecution was raised against the Christian saints. He reigned eighteen years, and for the first ten years was very favorable to the Christians. Afterward, through sinister suggestions and malicious accusations of the malignant, he was so incensed against them, that proclaimed that the Christians should no longer be tolerated. Thus the rage of the emperor being inflamed against them, a great persecution was stirred up on every side, whereby an infinite number of martyrs were slain about A.D. 205, as Eusebius records in his sixth book. The crimes and false accusations objected against the Christians were partly touched on before, such as sedition and rebellion against the emperor, sacrilege, murdering infants, and eating raw flesh.⁷⁵ It was also objected against them that they worshipped the head of an ass; I can find no certain cause from which this charge arose, except perhaps, from the Jews. They were also charged with worshipping the sun, either because they assembled together before the sun rose, singing their morning hymns to the Lord; or else because they prayed towards the east. But they were specially accused because they would not worship idolatrous gods.

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The place where the force of this persecution most raged was Africa. The number who suffered was innumerable. The first was Leonides, the father of Origen, who was beheaded. Origen still being young, was fervently attached to the doctrine of Christ's faith, by the operation of God's heavenly providence, and partly by the diligent education of his father.

⁷⁵ Likely misperceiving baptism as drowning, and the Lord's Supper as eating flesh and blood.

He brought him up from his youth to be most studious in all good literature, but especially in the reading and exercise of the holy Scripture. In this he had such inward and mystical speculation, that many times he would ask his father questions about the meaning of this or that place in the Scripture, so much so that his father would often uncover his breast as he was asleep, and kiss it, giving thanks to God who had made him so happy a father of such a happy child. After the death of his father, all his goods having been confiscated by the emperor, Origen, along with his poor mother and six brethren, was brought to such extreme poverty, that he sustained both himself and them by teaching school. At length, having grown weary of the profession, he transferred his study exclusively to the knowledge and seeking of divine Scripture, and such other learning as was conducive to that.

Those who write about the life of Origen, testify that he was of a quick and sharp wit, very patient in labor, learned in various tongues, of a sparse diet, a strict life, and fasting. He was often in danger of being stoned by the multitude; and sometimes by the provision of Christian men who had his house guarded with soldiers, for the safety of those who daily came to hear his readings. Among others who came to him and were his hearers, was Plutarch, who died a martyr; and with him Serenus, his brother, who was burned; Heraclides and Heron, who were both beheaded; another Serenus, who was also beheaded; Rhais; and Potamiana, who was tormented with pitch poured upon her, and martyred with her mother, Marcella, who also died in the fire.

Besides these who suffered in this persecution of Severus, was one Andoclus, whom Polycarp had sent into France. Because he had spread the doctrine of Christ there, he was apprehended by Severus, first beaten with staffs and bats, and afterwards beheaded.

About the same time, Ireneus (c. 130-200) was martyred with a great multitude of others, for the confession and doctrine of Christ. Ireneus was a great writer, and great searcher of all kinds of learning. After the martyrdom of Photinus, he was appointed bishop of Lyons, where he continued for about twenty-three years. In the time of Ireneus, the state of the church was greatly troubled, not only by outward persecution, but also by diverse sects and errors then stirring within, against which he diligently labored and wrote much. The nature of this man, well agreeing with his name (peaceful), was such that he ever loved peace, and sought to settle disagreements when any controversy arose in the church. Therefore, when the question of keeping the Easter day was renewed in the church between Victor, bishop of Rome, and the churches of Asia. When Victor would have excommunicated them as schismatics, for disagreeing with him in this, Ireneus, with other brethren of the French church — sorry to see such a contention among brethren for such a trifle — assembled themselves together in a council. They directed that their letter, with their common consent subscribed, be sent to Victor, entreating him to stay his purpose, and not proceed in excommunicating his brethren for that matter. Though they themselves agreed with him in observing Easter Sunday as he did, yet with great reasons and arguments, they exhorted him not to deal so rigorously with his other brethren. This followed the ancient custom of their country in that regard. And besides this, he wrote diverse other letters abroad concerning the same contention, declaring the excommunication of Victor to be of no force.

Not long after Ireneus, followed Tertullian (160-230), a man who was expert both in Greek and Latin, having great gifts in disputing, and in eloquent writing, as his books evidence, and as the commendation of all learned men testifies.

God raised up such men from time to time, as pillars and stays for his poor church, as He raised up Tertullian in these dangerous days of persecution. For when the Christians were vexed with wrongs, and falsely accused by the Gentiles, Tertullian, took their cause in hand,

and defended them against their persecutors, and against their slanderous accusations. He declared that they were falsely accused and wrongfully persecuted, not for any desert of theirs, but only for the hatred of their name. And yet he proves in the same apology, that the religion of the Christians was not *impaired* by persecution, but rather *increased*. He says,

“The more we are mown down by you, the more we rise up. The blood of Christians is seed. For what man, in beholding the painful torments, and their perfect patience, will not search and inquire what is the cause? And when he has found it out, who will not agree to it? And when he agrees to it, who will not desire to suffer for it? Thus this sect will never die, but the more it is cut down, the more it grows. For every man seeing and wondering at the sufferance of the saints, is moved even more by this to search for the cause; in searching, he finds it; and in finding, he follows it.”

Thus Tertullian, in this time of persecution, defended the innocence of the Christians against the blasphemy of the adversaries. And moreover, for the instruction of the church, he compiled many works; some are extant, some are not to be found. Notwithstanding the great learning and many virtues of this worthy man, certain errors and blemishes are noted in his doctrine. This, by the way, will be sufficient to admonish the reader never to look for perfection in any man in this world. However excellent he may be, some blemish or other joins itself with him.

And now, to return again to the order of bishops of Rome. After Eleutherius, succeeded Victor (A.D. 185). This Victor was a great stirrer in the controversy of Easter day. He would have proceeded in excommunication against the churches of Asia, had not Ireneus, with the counsel of his brethren, repressed his violence. As to that controversy about Easter in those days of the primitive church, the original cause of it was recorded by Eusebius, Socrates,⁷⁶ Platina, and others. It is certain that the apostles, being only attentive to the doctrine of salvation, gave no heed to the observation of days and times. Nor did they bind the church to any ceremonies and rites, except those things mentioned in Acts 15. 29, such as “blood, and things strangled.” These were ordained then by the Holy Spirit, and not without a most urgent and necessary cause, as partly touched on earlier in this history. For when the murdering and blood of infants was commonly charged by the heathen persecutors against the Christians, they had no other argument to help themselves, nor to refute the adversary, except their own law, by which they were commanded to abstain not only from all men’s blood, but also from the blood of all common beasts. And therefore, that law seems to be given by the Holy Spirit, and it continued in the church so long as the cause — that is, so long as the persecutions of the heathen Gentiles continued. Besides these, we read of no other ceremonies or rites which the apostles greatly regarded. Rather, they left such things free to the liberty of Christians, every man exercising his own discretion for using or not using them. So that, concerning all the ceremonial observations of days, times, places, meats, drinks, clothing, and other such things, the diversity among men was not greatly noted, nor was any uniformity greatly required.

The doctrine of Christian liberty remained whole in the church till the time of Victor. Nor did the violence of Victor take such effect, except that the doctrine of Christian liberty was defended and maintained by means of Ireneus and others. And so it continued in the church till after the Council of Nice.

But to return to Victor again, we will show what diversity there was in observing the day of Easter. The question of Easter was first advanced in the time of Pius (r. 140-161). He

⁷⁶ Socrates of Constantinople (c. 380-439), also known as Socrates Scholasticus, was a church historian.

decreed the observation of that day to be changed from the customary fourteenth day of the moon, in the first month, to the next Sunday after. After him came Anicetus, Soter, and Eleutherius, bishops of Rome, who also determined the same. Against these stood Melito, bishop of Sardis, Polycarp, and as some think, Egesippus, with other learned men of Asia. Polycarp, sent by the brethren of Asia, came to Rome to confer with Anicetus in that matter. After long debating, they could not agree, and yet they both communicated together with reverence, and separated in peace.

[45] A.D. 193-222.

And so the celebration of Easter day remained an indifferent thing in the church till the time of Victor. Following after Anicetus and his fellows, and chiefly stirring in this matter, he endeavored by all means to draw, or rather to subdue the churches of Asia to his opinions. He thought, moreover, to excommunicate all those bishops and the churches of Asia, as heretics and schismatics, who disagreed from the Roman order, except that Ireneus restrained him from doing so (A.D. 191). Thus, the uniformity of keeping that holy day, first began to be required as a necessary thing; and all who dissented from the bishop and tradition of Rome were counted as heretics and schismatics.

With Victor, stood Theophilus, bishop of Caesarea, Narcissus of Jerusalem, Ireneus of Lyons, Palmas of Pontus, Banchillus of Corinth, the bishop of Ostroena, and others. All of them condescended to have the celebration of Easter on that Sunday, partly because they wished to differ from the Jews in all things as much as they might, and partly because the resurrection of the Lord fell on the same day.

On the contrary side there were various bishops in Asia, of whom the principal was Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus. Being assembled with a great multitude of bishops and brethren of those parts, and by the common assent of the rest, he wrote to Victor, and to the church of Rome, declaring that from the beginning they had ever observed that day unchanged, according to the rule of Scripture, that nothing be added to or taken from it. They alleged, moreover, the examples of the apostles, and the holy fathers, their predecessors, such as Philip the apostle, with his three daughters at Hieropolis; also John the apostle and evangelist at Ephesus, Polycarp at Smyrna, Thraseas, bishop and martyr at Eumenia; likewise Sagaris, bishop and martyr at Laodicea; holy Papius and Melito at Sardis. Besides these, seven bishops, also of his own kindred and ancestors, all of whom observed the solemnity of Easter day, in the same manner that we do now.

Victor, not a little upset with this, again threatened them by letter, with violent excommunication (being more bold upon authority than wise in his commission). By the wise handling of Ireneus and other learned men, the matter was stayed, and Victor was otherwise persuaded. What the persuasions of Ireneus were, partly appear in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* (lib. 5. cap. 2(j)), to this effect: That the variance and difference of ceremonies is no strange matter in the church of Christ, as this variety is not only in the day of Easter, but also in the manner of fasting, and in other usages among the Christians. For some fast one day, some two days, some fast more. And this varying mode of fasting in the churches began not only in our time, but was among our fore-elders. And yet, despite all this diversity, they were in unity among themselves, and so should we be. Nor does this difference in ceremonies hinder, but rather commends the unity of faith. And he brings forth the examples of the fathers — of Telesphorus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter, Eleuthenus, and such others, who neither observed the same usage themselves, nor prescribed it to others. And yet notwithstanding, they kept Christian charity with those who came to communicate with them, not observing the same form of things which they observed. This appeared by

Polycarp and Anicetus. Although they did not agree in one uniform custom of rites, they did not refuse to have communion together, the one giving reverence to the other. Thus, the controversy being taken up between Ireneus and Victor, the matter remained free till the time of the Nicene council. After Victor, Zephirinus succeeded in the See of Rome (about A.D. 203). Two epistles are ascribed to this Zephirinus; but as to the epistles of other Roman bishops, I say and truly suppose that neither the style nor the matter contained in them, nor the state of the time, warrant us to think of them other than as forged letters. They were letters not written by these fathers, nor in those times, but were craftily and wickedly packed in by some who, to set up the primacy of Rome, have most pestilently abused the authority of these holy and ancient fathers, in order to deceive the simple church.

Septimus Severus (145–211), the persecutor, reigned eighteen years. About the latter time of his reign he came with his army into Britain where, after many conflicts with the Britons in the north, he cast up a ditch with a mighty wall made of earth, turf, and strong stakes, to the length of 132 miles from one side of the sea to the other, beginning at the Tyne and reaching to the Scottish sea. This being done, he moved to York and died there (A.D. 211), leaving his two sons Basianus (surnamed Caracalla), and Geta, joint emperors.

After Caracalla and Macrinus, Heliogabalus, or Elagabalus (c. 203–222), succeeded to the empire. He may be called a monster rather than a man, so prodigious was his life in all gluttony and filthiness. Not to pass by his sumptuous vestures, he would only wear those of gold and most costly silks; his shoes glittering with precious stones finely engraved; he never wore one garment twice. He was never served two days in a row with one kind of meat; some days his company was served with the brains of ostriches, and another day with the tongues of popinjays and other sweet singing birds. When he was near the sea he never ate fish; but in places far distant from the sea, his whole house was served with the most delicate fishes. At one supper he was served with 7000 fishes, and 5000 fowls. He sacrificed young children, and preferred the most abandoned characters to the highest offices in the state, such as public dancers, minstrels, charioteers, and such like. In a word, he was an enemy to all honesty and good order. And when he was foretold by his sorcerers and astronomers, that he would die a violent death, he provided ropes of silk to hang himself, swords of gold to kill himself, and strong poison in precious caskets to poison himself, if he were forced to it. Moreover, he made a high tower, having the floor of boards covered with gold plate and bordered with precious stones. He would throw himself down from this tower if he were pursued by his enemies. But, notwithstanding all his provision, he was slain by the soldiers, drawn through the city, and cast into the Tiber, after he had reigned two years and eight months, as Eutropius witnesses; others say four years.

This Heliogabalus, having no children, adopted as his son and heir, Aurelius Alexander Severus, the son of Mammea. He began to reign A.D. 222, and continued thirteen years. He is much commended as being virtuous, wise, gentle, liberal, and hurtful to no man. Among his other virtues, it also appears that he was friendly and favorable to the Christians. And thus this good emperor continued the space of thirteen years.

During the reign of Alexander Severus, although the church of Christ did not have perfect peace, it had at least some tranquility from persecution. Even so, Tiburtius and Valerianus (the husband of Cecilia) were converted at this time, both noblemen of Rome. They remained constant in the faith to the end, and suffered martyrdom. It is written of Cecilia, that after she had brought Valerian her husband, and Tiburtius his brother, to the knowledge and faith of Christ, and made them constant unto martyrdom with her exhortations, she was apprehended and brought to the idols to do sacrifice. When she

abhorred to do this, she was to be presented before the judge to have the condemnation of death. In the meantime, the sergeants and officers who were around her, beholding her exceptional beauty and prudent conversation, began with many persuasive words to solicit her to favor herself, and her excellent beauty, and not cast herself away, etc. But she so replied to them with reasons and godly exhortations, that by the grace of Almighty God, their hearts began to kindle; and at length they yielded to that religion which before they had persecuted. Perceiving this, she desired of the judge a little respite. Her request being granted, she sent for Urbanus, the bishop, to come to her house, to establish and ground her household in the faith of Christ.

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And so they were baptized, with diverse others, both men and women, numbering (as the history says) 400 persons. Among them was one Gordian, a nobleman. This done, the blessed martyr was brought before the judge, where she was condemned, and enclosed in a hot bath. But remaining there a whole day and night without any hurt, she was brought out again, and beheaded.

Various others are said to have suffered martyrdom under this same Alexander Severus. One such was Agapetus, aged fifteen years. Being apprehended and condemned at Preneste in Italy because he would not sacrifice to idols, he was assailed with sundry torments: — first, scourged with whips, then hung up by the feet, and after having hot water poured on him, he was at last thrown to the wild beasts.

Also, with this same Agapetus is numbered Calepodius, a minister of Rome. His body was first drawn through the city of Rome, and afterwards cast into the Tiber.

Then follows Pammachius, a senator of Rome, with his wife and children, and others, both men and women, numbering forty-two; also, another noble senator of Rome, named Simplicius. All of them together, in one day, had their heads struck off, which were hung at various gates of the city, as a terror to others, that none should profess the name of Christ.

Besides these, Quiritius also suffered, a nobleman of Rome. He, with his mother Julia, and a great number more, were likewise put to death.

Also, Tiberius and Valerianus, citizens of Rome and brothers, suffered at the same time, being bruised and broken with bats, and afterwards beheaded.

Also, Martina, a Christian maiden. After diverse bitter punishments, being constant in her faith, she suffered in like manner by the sword.

The Sixth Persecution.

Emperor Alexander Severus, after a commotion in Germany, was murdered, along with his mother Mammea. Maximinus Thrax was then chosen to be emperor, only by the will of the soldiers, and against the mind and authority of the senate (A.D. 235). He raised up the sixth persecution against the Christians, especially against the teachers and leaders of the church. He thought he might vanquish the rest sooner, if the captains were removed out of the way. In the time of this persecution, Origen wrote his book on martyrdom. This book, if it were extant, would give us some knowledge of those who suffered in this persecution, who are now unknown. No doubt they were a great number, and would have been still greater, had the provident mercy of God not shortened his days, and bridled his tyranny. For Maximinus reigned but three years. After him succeeded Gordian (A.D. 238), a man no less studious for the utility of the commonwealth, than he was mild and gentle to the Christians. This

Gordian,⁷⁷ after he had governed the empire of Rome with much peace and tranquility for six years, was slain by Philip, the emperor who followed him.

In the days of these emperors recited above, Pontianus was bishop of Rome. He succeeded next after Urban (A.D. 230). He was banished under Maximinus, and died in the beginning of the reign of Gordian. In his decretal epistles (which seem likely to be forged), he appears very devout, following the example of other bishops. He upheld the dignity of priests, and of clergymen, saying that God has them be so familiar with him, that *by them* He accepts the offerings and oblations of others, forgives their sins, and reconciles them to Himself. Also, he says that they “make the body of the Lord with their own mouth,” and give it to others, etc. How this doctrine stands with the testament of God, and the glory of Christ, let the reader use his own judgment.

In the same time, other notable fathers were raised up in the church, such as Philetus, bishop of Antioch, and after him Zebenus, bishop of the same place.

To these also may be added Ammonius, the schoolmaster of Origen and the kinsman of Porphyry, who was a neo-Platonic philosopher and great enemy of Christ. As Ammonius left various books in defense of Christ’s religion, so too he constantly persevered in the doctrine of Christ, which he had received in the beginning.

After the decease of Pontianus, bishop of Rome, succeeded Anterius. Because he caused the acts and deaths of the martyrs to be written down, he was put to martyrdom himself, by Maximinus the judge. Next to this bishop was Fabian, of whom more is to be said hereafter.

Hippolytus too was a bishop and a martyr. He was a great writer, and left many works to the church. He lived about A.D. 230. Prudentius,⁷⁸ in his *Peristephanon*, mentions great heaps of martyrs buried in groups of 60. He speaks also of Hippolytus, and says that he was drawn with wild horses through fields, dales, and bushes, and describes a pitiful story.

After the Emperor Gordian, the empire fell to Philip (A.D. 244), who with his son Philip, reigned about six years. This Philip, with his son and all his family, was christened and converted by Fabian and Origen. By letters, they exhorted him and Severa his wife, to be baptized. He was the first of all the emperors to bring Christianity into the imperial seat. However, Pomponius Letus reports him to be a dissembling prince. This is certain, that Philip was slain for his Christianity, along with his son, by Decius (one of his captains).

The Seventh Persecution.

Philip being slain, Decius invaded the crown (A.D. 249). A terrible persecution was moved by him against the Christians. The occasion of his hatred and persecution against them was chiefly because the treasures of the emperor had been committed to Fabian.

This Fabian, being a married man (as Platina writes), was made bishop of Rome after Anterius. He remained in this function till the time of Decius. Either because Philip had committed his treasures to Fabian, or because of the hatred Decus bore towards Philip, he caused Fabian to be put to death. Moreover, he sent out his proclamation into all quarters, that all who professed the name of Christ should be slain.

Origen wrote one of his works to this Fabian. This Origen (as stated earlier) was bold and fervent in assisting, comforting, exhorting, and kissing the martyrs who were imprisoned

⁷⁷ This Gordian is different from the nobleman mentioned above.

⁷⁸ Aurelius Prudentius Clemens (c. 348-413) was a Roman Christian poet. *Peristephanon*, or "Crowns of Martyrdom," is a collection of 14 of his poems about these martyrs.

and suffered for the name of Christ. Despite the danger to his own life, he continued teaching, writing, confuting, exhorting, and expounding, for about of fifty-two years. Origen sustained great persecutions, but especially under Decius, as Eusebius testifies — declaring that for the doctrine of Christ, Origen sustained bands and torments in his body, racking with bars of iron, dungeons, and terrible threats of death and burning.

Epiphanius writes that being urged to sacrifice to idols, and taking the boughs in his hand with which the heathen usually honored their gods, he called upon the Christians to carry them in honor of Christ. The church of Alexandria, not approving of this act, removed him from their communion. Origen, driven from Alexandria by his shame and sorrow over this, went into Judea. There, being among the congregation in Jerusalem, he was requested by the priests and ministers (he being a priest as well) to make some exhortation in the church. He refused a great while. At length, being constrained by importunate petition, he rose up. And turning the book, as though he would have expounded some place of the Scripture, he only read this verse: “God says to the wicked, what right have you to declare My statutes, or to take My covenant in your mouth?” Psa 50.16. Having read this, he shut the book, and sat down weeping and wailing, the whole congregation also weeping and lamenting with him.

Nicephorus, and others who write about this persecution under Decius, declare that its horror was so great, and the martyrs who suffered under it so innumerable, that it is as easy to number the sands of the sea, as to recite the particular names of those whom this persecution devoured.

[47] A.D. 222-249.

Although it would be hard to insert here all the persons who died in this persecution, yet those who are most notable in history, I will briefly touch upon, by the grace of Him for whose cause they suffered.

Alexander was appointed bishop of Jerusalem, until a very aged man. He was governor of that church over forty years, till the time of Decius. Then being brought from Jerusalem to Caesarea, into the judgment place, after a constant and evident confession of his faith made before the judge, he was committed to prison, and there he finished his life.

Babylas, bishop of Antioch, also died in prison under Decius.

We read in Chrysostom, a noble and long history of one Babylas, a martyr who about these times was put to death for not allowing a certain emperor to enter into the temple of the Christians after a cruel murder was committed. The history of the murder is this: There was a certain emperor, who upon the conclusion of peace with a certain nation, had received for hostage or surety of peace, the son of the king, on condition that he would not be molested by them, and that they should never be vexed by him. The son was of a young and tender age. Upon this, the king’s son was delivered to the emperor, not without great care and fear of the father. The emperor, contrary to the promise, caused the son to be slain a short time after. This horrible act being committed, the tyrant with all haste would enter into the temple of the Christians, where Babylas was bishop or minister. He withstood the emperor, telling him that he might not approach that place. The emperor was incensed. In a great rage, he immediately bid that Babylas should be laid in prison with as many irons as he could bear, and from there, shortly after, to be brought out to death and execution. Babylas, going boldly to his martyrdom, desired after his death to be buried with his irons and bands, and so he was.

Bk. I. The 300 years after Christ – Ten Persecutions (64-324)

In the city of Antioch, Vincentius speaks of forty young maidens who suffered martyrdom in the persecution of Decius.

In the country of Phrygia, Vincentius also speaks of one Peter, who was apprehended, and suffered bitter torments for Christ's name, under Optimus the proconsul. And in Troas other martyrs likewise suffered there.

Also in Babylon, diverse Christian confessors were found by Decius, and led away into Spain, to be executed there.

In the country of Cappadocia, in like manner, Germanus, Theophilus, Caesarius, and Vitalus suffered martyrdom for Christ. Mention is also made of Polychronius, bishop of Babylon, and in Pamphilia, of Nestor, the bishop, who all died martyrs.

At Perside, Olympiades and Maximus; in Tyrus, a maiden named Anatolia, and Audax, also gave up their lives for the testimony of Christ's name.

Moreover, in his sixth book, Eusebius recounts from the epistles of Dionysius Alexandrinus, many who suffered at Alexandria. These extracts from Dionysius, as they are cited in Eusebius, I thought it good here, for the ancientness of their author, to insert his words in our language, as Dionysius wrote them to Fabius, bishop of Antioch:

“This persecution,” he says, “did not begin with the proclamation set forth by the emperor, but it began a whole year before, by the occasion and means of a wicked person, a soothsayer and a follower of wicked arts. Coming to our city here, he stirred up the multitude of the heathen against us, and incited them to maintain their own old superstition. By this means they obtained full power to prosecute their wicked purpose, and declared their entire religion to consist in the idolatrous worship of devils, and in our destruction. First flying upon a certain priest of ours, named Metra, they apprehended him, and brought him out to make him speak according to their wicked blasphemy. When he would not do this, they fell upon him with staffs and clubs; and with sharp reeds, they pricked his face and eyes. Afterward, bringing him out into the suburbs, they stoned him to death there. Then they took a faithful woman called Quinta, and brought her to the temple of their idols, to compel her to worship with them. When she refused to do this, and abhorred their idols, they bound her feet, and dragged her through the whole street of the city on the hard stones. Dashing her against millstones, and scourging her with whips, they brought her to the same place in the suburbs, as they did with the other before. There she likewise ended her life. This done, in a great outrage, and with a multitude running together, they burst into the houses of the religious and godly Christians, spoiling, sacking, and carrying away all that they could find of any value. Things which were of less value, and made of wood, they brought into the open market, and set them on fire. In the meantime, the brethren withdrew themselves, accepting the spoiling of their goods patiently and no less joyfully than those did of whom St. Paul testifies in Heb 10.32-34.

“Among the rest who were taken, there was a certain woman, well-stricken in years, named Apollinia, whom they brought out. Dashing all her teeth out of her jaws, they made a great fire before the city, threatening to cast her into it unless she would blaspheme with them and deny Christ. Pausing a little at this, as someone who would consider with herself, she suddenly leaped into the midst of the fire, and there was burned.

“There was also one Serapion, whom they took in his own house. After they had assailed him with sundry kinds of torments, and had broken almost all the joints of his body, they cast him down from an upper loft; and so he completed his martyrdom. Thus there was no way left for us to escape, either privately or publicly, either by day or by night. All the people made an outcry against us, that unless we uttered words of blasphemy, we would be drawn to the fire and burned. This outrageous tumult endured a certain time; but at length, as the Lord would

have it, the miserable wretches fell into dissension among themselves. They turned the cruelty they exercised against us, upon their own heads. And so we had a little breathing time while the fury of the heathen people was assuaged by this occasion.

“Shortly after this, word was brought to us that the state of the empire, which before was somewhat favorable to us, was altered and changed against us, putting us in great fear. And soon followed the edict of the emperor, so terrible and cruel, that according to the forewarning of the Lord, the elect (if it had been possible) might have been subverted by it. Upon that edict such fear came over us all, that there were many, especially of the richer sort, who came running to participate in those impure and idolatrous sacrifices — some led by the occasion, some drawn by their neighbors citing them by name. Others came trembling and shaking, not as men who would sacrifice, but who might be sacrificed themselves, the multitude mocking them. Some again came boldly to the altars, declaring themselves never to have been of that profession of Christ. It is said of them, that they will hardly be saved. Of the rest, some followed one part, some another; some ran away, some were taken. And of these, certain ones continued constant in their bands and torments. Others, after long imprisonments and before they came before the judge, renounced their faith. Some also, after they suffered torments, afterward revolted. But others, blessed and valiant pillars of the Lord’s, and fortified with constancy agreeable to their faith, were made faithful martyrs of the kingdom of God.

“The first of these was Julian, a man diseased with the gout. Not able to walk, he was carried by two men. This old man, confessing the Lord with a perfect faith, was laid upon camels, scourged, and at length cast into the fire, and so was consumed, with great constancy.

“As these were going to their martyrdom, there was a certain soldier, who in their defense took part against those who railed upon them. For this reason, the people cried out against him. He too was apprehended, and being constant in his profession, he was immediately beheaded.

“Likewise one Macar, being admonished and exhorted by the judge to deny his faith, and not agreeing to the judge’s persuasions, was burned alive.

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“After these suffered Epimachus, and one Alexander. Being long detained in prison and in bands, after innumerable pains and torments with razors and scourges, they were also cast into the burning tire with four women, who all ended their martyrdom there.

“Also Amnionarion, a holy maiden, whom the cruel judge had long and bitterly tormented because she had assured him before, that no punishment would cause her to yield to his request. And constantly displaying this, she likewise suffered martyrdom with two other women. One of them was an aged matron named Mercuria; the other was called Dionysia, a mother of many fair children — yet she did not love them above the Lord. After they could not be overcome by any torments of the cruel judge, he was rather ashamed and confounded to be overcome by feeble women. At length being past all feeling by their torments, they were slain with the sword.

“Heron, Ater, and Isidorus, also with Dioscorus, a child of fifteen years, were crowned with the same crown of martyrdom. The judge began with the child, thinking him to be won more easily with words to entice him, than with torments to constrain him. But the child persisted immovable, giving way neither to persuasions nor punishment. The rest, after the judge had grievously tormented them, and being constant in their profession, he committed to the fire. The judge, greatly marvelling at Dioscorus for his wise answers and grave constancy, dismissed him, sparing his age to a longer respite. This Dioscorus is still with us at present, awaiting a long trial.

Bk. I. The 300 years after Christ – Ten Persecutions (64-324)

“Nemesion was accused as a companion of thieves. But being acquitted before the centurion, he was then accused of Christianity. And for that reason he was brought to the president, who most unrighteously tormented and scourged him double, and at length burned him to death among the thieves, making him a blessed martyr.

“There were standing before the tribunal seat, certain of the warriors or knights, whose names were Animon, Zenon, Ptolomeus, Ingenuus. And with them was a certain aged man called Theophilus. When a Christian man was examined, seeing him ready to decline and fall away out of fear, they almost burst for sorrow within themselves, making signs to him with their hands, to be constant. This being noted by all the bystanders, they were ready to lay hold of them. But making this unnecessary, they pressed up of their own accord before the bench of the judge, professing themselves to be Christians. Both the president and the benchers were all astonished. The Christians, who were judged, were more emboldened to suffer, and the judges were thereby terrified. This done, the Christians departed from the place, glad and rejoicing for the testimony that they had given of their faith. Many others besides, in other cities and towns, were rent and torn asunder by the heathen. Among them, I will speak of one as worthy of memory.

“Ischirion, who was in the service of a certain nobleman, was commanded by his master to make sacrifice. For not obeying, he was rebuked. After persisting in his, he was grievously threatened with sharp and menacing words. At last his master, when he could not prevail against him, taking a stake or pike in his hands, ran him through and slew him.

“What shall I say of the multitude of those who, wandering in deserts and mountains, were consumed with hunger, thirst, cold, sickness, thieves, or wild beasts, of whose blessed victory those who are still alive are witnesses? Among their number, I will speak of one named Cheremon, bishop of Nilus, an aged man. He with his wife, fleeing to the mountains of Arabia, never returned again, nor could ever be seen afterward. Though they were diligently sought for by their brethren, neither they nor their bodies were found. There were many others who, fleeing to the mountains of Arabia, were taken by the Arabs. Some of them could scarcely be ransomed with much money; some were never heard of to this present day,” (Eusebius, lib. 6. cap. 41, 42, etc.)

Thus much out of the epistles of Dionysius. But in another place, Dionysius wrote to Germanus about his own dangers and that of others, which were sustained in this persecution, and before in the persecution of Decius. He says,

“I behold before the sight of God — I do not lie, and He knows I do not lie — how my having no regard for my own life, and not without the motion of God, I fled and avoided the danger of this persecution. Yes, and also before that, the persecution of Decius raged against us, Sabinus the same hour sent a farmer to seek me. At that time I remained at home and waited three days for his coming. Those three days being past, on the fourth day, the Lord God so willing and commanding me to flee, and also marvellously opening the way for me, I went out, together with my children and many other brethren. And this did not come from myself, but it was the work of God’s providence — the sequel of those things declared, in which afterward, I was perhaps not unprofitable to some,” etc.

Bergomensis relates about many martyred under Decius, such as Meniatius, who suffered at Florence; Agatha, a maiden of Sicily, who is said to have suffered many and bitter torments — with imprisonment, beatings, famine, racking, and being rolled upon sharp shells and hot coals.

It is impossible to recite all who suffered in this persecution, when whole multitudes went into wildernesses and mountains, wandering without succor or comfort. Some starved with

hunger and cold; some were consumed with sickness; some were taken and carried away by barbarous thieves.

Mention is made of Triphon, a man of great holiness, and constancy in his suffering, who for his confession of Christ's name, was afflicted with diverse and grievous torments, and at length put to death with the sword.

When Decius had erected a temple in the midst of the city of Ephesus, compelling all who were in the city to sacrifice to the idols, seven Christians were found, who refused the idolatrous worship. They were accused to the emperor of being Christians. They openly professed and did not deny that they were Christians; but because they were soldiers in the emperor's service, respite was given them for a time to deliberate with themselves, till the return of the emperor, who was then going to war. In the meantime, the emperor having departed, they took counsel together, and went and hid themselves in some secret caves of mount Celius. The emperor returned. After a great search had been made for them, and hearing where they were, the emperor caused the mouth of the cave to be closed up with heaps of stones, so that they would not be able to get out, and would starve within. And thus those good men were martyred.

Agathon of Alexandria rebuked certain persons for scornfully deriding the dead bodies of Christians. He was decried and railed on by the people. Afterward he was accused to the judge, and condemned to lose his head.

Also Paulus and Andreas, whom the proconsul of Troas gave to the people, being scourged and dragged out of the city, were trampled to death with the feet of the people.

Among others who suffered under this wicked Decius, mention is made of Justin, a priest, and of Nicostratus, a deacon; also Fortius, a priest, who is reported to have been the one who converted Philip, the emperor.⁷⁹

Abdon and Sennas, two noblemen, were accused to Decius and brought to Rome because they had buried the Christians. There, being commanded to sacrifice to dead idols, they would not obey, and were given to the wild beasts to be devoured.

One Secundianus was accused of being a Christian. When he stoutly maintained this profession, he was commanded to prison. As the soldiers were leading him to the jail, Verianus and Marcellianus confessed themselves to be Christians, and were apprehended. Being commanded to sacrifice, they spit on the idols, and so they were beaten with truncheons, and afterwards were hanged and tormented, having fire set to their sides.

To give the history of the lives and sufferings of all who were martyred in this terrible persecution, would be too long, almost infinite. Therefore to briefly repeat the names of those we find alleged out of a treatise of Bede,⁸⁰ will be sufficient at this time:

[49] A.D. 249-251.

Under Decius suffered Hippolitus and Concordia, Hiereneus and Abundus, Victoria, a maiden, all being noble personages of **Antioch**. Bellias, *bishop* of the city of **Apollonia**, Leacus, Tirsus, and Gallinetus. Nazanzo, Triphon in a city of Egypt called **Tamas**, Phileas *bishop*, Philocomus, with many others in **Perside**, Philcronius a *bishop* of **Babylon**; Thesiphon *bishop* of **Pamphilia**, Neffor *bishop* in **Corduba**, Pannenius a priest, with diverse more. In the province called **Colonia**, there were Circensis, Marianus, and Jacobus. In **Africa**,

⁷⁹ Earlier Philip was said to be converted by Fabian and Origen.

⁸⁰ Called the Venerable Bede (672-735), a monk, and author of the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*.

Nemesianus, Felix, Rogatianus a *priest*, Felicissimus. At **Rome**, Jovinus, Basileus, also two maidens named Ruffina and Secunda, Tertullianus, Valerianus, Nemesius, Sempronianus and Olympius. In **Spain**, Teragon. At **Verona**, Zeno the bishop. At **Caesarea**, Marinus and Archemius. In the town of **Milan**, Privatus the *bishop*; Theodorus, surnamed Gregorius, *bishop of Pontus*.

Now I have sufficiently recorded those who, under this tempest of Decius, gave their lives to martyrdom for the testimony of Christ. It remains that a few words also be spoken about those who, out of fear or frailty in this persecution, shrank and slid from the truth of their confession. Serapion was one of their number; he was a very aged man. Dionysius Alexandrinus writes about him to Fabius, declaring that this Serapion was an old man, who lived a sincere and upright life among them for a long time; but at length he fell. Serapion often desired to be received back, but no one listened to him, for he had sacrificed before. Not long after this, he fell into sickness; for three days he remained unable to speak, and he was benumbed in all his senses. The fourth day, beginning to recover a little, he called to him his sister's son, and said, "How long, how long (my son) have you held me here? Make haste, I pray you, that I may be absolved. Call some of the ministers to me." And so, saying no more, he held his peace again, just as dumb and speechless. The boy ran to the minister (it was then night). Being sick, the minister could not come with the messenger, but said that as he "always desired that those who lay dying, if they wished to be received and reconciled, and especially if they required it earnestly, then they should be admitted, so that they may depart from here with a better hope and confidence." Therefore he gave the boy a little of the eucharist, desiring him to crumble it into the cup, and pour it into the mouth of the old man. The boy returned, bringing the holy eucharist with him. As he was now near at hand, before he entered in, Serapion, the old man speaking again, said, "Have you come, my son?" The messenger answered, "The priest is sick, and cannot come; but do as he desires, and let me go." The boy mixed the eucharist, and poured it softly into the mouth of the old man. After he had tasted a little, the old man immediately gave up the ghost.

Dionysius, in his epistles, also writing to Fabius, and lamenting the great terror of this persecution, declares how many worthy and notable Christians — from fear and horror of its great tyranny — showed themselves to be feeble and weak men. Of these, some out of dread, some of their own accord, others after they had suffered great torments, afterwards revolted from the constancy of their profession. Also, St. Cyprian testifies with great sorrow, how a great number voluntarily fell away themselves, at the first threatening of the adversary, neither compelled nor thrown down with any violence by the enemy, but from their own weakness. He says, "Neither tarrying while the judge put incense in their hands, nor before any blow was struck in the field, they turned their backs, and played the cowards; not only coming to their sacrifices, but pretending to come without compulsion. Moreover they brought their infants and children, who were either put into their hands, or taken of their own accord. And they exhorted others to do the same, following their example."

Novatian Heresy

On the occasion of these and others, when a great number fell and renounced their faith during this persecution of Decius, the heresy of Novatus first rose up. In these days, he made a great disturbance in the church, holding the opinion that those who once renounced the faith for fear of torments, and offered incense to the idols, even if they repented, they could not afterward be reconciled, nor admitted to the church of Christ. Novatus was the first priest under Cyprian at Carthage. Afterward, by stirring up discord and factions, he began to disturb the bishopric of Cyprian. He appointed there a deacon, against the bishop's

mind or knowledge, and also to allure and separate certain of the brethren from the bishop, all which is declared by Cyprian (lib. 2. epist. 8.) After this, going to Rome, Novatus created a like stir with Cornelius, who testifies in Eusebius (lib. 6. cap. 43.), that Novatus set himself up as bishop of Rome, *against* Cornelius, who was the lawful bishop. He allured to himself, to be his adherents, four good men and holy confessors, who had suffered great torments for their confession, whose names were Maximus, Urbanus, Sidonius, and Celerinus. After this, he enticed three simple bishops around the coasts of Italy, to move to Rome, under the pretense of making an end of certain controversies then in hand. He then caused them to lay hands on him, to make him bishop, which they did. Thus, there were two bishops together in one church of Rome, Novatus and Cornelius. This was unseemly, and contrary to the discipline of the church. From this arises the true cause and meaning of St. Cyprian, writing in his epistles so much about having one bishop, and of the unity to be kept in ecclesiastical government. Along those same lines, Cornelius himself writes of one bishop, saying, “He did not know if there ought to be one bishop in a catholic church,” etc.

This, by the way (and not out of the way I trust), I have briefly touched on, to expose and refute the cavilling of the papists, who falsely apply these passages of Cyprian and Cornelius to maintain the pope’s supreme mastership alone, over the whole *universal* church of Christ in all places. But the meaning of these two bishops was otherwise, how every *particular* catholic church or diocese ought to have one bishop over it, not that the whole world ought to be subject to the dominion of the one who is bishop of Rome. Now, to return to the history again.

Novatus thus being bishop, did not take a little upon himself, endeavoring by all means to defeat Cornelius, and to draw the people away from him. It went so far, that when Novatus came to distributing the offerings, and should have given every man his part, he compelled the simple persons, every man, to swear that they would adhere to him. Before they could receive the benediction, and receive from the collections or oblations, holding both their hands in his, he spoke these words to them: “Swear to me by the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you will not leave me and go to Cornelius.” He held their hands till, instead of saying Amen (at the receiving of the bread), they would swear to him, “I will not return to Cornelius.” Note here, by the way, that the Latin prayer book in this place (Christoferson’s translation) craftily leaves out the word *bread*. This story was written in Eusebius, and also contained in Nicephorus (although not in the same words, yet in effect drawn from him). Both authors declare in plain words, that the sacrament of the body of Christ is termed with the plain name of *bread*, following the consecration.

And thus much of Novatus, against whom, as Eusebius testifies, a synod of sixty bishops was held at Rome in the time of Cornelius, under the reign of Decius (A.D. 251). From this it may be supposed that the heat of the persecution at that time had somewhat calmed.

After Fabian, Cornelius next succeeded to the bishopric of Rome. Cyprian notes he was a worthy bishop, and much recommended for his great virtue. He was chosen to that office, not so much by his own consent, as by the full agreement both of the clergymen, and also of the people.

During this persecution of Decius, he humbled himself very constantly, and faithfully, sustaining great conflicts with the adversaries. By the commandment of Decius, he was banished. Afterwards he sent his letters to Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and Cyprian sent letters back to him. This coming to the ears of Decius, the emperor, he sent for Cornelius, asking him how he dared be so bold to show such stubbornness, that neither caring for the

gods, nor fearing the displeasure of his princes, he dared give and receive letters from others, against the commonwealth?

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Answering him, Cornelius cleared himself, declaring to the emperor, that he had, indeed, written letters, and received answers concerning the praises and honoring of Christ, and the salvation of souls, but nothing regarding any matter of the commonwealth. Then Decius, moved with anger, commanded him to be beaten and scourged, and so brought to the Temple of Mars, either to do sacrifice there, or to suffer the extremity. But Cornelius, willing to die rather than commit such iniquity, prepared himself for martyrdom. And so, commending the charge of the church to Stephanus, his archdeacon, he was brought to the way of Appius, where he ended his life in faithful martyrdom.

And thus much of the tyranny of this wicked Decius against God's saints. Now to touch also upon the power of God's vengeance and punishment against Decius. As we commonly see that a vehement tempest does not continue long, so it happened with this tyrannical tormentor. Reigning but two years, he was slain with his son in battle with the barbarians. As he had slain Philip and his son before, so he was slain with his son, by the righteous judgment of God himself.

Nor did the just hand of God plague the emperor only, but also all the persecutors of his word throughout all the provinces and dominions. The Lord, immediately after the death of Decius, sent such a plague and pestilence among them, lasting for ten consecutive years, as is horrible to hear about, and almost incredible to believe. Although the greatness of the plague also touched the Christians somewhat, yet it scourged the heathen idolaters much more. Besides that, the order of their behavior in the one and in the other was very different. For, as Dionysius records, the Christians, through brotherly love and piety, did not refuse to visit and comfort one another, and to minister to others as need required, notwithstanding that it was great a danger to them. For there were many who, in closing up the eyes of the dead, in washing their bodies, and interring them in the ground, succumbed to the disease, and soon followed them to their graves. Yet all this did not keep them from doing their duty, and showing mercy to one another. Whereas the heathens, contrarily, being extremely assailed by the hand of God, were struck by the plague, but did not consider the Striker, nor did they consider their neighbor. But every man, shifting for himself, did not care for others, but those who were infected, they would throw out of doors, half dead, to be devoured by dogs and wild beasts. Some they let die within their houses, without any succor. Some they suffered to lie unburied, for no man dared come near them. And yet, notwithstanding their care not to come near the sick, the pestilence followed them wherever they went, and miserably consumed them.

The Emperor Gallus, with his son Volusianus, succeeded Decius (A.D. 251). He was somewhat quiet in the beginning of his reign. Yet shortly after, following in the steps of Decius, he proclaimed edicts in the same manner, for the persecution of Christians. Under this edict, we have no number of the martyrs who suffered, but this persecution was only in the banishment of bishops or guides of the flock. We do not read of other sufferings or executions, for the terrible pestilence followed immediately, keeping the barbarous heathen otherwise occupied.

Cyprian, now banished from Carthage, had no less care of his flock and of the whole church than if he had been present with them. And therefore he never ceased in his epistles to continually exhort and call upon them to be constant in their profession and patient in their

afflictions. Among others whom he comforted in his banishment (although in that case, he was to be comforted himself), were certain men condemned to labor in the mines. Their names were Nemesianus, Felix, and Lucius, with other bishops, priests, and deacons. Cyprian writes to them, “It is no shame, but a glory; it not to be feared, but to be rejoiced at; to suffer banishment or other pains for Christ.” And confirming them in this, or rather commending them, he signifies how worthily they show themselves to be like valiant captains of virtue, exciting both by the confessions of their mouth, and by the suffering of their bodies, the hearts of the brethren to Christian martyrdom. Their example was and is a great confirmation to many, both women and children, to follow alike. As for punishment and suffering, it is (he says) a thing that is not execrable to a Christian.

For a Christian man’s breast, whose hope wholly consists in the cross, dreads neither bat nor club. Wounds and scars of the body are ornaments to a Christian man. They bring no shame or dishonesty to the party, but rather prefer and free him with the Lord. And although in the mines where the metals are dug, there are no beds for Christian men’s bodies to take their rest, yet they have their rest in Christ; and though their weary bones lie upon the cold ground, yet it is no pain to lie with Christ. Their feet have been fettered with bands and chains, but he is happily bound by man, whom the Lord Christ looses. Happily he lies tied in the stocks, whose feet are thereby made swifter to run to heaven. Nor can any man tie a Christian so fast, that he will not run much faster for his garland of life. They have no garments to save them from cold, but whoever puts on Christ is sufficiently clothed. Do their hungry bodies lack bread? ‘But man does not live by bread alone, but by every word proceeding from the mouth of God.’ ^{Mat 4.4} Your deformity will be turned to honor, your mourning to joy, your pain to pleasure and infinite felicity. And if this grieves you, that you cannot now employ your sacrifices and oblations in your customary way, yet your daily sacrifice does not cease, which is a contrite and humble heart — as when you daily offer up your bodies, a living and a glorious sacrifice to the Lord, which is the sacrifice that pleases God. ^{Rom 12.1} And though your labor is great, yet the reward is greater, which is most certain to follow. For God, beholding and looking down upon those who confess His name, approves them in their willing mind, helps them in their striving, crowns them in their victory — rewarding in us what He has performed, and crowning in us what He has perfected.

With these and similar comfortable words he animates his brethren, admonishing them that they are now on a joyful journey, hasting apace to the mansions of the martyrs, there to enjoy after this darkness an eternal light and brightness greater than all their sufferings, according to the apostle’s saying, ‘The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us,’ ^{Rom 8.18}.

And with like words of sweet comfort and consolation, writing to Seagrius and Rogatianus who were in prison and bonds for the testimony of truth, He encourages them to continue steadfast and patient in the way in which they have begun to run. For they have the Lord with them, their helper and defender, who promises to be with us to the world’s end. And therefore he exhorts them to set before their eyes immortality in their death, and everlasting glory in their pain. Of them it is written, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” ^{Psa 116.15} Though they suffered torments before men, yet their hope is filled with immortality. Being vexed in small things, they will be well-requited in great matters. “For the Lord has tried them as gold in the fire.” ^{Zec 13.9} He admonishes them that it is appointed from the beginning of the world, that righteousness should suffer here in secular conflicts. For thus was just Abel slain in the beginning of the world, and after him all just and good men, the prophets also, and the apostles sent by the Lord himself. To them the Lord first

gave an example in himself, teaching that there is no coming to his kingdom, except by that way which he entered himself, saying, “He that loves his life shall lose it.” ^{Joh 12.25} And again, “Do not fear those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.” ^{Mat 10.28} And St. Paul likewise admonishes all those who would be partakers of the promises of the Lord, to follow the Lord. He says, “If we suffer (endure), we shall also reign with him.” ^{2Tim 2.12}

At the same time, Lucius, bishop of Rome, was banished. He succeeded next after Cornelius, (about A.D. 253), although he did not continue long in this banishment, but returned home to his church.

[51] A.D. 251-259.

After him next came Stephen, bishop of Rome. After the reign of Gallus, and his son Volusianus, came Emilianus. He slew them both by civil sedition, and succeeded in their place. He reigned but three months and was also slain. Next after him, **Valerian**, and his son **Galienus**, advanced as co-emperors (r. 253-260).

Regarding the changing of these emperors, the persecution which first began by Decius, and afterward slacked in the time of Gallus, was now extinguished for a time. This was partly for the great plague reigning in all places, and partly by the change of emperors — although that was not very long. For Valerian, in the beginning of his reign and for three or four years after, was very courteous and gentle to the people of God, and well-accepted by the senate.

Nor were there any of all the emperors before him, even of those who openly professed Christ, who showed themselves so loving and familiar toward the Christians as he did. In so much that his whole court was filled with holy saints, and servants of Christ, and godly persons; so that his house might seem to be made a church of God. But by the malice of Satan, through wicked counsel, these quiet days did not endure very long. For in the process of time, Valerian was charmed or *incensed* by a certain Egyptian, a chief ruler of the heathen synagogue of the Egyptians. ⁸¹ He was so far infatuated and bewitched, that through the detestable provocations of that devilish Egyptian, he was wholly turned to abominable idols, and to execrable impiety — in sacrificing young infants, quartering bodies, and dividing the entrails of new-born children. Proceeding in his fury, he initiated the eighth persecution against the Christians, those whom the wicked Egyptian could not endure (A.D. 257).

The Eighth Persecution.

The chief original cause of this persecution is partly signified before, namely through the influence of the wicked Egyptian. But just as this was the outward and political cause, so St. Cyprian shows us other causes:

We must understand and confess that this oppression and calamity which has wasted for the most part our whole company, and daily consumes it, rises chiefly from our own wickedness and sins, while we do not walk in the way of the Lord, nor observe his precepts left to us for our institution. The Lord observed the will of his Father in all points. But we do not observe the will of the Lord, having our whole mind and study set upon lucre and possessions, given to pride, full of emulation and dissension, void of simplicity and faithful dealing, renouncing this world in word but not in deed, every man pleasing himself and displeasing all others. And therefore we are thus scourged, and worthily so. For what stripes and scourges do we not deserve, when the confessors themselves (those who have withstood the trial of their confession) and those who ought to be an example to the rest of well-doing, keep no discipline. And therefore these torments come because there are some who are proudly puffed up with

⁸¹ [Outside of Foxe's History, there is no evidence of this unnamed instigator.](#)

this swelling and unmannerly boasting of their confession, those who do not easily send us to the crown, except by the mercy of God. Some being taken away by quickness of death, escape the tediousness of punishment. But we suffer these things for our sins and deserts.

Finally, at the end of the epistle Cyprian adds,

“The Lord grants to many of his servants to foreshow the restoring of His church, and of the stable quiet of our health and safeguard. After rain, fair weather; after darkness, light; after stormy tempest, peaceable calm — to foreshow both the fatherly help of His love, and the habitual and ancient glory of his divine Majesty, by which the blasphemy of the persecutor shall be repressed, the repentance of those who have fallen shall be reformed, and the strong and stable confidence of those who stand firm — they shall rejoice and glory.”

As to the crimes and accusations in this persecution that were laid to the charge of the Christians, this was the principal one: that they refused to worship idols and emperors; and that they professed the name of Christ. Besides these accusations, all the calamities and evils that happened in the world were imputed to the Christians — such as wars, famine, and pestilence. Cyprian eloquently defends the Christians against all these accusations.

Cyprian

Cyprian was born in Carthage. He was an idolater and Gentile, given to the study and practice of the magical arts. In his first book and second epistle, he himself writes an eloquent history of his conversion and baptism. His conversion was through the grace of God, and the means of Cecilius, a priest, and on the occasion of hearing the history of the prophet Jonas. Immediately upon his conversion, he distributed among the poor all his substance. And being ordained a priest, he was not long after constituted bishop of the church of Carthage. He was courteous and gentle, loving and full of patience, and yet strict and severe in his office, as the cause required. He was most loving and kind toward his brethren, and took great pains in helping and relieving the martyrs.

Now a few words regarding his exile and martyrdom. He himself states that he voluntarily absented himself, lest he do more hurt than good to the church by his presence. And he writes to his brethren from the desolate places of his banishment, in which he was often sought. But after he returned from exile in the reign of Valerian, he was banished the second time by Paternus, the proconsul of Africa. But when Paternus was dead, Galienus Marimus succeeded him. Finding Cyprian in a garden, he caused him to be apprehended, and to be brought before the idols to offer sacrifice. Upon his refusing, the proconsul condemned him to have his head cut off. Cyprian patiently and willingly submitted his neck to the stroke of the sword. And so this blessed martyr ended this present life in the Lord (A.D. 259).

Now to say something of his works and books left behind him. Although all that he wrote does not remain — some are missing, some again are not written in his own name — those which are certainly his may be soon discerned by their style and sense. Such is the eloquence of his phrase, the gravity of his sentence, his vigor of wit, his power in persuasion, so differing from all others, that he cannot easily be imitated. Of these extant books, their eloquence is worthily commended by the school of rhetoricians, and their authority is of no less reputation — not only in this age of the church, but also among the ancient fathers.

As we have set forth the commendation of this blessed martyr Cyprian, we must take heed that we do not incur the old and common danger which the Papists run into. Their fault is almost always to be immoderate and excessive in their proceedings, making too much of everything.

Thus in speaking of the Holy Sacraments, they make more of them than the nature of sacraments require — not using them, but abusing them; not referring or applying them, but adoring them; not taking them as godly things (which they are), but taking them for God himself; turning religion to superstition, the creature to the Creator, and the sign to the thing signified, etc. They likewise do this to the church and to the ceremonies of the church, to general councils, to the blessed virgin Mary mother of Christ, to the bishop of Rome, etc. They are not content to attribute only what is sufficient, but they exceed the bounds of judgment and of verity. They judge so of the church and general councils, as though they never could, or never did err in any jot. That the blessed mother of Christ was blessed among women, and a virgin full of grace, the Scriptures and truth allow. But to say that she was born without original sin, or to make an advocate of her or the mother of mercy, there they run further than truth will bear. The ceremonies were first ordained to serve only for the sake of order. But at length they have attributed so much to them, that they have placed a great part of our religion in them, yes, and also of our salvation. And what thing is there in which the Papists have *not* exceeded?

Therefore, to avoid this common error of the Papists, we must beware in commending the doctors and writers of the church, so that truth and consideration go with our commendation.

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For though it cannot be denied that Cyprian and other blessed martyrs were holy men, yet notwithstanding, they were *men*. That is, they were those who might have, and did have their falls and faults. There were men, I say, and not angels or gods. They were saved by God, and were not saviors of men, nor patrons of grace. And though they were also men of excellent learning, yet with their learning they also had their errors. And though their books are (as they should be) of great authority, yet they should not be equal with the Scriptures. And although they said well in most things, it is not therefore enough; what they said must stand for truth. That preeminence of authority only belongs to the word of God, and not to the pen of man. For of men and doctors, however famous, there is none who is free from fault.

In **Origen**, even though in his time the admiration of his learning was singular, how many things there are which the church now does not hold to be true. For examining him by the Scriptures, where he said well, they allow him; but where otherwise, they leave him. In **Polycarp**, the church has corrected and altered what he held concerning the celebration of Easter. Nor can holy and blessed **Ignatius** be defended in all his sayings —such as where he makes fasting on Sunday or the Sabbath as great an offense as killing Christ himself (Ignat. Epist. ad Philip). This is contrary to this saying of St. Paul, “Let no man judge you in food or in drink,” Col 2.16. **Ireneus** held that man was not made perfect in the beginning. He seems also to defend free will in man, in spiritual things. He says that Christ suffered after he was fifty years old. **Tertullian** is noted as a *millenarian*, and also as a *Montanist*. He held with Justin, Cyprian and others, that the angels fell first for the love of women. He defends the free will of man after the corruption of nature, inclining also to the error of those who defend the possibility of keeping God’s law. **Justin** also seems to have inclined to the error of the millenarians, also of the fall of certain angels by women, of the free will of man, of the possibility of keeping the law, and other such things. Nor was **Cyprian** wholly exempt from error. Contrary to the doctrine of the church, he held with rebaptizing those who were baptized before by heretics. The same may likewise be said of **Augustine**, of

Ambrose, Jerome, and Chrysostom — that all of them had their peculiar faults and errors. It would be too long and outside our purpose, to treat them all at present.

About this time Sixtus II, bishop of Rome, also suffered. Being accused of being a Christian, he was brought with his six deacons to the place of execution, where he, with Nemesius and the deacons [one of whom was Lawrence], were beheaded and suffered martyrdom.

St. Lawrence

Now let us enter upon the history of that most constant and courageous martyr of Christ, St. Lawrence, whose words and works deserve to be as fresh and green in Christian hearts, as the flourishing laurel tree. This thirsty heart, longing for the Water of Life, was desirous to pass to it through the narrow door of bitter death, when he saw his vigilant shepherd, Sixtus, led to his death like a harmless lamb, by harmful tyrants.

Let us draw near to the fire of martyred Lawrence, so that our cold hearts may be warmed by it. The merciless persecutor, Valerian, understanding this virtuous Levite to be not only a minister of the sacraments, but also a distributor of the church riches, promised himself a double prey by the apprehension of one poor soul. First with the rake of avarice to scrape to himself the treasure of poor Christians, and then with the fiery fork of tyranny, to so toss and turmoil them, that they would grow weary of their profession. With furious face and cruel countenance, the greedy wolf demanded where this deacon Lawrence had stored the substance of the church? Craving three days' respite, Lawrence promised to declare where the treasure might be had. In the meantime, he caused a good number of poor Christians to be congregated. So when the day of his answer had come, the persecutor strictly charged him to stand to his promise. Then valiant Lawrence, stretching out his arms over the poor, said:

“These are the precious treasure of the church. These are the treasure indeed, in whom the faith of Christ reigns, in whom Jesus Christ has his mansion-place. What more precious jewels can Christ have, than those in whom he has promised to dwell? For so it is written, ‘I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was homeless, and you lodged me.’ ^{Mat 25.35} And again; ‘Look, what you have done to the least of these, you have done to me.’” ^{Mat 25.40}

Oh, what tongue is able to express the fury and madness of the tyrant's heart! How he stamped, he stared, he ramped, he fared like someone out of his wits. His eyes glowed like fire, his mouth foamed like a boar, his teeth grinned like a hell-hound. Now he might be called, not a reasonable man, but a roaring lion. He cried,

“Kindle the fire! Spare no wood. Has this villain deluded the emperor? Away with him— away with him. Whip him with scourges, jerk him with rods, buffet him with fists, brand him with clubs. Does the traitor jest with the emperor? Pinch him with fiery tongs! Gird him with burning plates. Bring out the strongest chains, and the fire-forks, and the grated bed of iron. Put it on the fire! Bind the rebel hand and foot. And when the bed is hot, on with him! Roast him, broil him, toss him, turn him. On pain of our high displeasure, let every man do his office, O you tormentors.”

The word was no sooner spoken, than all was done. After many cruel handlings, this meek lamb was laid, I will not say on his fiery bed of iron, but on his soft bed of down. So mightily God wrought with his martyr Lawrence; so miraculously God tempered his element, the fire, that it was not a bed of consuming pain, but a pallet of nourishing rest to Lawrence. Not

Lawrence, but the emperor, might seem to be tormented — the one broiling in the flesh, but the other burning in the heart.

O rare and unaccustomed *patience!* O invincible *faith*, that not only does not burn, but by unspeakable means recreates, refreshes, establishes, and strengthens those who are burned, afflicted, and troubled. And why do you so mightily comfort the persecuted? Because, through you they believe in God's infallible promises. By you this glorious martyr overcomes his torments, vanquishes this tyrant, confounds his enemies, confirms the Christians, sleeps in peace, and reigns in glory. The God of might and mercy grant us grace, by the life of Lawrence, to learn to live in Christ, and by his death, to learn to die for Christ. Amen.

Such is the wisdom and providence of God, that the blood of his dear saints (like good seed) never falls in vain to the ground, but it brings some increase. So it pleased the Lord to work at the martyrdom of this holy Lawrence, that by the constant confession of this worthy and valiant deacon, a certain soldier of Rome, being converted to the same faith, immediately desired to be baptized by him — for which he was called to the judge, scourged, and afterwards beheaded.

Dionysius

Under the same Valerian, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria (248-264), suffered much affliction and banishment, along with certain other brethren. He writes of this himself. Dionysius, with three of his deacons, came to Emilianus, the Senate president, who signified to them the clemency of his emperors. They had granted them pardon of life, so that they would worship the gods of the empire, trusting, as he said, that they would not show themselves ungrateful to the clemency of those who so gently exhorted them. To this Dionysius said: "We worship not many, nor diverse gods, but only that one God, who is the Creator of all things, and has committed to our lords, Valerian and Galien, the government of their empire. We make our prayers to Him incessantly, for their prosperous health and continuance." Then the president said: "And what hurt is there, if you worship both *your* God, whatever god he is, and *our* gods also?" Dionysius answered, "We worship none other, but as we have said." Emilianus the president, said, "I see you are ungrateful men, and do not consider the benignity of the emperor. Therefore you will no longer remain in this city, but will be sent to the parts of Libya. Nor will it be lawful for you to gather your assemblies, nor to resort to your burial places, as you usually do. And if any of you are found outside of the places where you are appointed, it will be at your peril."

[53] A.D. 259-270.

Dionysius, speaking of himself, says:

"Although I was sick, he so strictly urged me to depart, that he would not give me one day's respite. Yet neither am I altogether absent from the society of the Lord's flock. I am absent in body, yet present in spirit. ^{1Cor 5:3} And a great congregation remained with me, as well as those brethren who followed me out of the city, and also those who remained there out of Egypt. And there the Lord opened to me the door of his word. Although at first I was persecuted and stoned among them, afterward a great number of them turned from their idols, and were converted to the Lord; and so the word was preached to them. After we had accomplished this ministry there, the Lord removed us to another place. For Emilianus transferred us to the sharper and stricter places of Libya."

Moreover, Dionysius mentions in his epistle, those who were afflicted in this persecution of Valerian. He says,

“It would be superfluous here to recite the particular names of all our brethren slain in this persecution. But this is certain, that there were men, women, young men, maidens, old wives, soldiers, simple innocents, and all sorts and ages of men. Some of these with scourgings and fire, some with the sword, obtained the victory and got the crown. Some continued a great time, and yet have been reserved. In their number I am reserved up to now, till some other time known to the Lord, who says, ‘In the time accepted I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you,’ etc. ^{Isa 49.9} Nor does the president yet cease to cruelly murder those who are brought before him, tearing some with torments, imprisoning and keeping some in custody, commanding that no man should come to them, also inquiring who had resorted to them. Yet, notwithstanding, God comforts the afflicted with cheerfulness, and with the daily resort of the brethren.”

Regarding Dionysius himself, the histories report that he survived all these troubles and persecutions, by the providence of God, and lived to about the year A.D. 268. And so he departed in peace at a great age.

At the same time in Caesarea Palestine, Priscus, Malchus and Alexander also suffered. These three, dwelling in that country and good men, saw the valiant courage of the Christians to so boldly risk, so constantly stand, and so patiently suffer in this persecution. They began to accuse their own cowardly negligence, to see others so zealous and valiant, and themselves so cold and faint-hearted. So, consulting and agreeing with each other, they came to Caesarea, declared what they were, and obtained the end they came for, being given to the wild beasts.

There also suffered in Africa, three constant maidens. Maxima, Donatilla, and Secunda. They had vinegar and gall given for their drink, then were tried with scourges. After that they were tormented upon the gibbet, and rubbed with caustic lime, then scorched upon the fiery grid-iron, and at last cast to the wild beasts.

In Simela, a city in Italy, one Pontius was apprehended. By the command of Claudius the president, he was first hung upon the rack, and then cast to the wild beasts.

Zenon, bishop of Verona, is also said to have suffered martyrdom in the same persecution.

Fructuosus, bishop of Tarraconia, in Spain, with his two deacons, Augurius and Eulogius, also suffered martyrdom, being burned after six days’ imprisonment in this persecution. The charge of the judge to the bishop was that, “he should worship the gods whom the emperor Galien worshipped.” Fructuosus, the bishop, answered him, “No, I worship no dumb god made of stocks and blocks, whom Galien worships, but I worship the lord and master of Galien, the Father and Creator of all times, and his only Son sent down to us, of whose flock I am here the pastor and shepherd.” At this word, Emilianus answered back, “No, do not say you are, but say you were.” And he immediately commanded them to be committed to the fire, where (as said) their bands and manacles being loosed by the fire, they lifted up their hands to heaven, praising the living God, to the great admiration of those who stood by, also praying that the element might work its full force upon them, and speedily dispatch them.

And thus wicked Valerian continued in his tyranny against the saints of Christ. But all the tyrants before him, and all the oppressors of the Christians, had their deserved reward at the just hand of God “who renders to every man according to his works.” ^{Pro 24.12} So too, this cruel Valerian felt the just stroke of His hand, whose indignation he had provoked. For in making his expedition against the Persians, he fell into the hands of his enemies (A.D. 260).

There he led his wretched age in a more wretched captivity, insomuch that Sapor, the king of the Persians, used him for his riding-block. For whenever the king would mount his horse openly in the sight of the people, Valerian was brought out instead of a block, for the king to tread on his back to get onto his horse. And so this blockish butcherly emperor continued with shame and sport enough to his final end.

Eusebius, in one of his sermons, declares the cruel handling of Valerian, affirming that he was slain. He writes, “And you, Valerian, having exercised the same cruelty in murdering the subjects of God, you have thus proved to us the righteous judgment of God, in that you yourself have been bound in chains, and carried away as a captive slave, with your gorgeous purple, and your imperial attire. And at length, being commanded by Sapor, king of the Persians, to be slain and powdered with salt, you have set up for all men a perpetual monument of your own wretchedness,” etc.

Emperor Galien

Galien succeeded his father Valerian (A.D. 260). And being (it is thought) terrified by the example of his father, he removed or at least moderated the persecution stirred up by the edicts of Valerian.

By this some peace was granted under Galien to the church of Christ. Even so, there were some who suffered, one of whom was Marinus. This Marinus, being a warrior and a nobleman in Caesarea, stood for the dignity of a certain order. By right, this dignity was to fall upon him next, had not the envious ambition of the one who would follow after him, supplanted both his office and life. For this man accused Marinus of being a Christian, and therefore said that he was not to be admitted to those offices which were against their religion. Upon this, Achaius, then being judge, examined Marinus about his faith. Finding him to be a Christian indeed, and to constantly stand to his profession, he gave him three hours to deliberate and counsel with himself. At the same time in Caesarea, there was a bishop named Theotechnus. Perceiving Marinus standing in doubtful deliberation and perplexity, he took him by the hand and brought him into the church of the Christians. He laid before him a sword and a book of the New Testament, and asked him to take his free choice, which of them he would prefer. The soldier immediately without delay, ran to the book of the gospel, taking that before the sword. And thus being animated by the bishop, Marinus presented himself boldly before the judge, by whose sentence he was beheaded, and died a martyr.

After the death of Galien, followed Claudius, a quiet emperor (A.D. 268). This Claudius reigned but two years. After him came his brother Quintilian, who reigned only seventeen days, and was succeeded by Aurelian (A.D. 270). Under him Orosius⁸² numbers the ninth persecution against the Christians.

The Ninth Persecution.

From the captivity of Valerian, the church was in some quietness till the death of Quintilian, as declared above. After him Aurelian possessed the crown. In the beginning of his reign, he showed himself to be a moderate and discreet prince. He was severe in nature, rigorous in correcting, dissolute in manners, and just as his beginning was not unfruitful to the commonwealth, so neither was he any great disturber of the Christians. He not only tolerated their religion, but also their councils. Notwithstanding this, in the progress of time his nature, somewhat inclinable to severity, was altered to a plain tyranny. This was done

⁸² Paulus Orosius (c. 375-420): Roman priest, historian, and theologian; student of Augustine of Hippo.

through the sinister motions and instigations of certain men around him. He first showed this tyranny beginning with the death of his own sister's son. After that, he proceeded either to arouse, or at least to purpose persecution against the Christians.

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But the merciful working of God soon overthrew that wicked purpose of the emperor. For just as the edict or proclamation was to be announced for persecuting the Christians, and the emperor was now ready to subscribe the edict with his hand, he was suddenly terrified by lightning. And he so ceased from his wicked tyranny. Not long afterward he was slain (A.D. 275). Thus Aurelian intended rather than effected persecution.

After Aurelian, the succession of the empire fell to Tacitus, who reigned only six months. His brother Florianus succeeded him, who reigned only two months; and after him followed Marcus Aurelius, surnamed Probus (A.D. 276).

Mention was made before of Eusebius, whom God stirred up to visit and comfort the saints who were in prison and bonds, and to bury the bodies of the blessed martyrs — not without great peril of his own life. Afterwards he was made bishop of Laodicea. But before he came to Laodicea to be bishop there, while he remained at Alexandria, the city was besieged by the Romans. In this siege, half of the city sided with the Romans, and the other half withstood them. Eusebius was in that part which went with the Roman captain. Anatholius, governor of the school of Alexandria, was with the other half that resisted the Romans. This Anatholius, perceiving the citizens to be in miserable distress of famine and destruction, sent to Eusebius, who was then with the Romans, and certified to him the lamentable penury and peril of the city, moreover instructing him what to do in the matter. Eusebius, understanding the case, repaired to the captain requesting this favor of him: that so many as would flee the city from their enemies, might be allowed to escape and pass freely. This was granted. As Eusebius was thus laboring with the captain, Anatholius, on the other side, labored with the citizens, saying, I will counsel you in this miserable lack of things, to remove from your city all the women, young children, and aged men, with those others who are feeble and impotent, and not allow them to perish here with famine. The senate hearing this, and understanding moreover the grant of the Roman captain promising them their safety, consented to the proposal of Anatholius. Taking especial care of those who belonged to the church, he calls them together, telling them what they should do, and what had been obtained for them, which caused them to leave the city. At their coming out, Eusebius was ready to receive and refresh them. Thus, not only they, but the whole city of Alexandria was preserved from destruction.

By this short history of Eusebius and Anatholius, the reader may partly understand what the practice of the prelates was in those days in the church, that they were then only employed in saving life, and succoring the people among whom they lived. If we compare this practice to the practice of our later prelates of the church of Rome, I suppose no little difference will appear.

The Emperor Marcus Aurelius Probus was a wise and virtuous prince, and no less valiant in martial affairs than fortunate in their success. During this time we read of no persecution stirring in the church, but much quietness in matters of religion as well as in the commonwealth.

Carus, with his two sons, succeeded next after Probus in the empire (A.D. 282).

All this time we read of no great persecution stirring in the church. It was in quiet and tranquility up to the nineteenth year of Diocletian (A.D. 303). So that the peace of the church which God gave to his people, seems to continue for over forty-four years. During this time of peace and tranquility, the church of the Lord mightily increased and flourished. Even among the emperors themselves there were many who not only bore good will and favor to those of our Christian profession, but also committed to them offices and governance over countries and nations. What need is there to speak of those who not only lived under the emperors in liberty, but were also familiar in the court with the princes themselves, and entertained with great honor and special favor beyond the other servitors of the court? As Dorotheus, with his wife, children, and whole family, was highly accepted and advanced in the palace of the emperor. Also Gorgonius, and in like manner, various others who were held in great estimation with their princes, for their doctrine and the learning which they professed. Bishops of cities and dioceses were also held in the same reverence by the presidents and rulers where they lived. They not only allowed them to live in peace, but also held them in great regard so long as they kept themselves upright, and continued in God's favor. Who is able to number at that time the mighty and innumerable multitudes and congregations assembling together in every city, and the notable concourses of those who daily flocked to the common oratories to pray? For this reason, not being able to be contained in their old houses, they had large churches built new from the foundation. Eusebius says the church of Christ grew and shot up daily more and more, spreading through all quarters, which neither the envy of men could infringe, nor any devil enchant, nor the crafty policy of man supplant, so long as the protection of God went with his people.

But the common nature of all men, being of itself unruly and untoward, always seeks and desires prosperity, and yet it can never use prosperity well. It would always have peace, and yet having peace, it always abuses it. So likewise, it happened with these men who through great liberty and prosperity, began to degenerate, and to work against one another, striving and contending among themselves on every occasion — bishops against bishops, and people against people, arousing hatred and sedition one against another. And thus, while they were given only to the study of contentions, threatenings, emulations, mutual hatred and discord, — every man seeking his own ambition, and persecuting one another — then, I say, the Lord, according to the voice of Jeremiah, took away the beauty of the daughter of Sion, ^{Jer 6.2} and the glory of Israel fell down from heaven. Nor did He remember the footstool of his feet in the day of His wrath. ^{Psa 110.1} And the Lord overturned all the beautiful ornaments of Israel, and destroyed all her gorgeous buildings. And according to the words of the psalm, He subverted and extinguished the testament of his servant, and profaned his sanctuary in the destruction of his churches, and in laying waste its buildings. ^{Psa 74.7} He struck down to the ground and diminished her days; and over all this He poured confusion upon her. All these things were fulfilled upon us, when we saw the temples razed from the top to the ground, and the sacred Scriptures burnt in the open marketplace, and the pastors of the church hiding themselves, some here, some there. Others, taken prisoner with great shame, were mocked by their enemies when (also according to the saying of the prophet in another place) contempt was poured out upon the princes, and they were caused to wander, and not keep the straight path. ^{Psa 107.40}

The Tenth Persecution.

Because of all this (the wrath of God being kindled against his church) the tenth and last persecution arose against the Christians, so horrible and grievous that it makes the pen almost to tremble to write it; so tedious that there was never any persecution before or since to be compared to it for the time it continued, lasting for ten years. Although this

persecution passed through the hands of different tyrants, it principally bears the name of Diocletian, who succeeded to the empire next after Carus and his sons (A.D. 284).

After being established in the empire, he saw on every side many commotions rising up against him, which he was not well able to sustain himself. So in the beginning of his reign he chose Maximian for his colleague. These two emperors chose two other noblemen, Galerius and Constantius, whom they called *Caesars*. Galerius was sent into the eastern parts against the Persians. Constantius was sent over to our country of England, where he took Helena as his wife, the daughter of king Coill, a maiden excelling in beauty, and no less in learning. Constantine the Great was born of her.

[55] A.D. 275-303.

All this while, no persecution was yet stirred by these four princes against the church of Christ. They governed the commonwealth quietly and moderately. Therefore God prospered their doings and affairs, and gave them great victories. Because of these victories, Diocletian and Maximian, puffed up in pride, ordained a solemn triumph at Rome. After this triumph, Diocletian commanded that he be worshipped as God, saying that he was brother to the sun and moon. He adorned his shoes with gold and precious stones, and commanded the people to kiss his feet.

Not long after began the great and grievous persecution of the Christians, moved by the outrageous cruelty of Diocletian, who commanded all the churches of the Christians to be destroyed and cast to the earth, and the books of the holy Scripture be burned.

Thus, the most violent proclamations were set forth to overthrow the Christians' temples throughout the Roman empire. And this was the first edict by Diocletian. The next proclamation that came forth was for the burning of the books of the holy Scripture. This was done in the open marketplace. Then edicts were given for displacing those Christians who were magistrates, and that was done with great ignominy; also all others who ever held any office. They imprisoned those who were of the common sort, if they would not abjure Christianity, and subscribe to the heathen religion.

Not long after, new edicts were sent out, not inferior to the first in their cruelty. These were for throwing the elders and bishops into prison, and then constraining them, by various kinds of punishments, to offer to their idols. Then a great persecution followed among the governors of the church, among whom many stood manfully, passing through many exceedingly bitter torments. Many of them were tormented and examined in various ways. Some were scourged all over their bodies with whips and scourges. Some were excruciated with racks and intolerable raisings of the flesh. Some one way, and some another way, were put to death. Some again were violently dragged to the impure sacrifice; and as though they had sacrificed (when indeed they had not), they were let go. Some who neither came to their altars, nor regarded any part of their sacrifices, were still said by those who stood by, to have sacrificed. And so, suffering that false defamation of their enemies, they went quietly away. Others were carried and cast away as dead men, being but half dead. Some they cast down on the pavement, and trailing them a great distance by the legs, they made the people believe that they had sacrificed. There were others who stoutly withstood them, affirming with a loud voice that they had made no such sacrifice. Some of these said they were Christians, and gloried in the profession of that name. Some cried, saying that they neither had, nor would ever be partakers of that idolatry; and those, being punched in the face and mouth at the hands of the soldiers, were made to hold their peace; and so they were thrust out with violence. And if the saints seemed to do even a little of what their enemies would

have them do, they were made much of — although all this purpose of the adversary did not prevail against the holy and constant servants of Christ. Yet there were many of the weak sort who, out of fear and infirmity, fell away and submitted, even at the first brunt.

At the first coming down of these edicts into **NICOMEDIA** (modern Turkey), a Christian nobleman, moved by the zeal of God, after the proclamation was posted, went and took it down, and openly tore it in pieces. He did not fear the presence of the two emperors who were then in the city. For this act he was put to a most bitter death, which he endured even to the last gasp with great faith and constancy.

It can hardly be told what the number of martyrs was, and how much blood was shed throughout all the cities and regions, for the name of Christ. At that time, the bishop of Sidon was martyred. Sylvanus, the bishop of Gazensis, and thirty-nine others, were slain in the metal mines of Phoenicia. Pamphilus, the elder of Caesarea, being the glory of that congregation, died a most worthy martyr.

In **SYRIA**, all the chief teachers of the congregation were committed to prison first, which was a most heavy and cruel spectacle to behold; and also the bishops, elders, and deacons, who were all said to be men-killers, and perpetrators of most wicked facts. After that, we read of another whose name was Tirannion, who was made food for the fishes of the sea; and also of Zenobius, a good physician, who was slain with brickbats in the same place.

Eusebius mentions others who were not tormented to death, but terrified every day without ceasing. Others who were brought to the altars and commanded to do sacrifice, would rather thrust their right hand into the fire than touch the profane or wicked sacrifice. There were also some others who, before they were apprehended, would throw themselves down from steep places, lest being taken, they would commit anything against their profession. Also two fair maidens, with their mother who had carefully brought them up even from their infancy in all godliness, were long sought. At last being found, and strictly kept by their keepers, they threw themselves down headlong into a river. Two other young maidens were sisters, from a worshipful stock, and indued with many goodly virtues. They were thrown by their persecutors into the sea. But Sylvanus, the bishop of Emissa and a notable martyr, together with certain others, was thrown to the wild beasts.

The Christians in **MESOPOTAMIA** were molested with many and various torments; they were hanged up by the feet, and their head downwards, and suffocated with the smoke of a small fire; and also in Cappadocia, where the martyrs had their legs broken.

So outrageous was the beginning of the persecution which the emperor made in Nicomedia, that he did not refrain from the slaughter of the children of emperors, nor from the slaughter of the chief princes of his court, whom a little before he made as much of, as if they had been his own children. Among them was Peter, who suffered various torments, being stripped naked, and lifted up. His whole body was so beaten with whips, and torn, that a man might see his bare bones. Afterwards they mingled vinegar and salt together, and poured it on the tenderest parts of his body. And lastly, they roasted him at a soft fire, as a man would roast flesh to eat. And so this victorious martyr ended his life.

Dorotheus and Gorgonius, having great authority under the emperor, endured various torments, and then were strangled with a halter. Being in the privy chamber, they saw the grievous punishment of Peter, their household companion. Both of them exclaimed, “Why, O emperor, do you punish in Peter that opinion which is in all of us? Why is this which we all confess accounted an offense in him? We are of the same faith, religion, and judgment that he is of.” Therefore the emperor commanded them to be brought forth, and to be

tormented with the same pains that Peter was, and afterwards hanged. After them, Anthimus, the bishop of Nicomedia, having made a notable confession, and bringing with him a great company of martyrs, was beheaded. These men being thus dispatched, the emperor vainly thought that he might cause the rest to do whatever he pleased. To this end came Lucianus, the elder of the congregation of Antioch. He was martyred after he had made his apology (his defense of the faith) before the emperor. (Eusebius, lib. 8. cap. 13.)

Hermanus also, that monster, caused Serena, wife of emperor Diocletian, to be martyred for the Christian religion. The rage of persecution was so much, that all natural affections were utterly forgotten. Other martyrs of Nicomedia, such as Eulampius and Eulampia, Agape, Irene, Chionia, and Anastasia, were bound hand and foot to a post and burnt.

About that time, many Christian men were assembled together in their temple to celebrate the nativity of Christ, some of every age and sort. Caesar Maximian, thinking this a very fit occasion to execute his tyranny on the poor Christians, gave orders to burn the temple. The doors being shut and fastened all around, they came with fire. But first he commanded the crier with a loud voice to cry out that whoever would save his life should come out of the temple, and do sacrifice upon the next altar of Jupiter that they came to.

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And unless they did this, they would all be burnt with the temple. Then one stepped up in the temple, and answered in the name of all the rest, with great courage and boldness of mind. He said that they were all Christians, and believed that Christ was their only God and king, and that they would do sacrifice to him, with his Father, and the Holy Spirit; and that they were now all ready to be offered to him. With these words the fire was kindled and enveloped the temple, and some thousands of men, women, and children were burnt.

There was a city in **PHRYGIA** to which the emperor sent his edicts, that they should sacrifice to the gods and worship idols. All the citizens, the mayor, the quaestor (finance minister), and chief captain, confessed that they were all Christians. The city, upon this, was besieged and set on fire, with all the people. In **Melitina**, a region of Armenia, the bishops and elders were thrown in prison. In **Arabrace**, Eustratius was martyred. This man, beholding the constancy of the martyrs, thirsted with the desire for martyrdom, for he had secretly learned the Christian religion. Therefore he professed that he was a Christian, openly execrating the madness and vanity of the wicked heathens. He was therefore tied up, most bitterly beaten, and carried away. After that he was parched with fire put into his bowels, then basted with salt and vinegar, and lastly, he was so scorched and bemangled with sharp cutting shells, that his whole body seemed to be all one continual wound. After this he was carried away to Sebastia, where, with his companion Orestes, he was burnt.

But at **Alexandria** especially, the Christians and martyrs suffered most notable conflicts. In this persecution of Alexandria, the principal ones who then suffered were Peter, the bishop of Alexandria, with the elders there, who were most worthy martyrs — such as Faustus, Didius, and Ammonius; also, Phileas, Hesichius, Pachiminus, and Theodoras. All of them were bishops of the churches in Egypt; and besides them there were many other distinguished men. The whole legion of Christian soldiers which lay at Thebes in Egypt, under the Christian Captain Mauritius, when they would not obey the emperor's commandment regarding the worshipping of images, were decimated to death once, and then again. And at last, through the exhortation of Mauritius, they all died together like constant martyrs. Likewise, at **Antino**, diverse Christian soldiers, notwithstanding that they were seriously dissuaded from it, suffered death together. Among them were Ascla,

Philemon, and Apollonius. And also in the other parts of **AFRICA** and **MAURITANIA** there was great persecution. Also in **Sammium**, a place which Chronicon mentions, and **Sicily**, where there were seventy-nine martyrs slain for their profession of Christ.

Now let us come to **EUROPE**. At **Nicopolis**, the martyrs were most miserably and pitifully handled. Euphemia suffered in **Chalcedon**. Agricola and Vitalis at **Bohemia**. And at **Aquileia**, the emperor commanded every man to kill the Christians. Among those martyrs were Felices and Fortunatus. In all places of **ITALY** the persecution became great. In **FRANCE**, Rectionarus played the cruel hellhound. Many histories are full of his great cruelty against the Christians. And at Massilia, Maximian set forth his decree, that either they all sacrifice to the heathen gods, or else all would be slain with various kinds of torments. Therefore, many martyrs died there for the glory of Christ.

In many places of **SPAIN**, there was great persecution, such as at **Emerita**, where Eulalia suffered; and **Adula**, where Vincentius, Sabina, and Christina also suffered. At **Toletura**, Leucadia the virgin suffered; at **Caesarea Augusta**, eighteen were put to death, besides a great number of other martyrs who suffered under governor Decian, who afflicted all the coasts of Spain with persecution. Rectionarus made such a persecution at Trevers, that the blood of the Christian men who were slain ran like small brooks, and colored great and main rivers. Nor did this suffice him, but from there he sent certain horsemen with his letters, commanding them to ride into every place, and charge all those who had taken and apprehended any Christians, that they should immediately put them to death.

Bede (672-735) says that this persecution reached even to the **BRITAINS**. The *Chronicle of Martinus*, and the “Nosegay of Time,” declare that all the Christians in Britain were utterly destroyed. The kinds of death and punishment were so great and horrible, that no man is able to fully express them. In the beginning, the emperor threatened them with bonds and imprisonment. But a while later, when he began to work the matter in good earnest, he devised innumerable sorts of torments and punishments, such as whippings and scourgings, rackings, horrible scrapings, sword, and fire. A great number were put in boats, which were then sunk; they drowned in the bottom of the sea. Also, hanging them on crosses, binding them to the bodies of dead trees with their heads downward; hanging them by their middles on gallows till they died of hunger; throwing them alive to wild beasts which would devour them, such as lions, bears, leopards, and wild bulls. Pricking and thrusting them with daggers and the talons of beasts till they were almost dead; lifting them up on high with their heads downward. There were other sorts of punishments, most tragic – or rather, tyrannical and pitiful to describe: such as first binding them to trees and their boughs, then pulling and tearing apart their members and joints. Mangling them with axes; choking them with smoke by small fires; severing their hands, ears, feet, and other joints.

The holy martyrs of **Alexandria** suffered scorching and broiling with coals, not unto death, but renewed every day. The martyrs at **Antioch** were also afflicted with such torments. But in **Pontus**, the martyrs of Christ suffered other horrible punishments, fearful to be heard. Some of whom had sharp daggers thrust in their finger ends under their nails; some were sprinkled with boiling lead, having their most necessary members cut from them. Others suffered the most intolerable, and unendurable torments and pains.

Phileas, the bishop of the Thumitans, a man singularly well-learned, described in his epistle to the Thumitans, how great the persecution was which reigned in Alexandria. This epistle may be found in Eusebius (lib. viii, cap. 10). He tells how the martyrs were afflicted with many and sundry kinds of newly devised punishments. Here we will briefly recite a part:

“Because every man might torment the holy martyrs as they pleased, some beat them with cudgels, some with rods, some with whips, some with thongs, and some with cords. And this example of beating was executed with much cruelty. For some of them having their hands bound behind their backs, were lifted up on timber logs, and with certain instruments their members and joints were stretched out, upon which their whole bodies were hanging. They were subject to the will of their tormentors, who were commanded to afflict them with all manner of torments — and not on their sides only (as murderers were) but all over their bodies, thighs, and legs. They scratched them with the talons and claws of wild beasts. Others were seen hanging by one hand on the engine, by which they might feel even more the grievous pulling out of the rest of their joints and members. Others were bound to pillars with their faces turned to the wall, having no support under their feet, and then were violently drawn down with the weight of their bodies. And they suffered this, not only during the time of their examination, and while the sheriff dealt with them, but the whole day. And while the judge went thus from one to another, he appointed certain officers to attend those he left, so that they might not be let down, until either through the intolerableness of the pain, or by the extremity of the cold, they were near the point of death. Further, they were commanded not to show one spark of mercy or compassion upon us. They dealt with us so extremely and furiously, it was as though our souls and bodies should have died together.”

Thus wrote Phileas to the church where he was bishop, still in bonds, before he received the sentence of death. In the same letter, he exhorts his brethren to persist constantly in the truth of Christ after his death.

[57] A.D. 303-305.

Though all their torments were inconceivable, and notable for their horribleness, and most grievous and sharp — yet notwithstanding, these martyrs neither dismayed nor were they overcome. But rather, they were confirmed and strengthened, so cheerfully and joyfully they sustained whatever was put upon them. Eusebius says that he himself beheld the great persecution that was done in Thebaide. It went so far that the swords of the hangmen and persecutors were blunted with the great and frequent slaughter. They themselves sat down to rest from weariness, and others were obliged to take their places. Yet notwithstanding all this, the murdered Christians showed the marvellous readiness, willingness, and divine fortitude with which they were endowed. With courage, joy, and smiling, they received the sentence of death pronounced upon them, and sung even to their last gasp, hymns and psalms to God.

But there were also some who recanted, overcome with fear and threatenings, and by their own infirmities. Among them Socrates names Miletius and Athanasius.⁸³ In his second apology, he names the bishop of Licus. I will speak afterwards of the fall of Marcellinus, the bishop of Rome. For being persuaded by others, and especially of the Emperor Diocletian himself, he sacrificed to the idols, whereupon he was excommunicated. The number of the martyrs increased daily, sometimes ten, sometimes twenty were slain at once, sometimes thirty, and oftentimes sixty; and sometimes a hundred in one day — men, women, and children, by diverse kinds of death. Also Damasus, Bede, Orosius, Honorius, and others witness that within the space of thirty days, 17,000 martyrs were slain in this persecution, besides a great number who were condemned to the metal mines and quarries, with like cruelty.

At Alexandria, Peter the bishop, with 300 others were slain with axes; Gereon was beheaded at Colonia Agrippina, with 300 of his fellows; Mauritius, the captain of the Christian

⁸³ [A different Athanasius from the one at the Council of Nicea in 325.](#)

soldiers, with his fellows, 6,666. In the city of Troy, now called Xanthus, Victor with 360 of his fellows were slain. Reginus recites the names of many other martyrs, numbering 120.

As mention has been made of Mauritius and Victor, I thought it good here to insert a more particular account of them taken out of Ado and other historians, as follows.

Mauritius came out of Syria into France and Italy, being captain of the band of the Theban soldiers, numbering 6,666. He was sent for by Maximian, to go against the rebellious Bangandes. But rather, the reason of the tyrant seems to be, that he thought he might better use his tyranny upon the Christians in these quarters, than in the eastern part. These Thebans, with Mauritius the captain, after they had entered Rome, were confirmed in the faith by Marcellus the blessed bishop. They promised by oath that they would rather be slain by their enemies, than forsake that faith which they had received. At that time the Caesareans were encamped not far from the town called Ottodor, where Maximian offered sacrifice to his devils, and called all the soldiers of both east and west to do the same. He strictly charged them by the altars of his gods, that they I would fight against those rebels the Bangandes, *and* persecute the Christian enemies of the emperor's gods. This commandment was shown to the Theban host, who were also encamped about the river Rhone. But they would in no way come to Ottodor, for every man agreed to die in that place rather than either sacrifice to the gods, or bear arms against the Christians. The emperor being very angry with them, commanded every tenth man of that whole band to be put to the sword, to which they committed their necks with great joy. Mauritius himself was a great encourager to this notable and great strength of faith. He exhorted and animated his soldiers both to fortitude and constancy. Being called to the emperor, he answered him thus,

‘We are, O emperor! your soldiers; yet also, to speak freely, the servants of God. We owe to you the service of war, to Him innocency. From you we receive our labor wages; from Him the beginning of life. But in this we may in no way obey you, O emperor! so as to deny God our author and Lord, and not only ours, but your Lord likewise. If we are not so extremely forced that we offend Him, doubtless we will yet obey you, as we have done up to now. But we will rather obey Him than you. We offer here our hands against any other enemies; but to defile our hands with the blood of innocents, that we may not do. These right hands of ours have skill to fight against the wicked and true enemies; but they have no skill at all to destroy and murder the godly and citizens. We have in remembrance how we took armor in hand, *for* the defense of the citizens, and not *against* them. We fought always for justice' sake, piety, and for the health of innocents. These have been always the rewards of our perils and labor. We have fought in the contest of faith. We can in no way keep such faith with you, if we do not show the same to our God. We first swore upon the sacraments of our God, then afterward to the king; and do you think the second will avail us, if we break the first? By us you would plague the Christians; to do this feat we are only commanded by you. We are here ready to confess God is the author of all things, and we believe in his son Jesus Christ our Lord. We see before our eyes our fellows, and the partakers of our labors put to the sword, and we are sprinkled with their blood. We have not bewailed nor mourned the death of our blessed companions, but rather we have been glad, and have rejoiced at it, for they have been counted worthy to suffer for the Lord their God. The extreme necessity of death cannot move us against your majesty, nor yet will any desperation arm us against you, O emperor, though it is usual to do much in risky affairs. Behold, here we cast down our weapons, and do not resist, for we would rather be killed, than kill; and to die guiltless, than to live guilty. Whatever more you will command, appoint, and enjoin us, we are here ready to suffer — yes, both fire and sword, and whatever other torments. We confess ourselves to be Christians. We cannot persecute Christians, nor will we do sacrifice to your devilish idols.’

With this answer, the emperor, being much displeased, commanded a second time that a tenth of those who were left were to be murdered. That cruelty also being accomplished, at length, when the Christian soldiers would in no way condescend to his mind, he set upon them with his whole host, both footmen and horsemen, and charged them to kill them all. Making no resistance, but throwing down their armor, they yielded their lives to their persecutors, and offered their unprotected bodies to them, and were thus slain.

Victor was not of that band; but being an old soldier, he was dismissed for his age. Coming suddenly upon these tormenters as they were banqueting and making merry with the spoils of the holy martyrs, he was bid to sit down with them. Asking the cause of their great rejoicing, and understanding the truth of it, he detested the guests, and refused to eat with them. And then it being demanded of him whether he was a Christian or not, he openly confessed that he was a Christian, and ever would be. Upon which they rushed upon him, and killed him, and made him a partner of the same martyrdom and honor.

Diocletian and Maximian, seeing the number of the Christians rather increase than diminish, notwithstanding all the cruelty that they could show, were now out of all hope of rooting them out; and loathing the shedding of more blood, they at last ceased of their own accord to put any more Christians to death. But yet they tormented great multitudes, putting out their right eyes, and maiming their left legs with a searing-iron, condemned them to the mines, not so much for the use of their labor, as for the desire of afflicting them.

When Diocletian and Maximian had reigned together as emperors for twenty-one years, they abdicated the throne, Diocletian at Nicomedia, and Maximian at Midiolan. Both of them led a private life (A.D. 305).

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In the beginning of this persecution, you heard how Diocletian, being made emperor, took to him Maximian. Also how these two governing as emperors together, chose two others as Caesars under them, namely, Galerius Maximinus, and Constantius, the father of Constantine the Great. So Diocletian and Maximian now being displaced, the Imperial Dominion remained with Constantius and Galerius Maximinus, who divided the whole monarchy between them. **Maximinus** governed the *eastern* countries, and **Constantius** the *western* parts.

Galerius Maximinus appointed Maximian and Severus to be the two Caesars. These were the emperors and Caesars who, succeeding Diocletian and Maximian, continued the persecution which Diocletian and Maximian began.

But Constantius, with his son Constantine, was no great participant in this, but rather a maintainer and supporter of the Christians. Constantius was a very excellent prince – civil, meek, gentle, liberal, and desirous to do good to those who had any private authority under him. To these virtues he added yet a more worthy ornament; that is, devotion, love, and affection towards the word of God. This caused great peace and tranquility in all his provinces. He did not wage any wars contrary to piety and Christian religion, nor did he destroy the churches; but instead, he commanded that the Christians should be preserved and defended.

Galerius Maximinus, joint-emperor with Constantius, was so great an idolater, that he built temples in every city, and repaired those that had fallen into decay. He chose the most worthy of his political magistrates to be the idols' priests, and ordained that they should

execute their office with great authority and dignity, and also with warlike pomp. But he was much opposed to Christian piety and religion. And in the eastern churches he exercised cruel persecution.

A brief respite in the east

Maximinus was at length revoked from his cruelty by the just judgment and punishment of God. For he was suddenly seized with a most extraordinary and desperate disease which, beginning outwardly in his flesh, proceeded from there to the inward parts of his body. The physicians not being able to cure him, he was at length put in remembrance that this disease was sent from God. He began to think of the wickedness that he had done against the saints of God. And so, coming again to himself, he first confessed to God all his offenses, and then immediately commanded all men to cease from the persecutions of the Christians. He required, moreover, that they should set up his imperial proclamations for restoring their temples, and that the Christians in their assemblies should devoutly pray to their God for their emperor. Then the persecution was stayed, and the imperial proclamations were posted in every city, containing the countermand of those things which were previously decreed against the Christians.

Therefore, the governors of every province released all those prisoners who were condemned to the mines and to perpetual imprisonment for their faith. This seemed to them as unlooked for, and as light to travellers in a dark night. They gathered themselves together in every city, they called their synods and councils, and marvelled much at the sudden change and alteration. The infidels themselves extolled the only and true God of the Christians. The Christians received again all their former liberties; and such as fell away before in the time of persecution, repented themselves, and after having done penance, they returned again to the church. Now the Christians rejoiced in every city, praising God with hymns and psalms. This was a marvellous and sudden alteration of the church, from a most unhappy state into a better one.

The respite comes to an end

But the tyrant Maximinus scarcely permitted this peace to continue six months unviolated. For he took from the Christians all liberty to assemble and congregate in churchyards. And the emperor by and by commanded to be published throughout every city, and to be posted in the midst of every city (which was never done before) the edicts against the Christians, graven in tablets of brass. The children in the schools, with great noise and clapping of hands, every day resounded the blasphemies of Pilate to Jesus, and whatever other things were devised by the magistrates, in a most spiteful manner.

Thus came it to pass, that at length the persecution was as great as ever, and the magistrates of every province were very severe against the Christians. Some they condemned to death, and some to exile. Among those whom they condemned were three Christians at Emisa, in Phoenicia. With them, Sylvanus the bishop, a very old man, forty years in his ecclesiastical function, was condemned to death. At Nicomedia, Lucianus, the elder of Antioch — being brought there after he had written to the emperor his apology concerning the doctrine of the Christians — was cast into prison, and afterward put to death. At Alexandria, Peter, a most worthy bishop, was beheaded, with whom many other Egyptian bishops also died. Quirinus, the bishop of Scescanus, having a hand-mill tied around his neck, was thrown headlong from the bridge into the flood. There a long while he floated above the water, and when he opened his mouth to speak to the lookers on, that they should not be dismayed by his

punishment, he drowned. At Rome died Marcellus, the bishop, as Platina says; also Timotheus the elder was martyred, with many other bishops and priests.

To conclude, many in sundry places everywhere were martyred, whose names are declared in the book entitled *Fasciculus Temporum* — such as Victorianus, Symphorianus, Castorius with his wife, Castulus, Caesarius, Mennas, Nobilis, Dorotheus, Gorgonius, Petrus, and other innumerable martyrs; Erasmus, Bonifacius, Juliana, Cosmas, Damianus, Basilinus, with seven others. Dorothea, Theophilus, Theodosia, Vitalis, Agricola, Acha, Philemon, Hireneus, Januarius, Festus, Desiderius, Gregorius, Spoletanus, Agapes, Chionia, Hirenea, Theodora, and 270 other martyrs. Florianus, Primus and Felicianus, Vitus, and Modestus, Crescentia, Albinus, Rogatianus, Donatianus, Pancratius, Catharina, Margareta, Lucia the virgin, and Antheus the king, with many more thousands of martyrs. Simplicius, Faustinus, Beatrix, Panthaleon, Georgius, Justius, Leocandia, Anthonia, and others (to an infinite number) suffered martyrdom in this persecution. God has written their names in the book of life. Also Felix, Victor, with his parents, Lucia the widow, Gemenianus, with seventy-nine others. Sabinus, Anastasia, Chrysogonus, Felix and Audactus, Adrianus, Natholia, Eugenia. Also Agnes was martyred, when she was but thirteen years old.

Eusebius (lib. 8, cap. 15) mentions these kinds of torments and punishments inflicted on the Christians; “Fire, wild beasts, the sword, crucifyings, drowning at the bottom of the sea, the cutting and burning of members, thrusting out the eyes, dismembering the whole body, hunger, imprisonment, and whatever other cruelty the magistrates could devise.” All of this notwithstanding, the godly ones manfully endured, rather than do sacrifice to the idols, as they were bid. Neither could the Christians live safely in the wilderness, but were fetched even from there to death and torments. This was so bad, that it was a more grievous persecution under Maximinus the Tyrant, than the former cruel persecution was under Maximian the Prince.

As you heard, the cruel edict of Maximinus proclaimed against the Christians, was graven in brass. He thought this would perpetually endure to the abolishing of Christ and his religion. Now mark the great handywork of God, which immediately fell upon these persecutors. For there soon followed a most unseasonable drought, with famine and pestilence among the people. The people were greatly consumed by this famine and pestilence; great numbers died in the cities, but many more in the country and villages, so that most of the farmers and countrymen died with the famine and pestilence. There were many who brought out their best treasure, and were glad to give it for any kind of sustenance, however little. Others, selling their possessions, came to extreme poverty and beggary. Some ate grass and other unwholesome herbs; they were obliged to fill themselves with foods that hurt and poisoned their bodies. Also, a number of women in the cities, being brought to extreme misery, were constrained to depart from the city, and to beg throughout the country.

[59] A.D. 305-312.

Others being weak and faint, wandered up and down, and being too feeble to stand, fell down in the middle of the streets. They held up their hands, and most pitifully cried for some scraps or fragments of bread to be given them. Being at their last gasp and ready to give up the ghost, not able to utter any other words, they cried out that they were hungry. The marketplace, streets, lanes, and alleys lay full of dead and naked bodies, cast out and unburied. These were pitifully and grievously beheld by others; many eaten by dogs.

In like manner, the pestilence spreading through all houses and ranks of men, destroyed many, even those who, having plenty of food, escaped the famine. Thus, the rich princes, the

presidents, and magistrates, being more apt to receive the infection because of their plenty, were quickly cut off. The miserable multitude being consumed with famine and with pestilence, all places were full of mourning. Nor was there anything else seen but wailing and weeping in every corner. So that, with famine and pestilence, death in a short time broke up and consumed whole households; two or three dead bodies were carried out at a time, from one house, to one funeral.

These were the rewards of the vain boasts of Maximinus and his edicts, which he published against us in all the towns and cities – when it was evident to all men how diligent and charitable the Christians were to them in their miserable extremity. For in all this time of distress, the Christians only showed compassion on those who were forsaken by their own kindred, travelling every day, some in curing the sick, and some in burying the dead. Some of the Christians calling and gathering the multitude together who were in danger of famine, distributed bread to them, by which they gave occasion to all men to glorify the God of the Christians, and to confess them to be the true worshippers of God, as appeared by their works. By means of this, the great God and defender of the Christians – who before had shown His anger and indignation against all men for their wrongful afflicting of us – again opened to us the comfortable light of his Providence. So that peace fell upon us as a light to those who sit in darkness, ^{Luk 1.79} to the great admiration of all men who easily perceive God himself to be a perpetual director of our doings. Many times He chastens his people with calamities for a time, to exercise them. But after sufficient correction, He again shows himself merciful and favorable to those who call upon Him with faith.

Thus, at that time the true promise of Christ to his church was fulfilled most plainly and evidently, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church, built on his faith. ^{Mat 16.18} It may sufficiently appear by the ten persecutions described above. Just as no man can deny that Satan and his malignant world attempted to the utmost of their power and might, to overthrow the church of Jesus, so all men who read these histories, must grant that when Satan and the gates of hell had done their worst, they did not prevail against this mount of Sion, nor ever shall. For what else is to be thought, when so many emperors and tyrants together – Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius, Severus, Maxentius, and Licinius, with their captains and officers – were let loose, like so many lions upon a scattered and unarmed flock of sheep, intending nothing but the utter subversion of all Christianity? And especially too, when laws against the Christians were posted in brass, as if to stand perpetually. What was to be looked for here, if not a final desolation of the name and religion of *Christians*? You have partly heard what followed; more is to be marked in the history below.

The Rise of Constantine

Maxentius, son of Maximian, was declared emperor at Rome (A.D. 306). By his grievous tyranny and unspeakable wickedness, he oppressed the citizens and senators, who sent their complaints to Constantine, desiring him to help release their country and city of Rome. Constantine, understanding their miserable and pitiful state, first sent letters to Maxentius, desiring and exhorting him to restrain his corrupt doings and great cruelty. But when no letters or exhortations would prevail, at length, pitying the woeful case of the Romans, he gathered together his army in Britain and France, with which to repress the violent rage of the tyrant Maxentius. Thus Constantine, sufficiently furnished with strength of men, but especially with strength of God, began his journey towards Italy. This was about the last year of the persecution (A.D. 312). Maxentius understood that Constantine was coming. Trusting more to his devilish art of magic, than to the goodwill of his subjects, he dared not show himself outside of the city, nor encounter Constantine in the open field. He deployed secret garrisons to lie in wait for him along the way. Constantine had many skirmishes with them;

and by the power of the Lord, he vanquished them and put them to flight. Notwithstanding, Constantine was in great dread of Maxentius as he approached Rome. He had great doubts and was perplexed in himself, revolving many things in his mind. As he drew towards the city, he looked heavenward, and in the south part, about sunset, he saw a great brightness, appearing in the form of a cross, with certain stars of equal size, giving this inscription: *in hoc vince*, that is, *In this overcome*.⁸⁴ In his first book (*The Life of Constantine*), Eusebius Pamphilius declares this miraculous vision to be true. He testifies that he heard Constantine himself often report it, and also swear it to be true and certain: that he saw it with his own eyes in heaven, and also his soldiers about him. He was greatly astonished at the sight of it, and consulted with his men about its meaning. The same night, Christ appeared to him in his sleep, with the sign of the same cross which he had seen in the heavens. He bid Constantine to inscribe his banners with that figure, and carry it before him in the wars, and so he would have the victory.⁸⁵

Here it is to be noted that this sign of the cross, and these letters added, *in hoc vince*, was given to him by God, not to induce any superstitious worship of the cross, as though the cross itself had any power or strength in it to obtain victory, but only to be an admonition to him to seek and aspire to the knowledge and faith of Christ, who was crucified on the cross for his salvation him, and that of all the world. And so he was to set forth the glory of Christ's name, as it came to pass afterwards. This is by the way. Now to return to the history.

The day following, after this night's vision, Constantine caused a cross to be made of gold and precious stone, and to be borne before him instead of his standard. And so, with much hope of victory and great confidence, as one who is armed from heaven, he advanced against his enemy.

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Maxentius being constrained to come by force, advances out of the city, and sends all his army to join him in the field beyond the river Tiber. There he was put to such a flight, and driven to such exigence, that in retiring back into the city with haste, his horse overturned and fell into the bottom of the river. Being unable to get out from the weight of his armor, Maxentius was drowned, with a great part of his men.

We read in history of many victories and great conquests, yet we never read, and never shall, of any victory so wholesome, so desirable, so opportune to mankind, as this was. It made an

⁸⁴ Eusebius de vita Constant., lib. 2. Niceph., lib. 7. cap. 29. Eutrop. lib. 11. Sozom. lib. 1, cap. 3. Socrat. lib. 1, cap.2. Urspergensis, Chronicles of Paul, Diacon. lib. 11.

⁸⁵ The truth of this narrative is very far from being established so as to justify an author in admitting it without some qualification. It is now most generally regarded as a fiction, which was built upon some dream of the emperor. Mosheim thus notices it: "It is easy indeed, to refute the opinion of those who look upon this prodigy as a cunning fiction, invented by the emperor to animate his troops in the ensuing battle, or who consider the narration as wholly fabulous. The sentiment also of those who imagine that this pretended cross was no more than a natural phenomenon in a solar halo, is perhaps more ingenious than solid and convincing; nor, in the third place, do we think it sufficiently proved that the Divine Power interposed here to confirm the wavering faith of Constantine, by a stupendous miracle. The only hypothesis the which remains, is, that we consider this famous cross as a vision presented to the emperor in a dream." Mosheim, c. iv. p. 1.

Eusebius gives the narration on the sole authority of Constantine, who imagined that he had seen this cross; it was natural that in the troubled sleep of the emperor, on the eve of so eventful a battle, his dreams should be vivid, and their impression strong; but it is remarkable that Eusebius gives no evidence from the thousands of persons in the army who must have seen it, if it were really a miraculous display of the Divine Power, neither Sozomen nor Ruffin, who wrote so soon after, make any mention of it. And it has been thought that Eusebius, hearing the emperor, narrating his dream, mistook him as narrating a fact, for Constantine always stated that he was influenced by a dream in making use of the sign of the cross in his army. [Ed.]

end of so much bloodshed, and obtained liberty and life to the posterity of so many generations. For although some persecution was still stirring in the east by Maximinus and by Licinius, who had been appointed Caesar in place of Severus, yet in Rome and all the west, no martyr died after this heavenly victory. And also in the east, Constantine so vanquished the tyrants, and so established the peace of the church, that for the space of a thousand years after that, we read of no open persecution against the Christians, until the time of John Wycliffe. That was when the bishops of Rome began to persecute the true members of Christ, as it will appear in further process of this history. So happy and glorious was this victory of Constantine, that he was surnamed *the Great*. For joy and gladness in this victory, the citizens who had sent for him, brought him into the city of Rome with great triumph. There he was most honorably received with the cross, and the triumph celebrated for seven days. His image was set up in the marketplace, holding in his right hand the sign of the cross, with this inscription: “With this saving sign, the true token of fortitude, I have rescued and delivered our city from the yoke of the tyrant.” (Euseb. lib. 9. cap. 9.)

By this victory of Constantine, no little tranquility came to the church of Christ. Although the storm had not yet quieted altogether in the east, here in Europe great tranquility followed, and it continued in the church without any open slaughter for a thousand years (to the time of John Wycliffe and the Waldenses, as mentioned before). This was by means of the godly beginning of good Constantine. With his fellow Licinius, now being established in their dominion, they set forth their general proclamation or edict, that no man should be constrained to any religion, but that all men would have liberty; that the Christians might continue in their profession without any danger; and whoever pleased, might freely join them. This was very well received and highly approved by the Romans, and all wise men.

*The copy of the imperial constitution of Constantine and Licinius,
for establishing the free worship of God following the Christian religion.*

“Not long ago we considered with ourselves, that liberty and freedom of religion should not in any case be prohibited, but that free leave ought to be given to every man to practice this according to his own will and mind. We have commanded all men to qualify matters of religion as they themselves thought good, and also that the Christians should keep the opinions and faith of their religion. But because many and sundry opinions sprang up and increased through the liberty granted by our first license, we thought it good to add to it, and to make plain those things by which some, perhaps, in times to come, may be hindered from their religious observance. When, therefore, by prosperous success, I, Constantine Augustus, and I, Licinius Augustus, came to Mediolanum (Milan), and there sat in council on those things which served for the utility and profit of the commonwealth, we thought these things, among others, would be beneficial to all men. Before all other things, we purposed to establish those things in which the true reverence and worship of God is comprehended — that is, to give the Christians free choice to follow whatever religion they think good, and by which the same sincerity and celestial grace which is received in every place, may also be embraced and accepted by all our loving subjects.

Therefore, according to this our pleasure, and upon good advisement and sound judgment, we have decreed that no man be denied to choose and follow the Christian observance or religion, but that this liberty be given to every man, so that he may apply his mind to whatever religion he thinks fit himself, whereby God may perform upon us all, His accustomed care and goodness.

Therefore, to the intent that you might know that this is our pleasure, we thought it necessary to write this to you, whereby all these errors and opinions which are contained in

Bk. I. The 300 years after Christ – Ten Persecutions (64-324)

our former letters sent to you in behalf of the Christians, and which seem very indiscreet and contrary to our clemency, may be frustrated and annihilated.

Now, therefore, we firmly and freely will and command that every man have free liberty to observe the Christian religion, and that without any grief or molestation he may be allowed to do the same. These things we have thought it good to signify to you by plain words — *that we have given to the Christians free and absolute power to keep and use their religion*. And as this liberty is absolutely given by us to them, to use and exercise their former observance, if any are so disposed, it is manifest that the same helps much to establish the public tranquility of our time — *every man is to have liberty to use and choose whatever kind of worshipping he pleases himself*. And this is done by us with the intent that we would have no man forced to one religion more than another.

And we have also provided this thing, among others, for the Christians: that they may again have possession of the places in which they have been accustomed to make their assemblies. So that if any have bought or purchased these places from us, or from any other, we command that the same places, without either money or other recompense, be restored to the Christians forthwith and without delay. And if any man has obtained the same by gift from us, and requires any recompense to be made to them in that behalf, then let the Christians repair to the president (being the judge appointed for that place), so that consideration may be had of those men by our benignity — all which things we will and command that you see freely given and restored to the society of the Christians, without any delay. And because the Christians themselves are understood to have had not only those places in which they were accustomed to resort together, but certain other peculiar places also, not being private to any one man, but belonging to their church and society, you shall also see all those be restored to the Christians; that is to say, to every fellowship and company of them, according to the decree which we mentioned, provided that the order we have taken in the meantime is observed: that if anyone (taking no recompense) restores the same lands and possessions, they shall not mistrust, but be sure to be saved harmless by us.

In all these things it shall be your part to employ your diligence in behalf of the aforesaid company of the Christians, whereby this our commandment may speedily be accomplished, and also in this case by our clemency, the common and public peace may be preserved. For undoubtedly by this means, as we have said before, the goodwill and favor of God towards us (of which in many cases we have had good experience) shall always continue with us. And to the intent that this our constitution may be notified to all men, it shall be requisite that the copy of these our letters be posted in all places, so that men may read and know the same, lest any be ignorant of it.”

By this history, I have no doubt that the reader considers and beholds the marvellous working of God’s mighty power; to see so many emperors at one time confederate together against the Lord and Christ his anointed, who having the subjection of the whole world under their dominion, exerted their whole might to extirpate the name of Christ, and of Christians. If the power of man could have prevailed in this, what could they not do? Or what could they do more than they did? If policy or devices could have served, what policy was lacking? If torments or pains of death could have helped, what cruelty of torment could be invented by man, which was not attempted?

[61] A.D.305-323.

If laws, edicts, and proclamations, written not only on tablets, but engraved in brass, could have stood, consider that all this was practiced against the weak Christians. And yet, notwithstanding, see how no counsel can stand against the Lord; observe how all these are gone, and yet Christ and his church still stand. Only Maximinus remained, now in the

eastern parts, who bore a deadly hatred against the Christians, to whom Constantine and Licinius caused this constitution of theirs to be delivered. At the sight of this, although he was somewhat appalled and defeated of his purpose, yet he saw himself too weak to resist the authority of Constantine and Licinius, the superior princes. So he dissembled, as though he himself had desired the quiet of the Christians. But shortly after, making war and fighting a battle with Licinius, he lost the victory. And coming home again, he took great indignation against the priests and prophets of his gods, whom before that time he had great regard for and honored. Depending on their answers and enchantments, he began his war against Licinius. But after he perceived himself to be deceived by them, as by wicked enchanters and deceivers, and those who had betrayed his safety and person, he put them to death. Shortly after, oppressed with a mortal disease, he glorified the God of the Christians, and made a most absolute law for their safety and preservation.

Thus the Lord at length makes his enemies to stoop, however stern and stout they may be, and their hearts to confess him, as this Maximinus did, who not long after ended his life. Thus, no more tyrants were left alive to trouble the church, *except Licinius*.

Licinius

This Licinius being born a Dane, and first made Caesar by Galerius, as specified above, was afterwards joined with Constantine in the government of the empire. He was also joined in setting forth the edicts which we described before, although all this seems to have been done by him with a dissembling mind. For he is described in all histories, as a man surpassing all others in his insatiable desire for riches, and for being hasty, stubborn, and furious. He was such an enemy of learning, that he called it a poison and a common pestilence, especially the knowledge of the laws. He thought no vice was less becoming to a prince than learning, because he himself was unlearned.

There was great familiarity between him and Constantine in the beginning, and such agreement, that Constantine gave him his sister Constantia in matrimony. Nor would any man have thought him to be of any other religion than Constantine, for he seemed to agree so well with him in all things. He made a decree with Constantine in the behalf of the Christians, as we showed. Such was Licinius in the beginning. But afterwards he began to conspire against the person of Constantine. But finding he could not prevail in his conspiracies, he began to hate him vehemently, and not only to reject the Christian religion, but also to hate it. He said he would become an enemy to the Christians, because in their assemblies and meetings they did not pray for him, but for Constantine. Therefore, little by little at first, and secretly, he went about to wrong and hurt the Christians, and banished them from his court. Then he commanded that all those Christians who were knights of the honorable order should be deprived, unless they sacrificed to devils. Afterward he stretched the same persecution from his court into all his provinces.

The flattering officers who were under him, thinking to please him by this means, slew many bishops, and without any cause they put them to death, as though they had been murderers and heinous offenders. They cut their bodies into small pieces in the manner of a butcher, and threw them into the sea to feed the fishes. What shall we say of the exiles and the confiscations of good and virtuous men? For he took by violence every man's substance, and did not care by what means he came by it. He threatened them with death, unless they gave it up. He banished those who had committed no evil. He commanded that many honorable men should be put out of the way; and gave their daughters to his followers. This cruel outrage caused many godly men to forsake their houses of their own accord, and to flee to the woods, fields, desert places, and mountains. These were the only habitations and

resting-places for the poor and miserable Christians. Among those worthy men and famous martyrs in this persecution who found the way to heaven, was Theodorus. First being hanged upon the cross, he had nails thrust into his armpits, and after that, his head was struck off. Also another Theodorus, the bishop of Tyre; Basil also, the bishop of Amasenus; Nicholas the bishop of Mirorus, Gregory of Armenia; after that Paul of Neocesarea, who had both his hands cut off with a searing iron. Besides these in the city of Sebastia, there were forty worthy men and Christian soldiers in the cold of winter drowned in a horse pond. The wives of those forty good men were carried to Heraclea, a city in Thracia. And there, with a certain deacon whose name was Amones, after innumerable torments, they were slain with the sword. Licinius was determined to overrun all the Christians, to which neither will nor opportunity were lacking. But God brought Constantine into those parts to oppose him.

Diverse battles were fought between them. The first was in Hungary, where Licinius was overthrown. Then he fled into Macedonia, and repairing his army, he was again discomfited. Finally, being vanquished both by sea and land, at Nicomedia he finally yielded himself to Constantine, and was commanded to live a private life in Thesalia. There, at length, he was slain by the soldiers.

Thus you have heard the end and conclusion of the seven tyrants who were the authors and workers of this tenth and last persecution against the true people of God. The chief captain and promoter of this persecution was Diocletian, who died at Salona, some say, by his own poison (A.D. 313). The next was Maximian, who (it is said) was hanged by Constantine at Marseilles (A.D. 310). Then Galerius died, plagued with a horrible disease sent by God (A.D. 311). Severus was slain by Maximian, father of Maxentius, the wicked tyrant (A.D. 307). He was overcome and vanquished by Constantine (A.D. 312). Maximinus, the sixth tyrant, died not long after, being overcome by Licinius (A.D. 313). Lastly, this Licinius was overcome by Constantine, and slain (A.D. 323). Constantius, the father of Constantine, being a good and godly emperor, died in the third year of the persecution (A.D. 306), and was buried at York.

Catalogue of Martyrs in the Tenth Persecution.

It now remains, after having described these persecutors, to gather up the names and stories of certain particular martyrs, who are worthy of special memory, for the singular constancy and fortitude showed in their sufferings and cruel torments. It is impossible to include the names of all who suffered in this tenth persecution; but we insert here the most notable, for the edification of other Christians.

When Diocletian and Maximian, the pagan emperors, had directed their letters with all severity for the persecuting of the Christians, **Alban** (then an infidel) received into his house a certain cleric, fleeing from the persecutor's hands. When Alban beheld him continually persevere in watching and prayer, both day and night, he began to imitate the example of his faith and virtuous life. Upon being instructed, he became a Christian. The wicked prince was informed that this good man and confessor of Christ was harbored in Alban's house, upon which he charged the soldiers to make a diligent search as soon as they came to the house of Alban. By and by, putting on the apparel which his guest usually wore, Alban offered himself to the soldiers in the stead of the other. Binding him, they brought him immediately to the judge. It happened that when Alban was brought to him, they found the judge at the altars, offering sacrifice to devils. As soon as he saw Alban, he was in a great rage that he should presume to give himself as a prisoner for his guest whom he harbored. He commanded him to be brought before the images of the devils whom he worshipped, saying, "Because you would rather hide and let a rebel get away, than deliver him to the officers (as a despiser of our gods) so that he would not suffer the punishment and merit of

his blasphemy, the punishment he would have had, you will suffer for him if I perceive you revolt even a whit from our manner of worshipping.”

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But blessed Alban, who of his own accord had revealed that he was a Christian, did not fear at all the menaces of the prince. But armed with spiritual armor, he openly pronounced that he would not obey his commandment. Then the judge said, “Of what stock or kindred do you come from?” Alban answered, “What is that to you? Of whatever stock I came from, if you desire to hear the verity of my religion, I call you to witness that I am a Christian.” Then the judge answered with fury, “If you will enjoy the felicity of this present life, sacrifice to these mighty gods.” Alban replied, “These sacrifices which you offer to devils, can neither help those who offer them, nor yet can they accomplish the desires and prayers of their suppliants. But rather those who offer sacrifice to these idols, will receive for their reward everlasting pains of hell fire.” The judge, when he heard these words, was quickly angered, and commanded the tormentors to whip this holy confessor of God, endeavoring to overcome the constancy of his heart with stripes. And when Alban was cruelly beaten, he suffered it patiently, no, *joyfully* for the Lord’s sake. Then, when the judge saw that he would not be overcome with torments, nor be seduced from the worship of the Christian religion, he commanded him to be beheaded.⁸⁶ The Cleric mentioned in this story, whom Alban received into his house, fleeing into Wales, was brought back again, and martyred with cruel torments.

The time of martyrdom of this blessed Alban and the other, seems to be about the second or third year of the tenth persecution under Diocletian, before the coming of Constantius to his government. Where it is to be noted, by the way, that this realm of Britain was never touched by any of the other nine persecutions, before this tenth persecution of Diocletian and Maximian. In this persecution our histories record that Christianity was almost entirely destroyed in the whole island, the churches subverted, all books of the Scripture burned, many of the faithful were slain, both men and women. Among them, the first and chief was Alban. And thus much regarding the martyrs of **BRITAIN**.

Now from England to return again to other countries where this persecution raged more vehemently. We will add (Lord willing) the histories of others, beginning with **Romanus**, the notable and admirable soldier and true servant of Christ. His history is set forth in Prudentius’ *Peristephanon* as follows. It is so lamentably described by him, that it will be hard for any man to hear it with dry cheeks.

⁸⁶ The rest of this story that follows in the narration of Bede, such as the river drying up as Alban went to the place of his execution; then of making a well-spring in the top of the hill, and of the the eyes of the one who beheaded him falling out of (and other prodigious miracles mentioned in history), seem more legend than truth. I have the same estimation of Bede’s long history, in which a fabulous discourse is written at large of all the doings and miracles of St. Alban. But among all evidences sufficient to disprove these legends of Alban, nothing speaks more against them, than the very story itself — such as where he brings in the head of the holy martyr to speak to the people after it was struck off from the body. Also, where he brings in the angels going up and coming down in a pillar of fire, and singing all night long. Also, in the river which Alban made dry, those who were drowned before at its bottom, were found alive; with other similar monkish miracles, and gross fables, which these abbey monks were prone to in times past, to deceive the church of God, and to beguile the whole world for their own advantage. *Notwithstanding*, I do not write this to detract from this blessed and faithful martyr of God, who was the first I ever found in this realm to suffer martyrdom for the testimony of Christ. And he is no doubt worthy of all commendation, especially by us here in this land. I pray to God that we may all follow his Christian faith in the Lord, and his charity towards his neighbor. However, I wish that the stories of him, and of all other Christian martyrs, might have been delivered to us simple as they were, without the admixture of all these abbey-like additions of monkish miracles. The monks were most prone to paint the glory of such saints, based on the offerings they were most accustomed to receive for them.

“Pitiless Galerius with his grand captain Asclepiades, violently invaded the city of Antioch, intending by force of arms to drive all Christians to utterly renounce their pure religion. The Christians, as God would have it, were at that time congregated together. Romanus hastily ran to them, declaring that the wolves were at hand which would devour the Christian flock. ‘But fear not,’ he said, ‘nor let this imminent peril disturb you, my brethren.’ It was brought to pass, by the great grace of God working in Romanus, that old men and matrons, fathers and mothers, young men and maidens, were all of one will and mind, most ready to shed their blood in defense of their Christian profession. Word was brought to the captain, that the band of armed soldiers was not able to wrest the staff of faith out of the hand of the armed ⁸⁷ congregation, and all because Romanus so mightily encouraged them, that they did not hesitate to offer their naked throats, wishing to die gloriously for the name of Christ. ‘Seek out that rebel (the captain said) and bring him to me, that he may answer for the whole sect.’

He was apprehended, and being bound like a sheep appointed to the slaughter-house, he was presented to the emperor, who beholding him with wrathful countenance, said, ‘What? Are you the author of this sedition? Are you the reason why so many will lose their lives? By the gods, I swear you will smart for it, and be the first to suffer in your flesh the pains to which you have encouraged the hearts of your fellows.’ Romanus answered, ‘O emperor, I joyfully embrace your sentence. I do not refuse to be sacrificed for my brethren, and to do that by as cruel means as you may invent. And, whereas your soldiers were repelled from the Christian congregation, that was because it was not fit for idolaters and worshippers of devils, to enter the holy house of God, and to pollute the place of true prayer.’

Then Asclepiades, wholly inflamed with this stout answer, commanded him to be trussed up, and his bowels drawn out. The executioners themselves, more pitiful in heart than the captain, said, ‘Not so, sir, this man is of noble parentage, it is unlawful to put a nobleman to so ignoble a death.’ ‘Scourge him then with whips (said the captain) with knaps of lead at the ends.’

Instead of tears, sighs, and groans, Romanus sung psalms the whole time of his whipping, requesting them not to favor him for nobility’s sake; ‘Not the blood of my progenitors (he said) but Christian profession makes me noble.’ Then with great power of spirit he inveighed against the captain, ridiculing the false gods of the heathen, with the idolatrous worship of them, affirming that the god of the Christians is the true God, who created heaven and earth, and before whose judgment-seat all nations shall appear. But the wholesome words of the martyr were like oil to the fire of the captain’s fury. The more the martyr spoke, the madder the captain was, so much that he commanded the martyr’s sides to be lanced with knives, until the bones appeared white. ‘I am sorry, O captain (said the martyr) not that my flesh is thus cut and mangled, but for your cause am I sorrowful. Being corrupted with damnable errors, you seduce others.’

The second time he preached at large the living God, and the Lord Jesus Christ his well-beloved Son, and eternal life through faith in his blood; expressing with this the abomination of idolatry, with a vehement exhortation to worship and adore the living God. At these words, Asclepiades commanded the tormentors to strike Romanus on the mouth, so that his teeth being knocked out, his pronounciation at least might be impaired. The commandment was obeyed, his face beaten, his eye-lids torn with their nails, his cheeks sliced with knives, the skin of his beard plucked little by little from the flesh, until finally, his seemly face was wholly defaced. The meek martyr said, ‘I thank you, O captain, that you have opened to me many mouths, from which I may preach my Lord and Savior Christ. Look how many wounds I have; that is how many mouths I have lauding and praising God.’

[63] A.D. 323.

⁸⁷ That is, so armed with *faith*; hence the “staff of faith.”

Bk. I. The 300 years after Christ – Ten Persecutions (64-324)

The captain, astonished with this singular constancy, commanded them to cease from the tortures. He threatened cruel fire, reviled the noble martyr, and blasphemed God, saying, “The crucified Christ is but a yesterday’s god, the gods of the Gentiles are of most antiquity.”

“Here again, Romanus made a long oration of the eternity of Christ, of his human nature, of the death and satisfaction of Christ for all mankind. This done, he said, ‘Give me a child, O captain, but seven years of age, who is free from the malice and other vices with which ripe age is commonly infected, and you will hear what he will say.’ His request was granted. A handsome boy was called out of the multitude, and set before him. ‘Tell me, my child,’ says the martyr, “whether you think it reasonable, that we worship one Christ, and in Christ one Father, or else that we worship many gods?” The child answered him, “Certainly, whatever it is that man affirms to be God, must be one; and as this one is Christ, of necessity Christ must be the one true God. For we children cannot believe that there are many Gods.”

The captain much astonished at this, said, “You young villain and traitor, where, and from whom did you hear this lesson?” “From my mother,” said the child, “with whose milk I sucked in this lesson — that I must believe in Christ.” The mother was called, and she gladly appeared. The captain commanded the child to be hoisted up and scourged. The pitiful beholders of this pitiless act could not refrain from tears. The joyful and glad mother alone stood with dry cheeks. Indeed, she rebuked her sweet child for craving a draught of cold water. She charged him to thirst after the cup that the infants of Bethlehem once drank from, forgetting their mother’s milk. She willed him to remember little Isaac, who beholding the sword, and the altar on which he should be sacrificed, willingly offered his tender neck to his father’s sword. While this counsel was being given, the butcherly tormentor plucked the skin from the crown of the child’s head, hair and all. The mother cried out, “Suffer it, my child; shortly you shall pass to Him who will adorn your naked head with a crown of eternal glory.” The child, thus counselled and encouraged, received the stripes with a smiling countenance. The captain perceiving that the child was invincible, and himself was vanquished, committed the blessed babe to the stinking prison, commanding the torments of Romanus to be renewed and increased, as the chief author of this evil. Thus Romanus was brought again to new stripes, the punishments to be renewed and received upon his old sores, so much that bare bones appeared, the flesh all torn away.

“Yes, no longer could the tyrant forbear, but he must draw nearer to the sentence of death. “Is it painful to you (he said) to tarry so long alive? A flaming fire shall be prepared for you by and by, in which you and that boy, your fellow of rebellion, shall be consumed to ashes. Romanus and the child were led to the place of execution. As they laid hands on Romanus, he looked back, saying, “I appeal from this tyranny of yours, O unjust judge, to the righteous throne of Christ, that upright judge — not because I fear your cruel torments and merciless handlings, but that your judgments may be known to be cruel and bloody.” Now when they had come to the place, the tormentors required the child from the mother, for she had taken it up in her arms; and only kissing it, she delivered the babe; “Farewell,” she said, “my sweet child.” And as the hangman applied his sword to the babe’s neck, she sang on this manner:

All laud and praise with heart and voice,
O Lord we yield to you;
To whom the death of all your saints,
We know most dear to be.

“The innocent’s head being cut off, the mother wrapped it up in her garment, and laid it on her breast. On the other side a mighty fire was made, into which Romanus was cast. His sorrowful life and pains being ended, he now enjoys quiet rest in the Lord, with perpetual hope of his miserable body to be restored again, with his soul, into a better life.

“**Gordius** was a citizen of Caesarea, a worthy soldier, and captain of a hundred men. In the time of extreme persecution, he refused any longer to execute his charge, and willingly chose exile. He lived many years in the desert a religious and solitary life. But on a certain day when a solemn feast of Mars was celebrated in the city of Caesarea, and many people were assembled in the theatre to behold the games, he left the desert, and got up into the chief place of the theatre, and with a loud voice uttered this saying of the apostle, “Behold I was found by those who did not seek Me, and I was manifested to those who did not ask for me.” Rom 10.20 At this disturbance, the multitude looked about to see who it was that made such an exclamation. As soon as it was known to be Gordius, the crier commanded silence, and he was brought to the sheriff, who was present and had ordained the games. When Gordius was asked the question who he was, and from where, and for what purpose he came there, telling the whole truth, he answered; “I have come to proclaim that I set nothing by your decrees against the Christian religion, but that I profess Jesus Christ to be my hope and safety.” The sheriff was greatly affected with these words, and poured all his displeasure upon Gordius, commanding the executioners to bring out the scourges. Gordius answered that it would be a hindrance and damage to him, if he could not suffer and endure diverse torments and punishments for Christ’s cause. The sheriff being even more offended with his boldness, commanded him to feel as many kinds of torments as there were. With all of these, Gordius, notwithstanding, could not be mastered or overcome. But lifting his eyes heavenward, he sings this verse from the Psalms, “The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do to me;” Psa 118.6 and also this, “I will fear no evil, because you Lord are with me.” Psa 23.4

“When the sheriff saw that he could win but little by torment, he tried by gentleness and enticing words, to turn the stout and valiant mind of Gordius. He promised him if he would deny Christ, he would make him a captain, and give him riches, treasure, and whatever he desired. But it was all in vain. The magistrate, thoroughly angry, prepared to condemn him; and caused him to be taken out of the city to be burnt. Great multitudes went out of the city to see him put to execution. Some take him in their arms, and lovingly kiss him, persuading him to save himself, and did so with ‘tears. Gordius answered them, ‘Do not weep for me, I pray you, but rather for the enemies of God, who always make war against the Christians. Weep, I say, for those who prepare a fire for us, purchasing hellfire for themselves in the day of vengeance. And I pray you, cease to molest and disquiet my settled mind. For truly, I am ready to suffer for the name of Christ, and to endure a thousand deaths if need be.’ Some others came to him, to persuade him to deny Christ with his mouth, and to keep his conscience to himself. ‘My tongue,’ he says, ‘which I have by the goodness of God, cannot be brought to deny the author and giver of it; *for with the heart we believe unto righteousness, and with the tongue we confess unto salvation.*’ Rom 10.10 He spoke many more such words, but especially persuading the beholders to suffer death, and desire martyrdom. After all of this, with a cheerful and glad countenance, never changing so much as his color, he willingly gave himself to be burnt.”

Not much unlike this history of Gordius, is the history also of **Menas** an Egyptian, who was likewise a soldier. In this persecution of Diocletian, he forsook all, and went into the desert, where for a long time he gave himself to abstinence, watching, and meditation on the Scriptures. At length returning again to the city Cotis, there in the open theatre, with a loud voice, he openly proclaimed himself to be a Christian, and upon this he was brought to Pyrrhus the president. When he demanded of him his faith, Menas gave this answer, “It is right that I should confess God, in whom is light and no darkness. ^{1Joh 1.5} For Paul teaches that with the heart we believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Rom 10.10

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After this, the innocent martyr was most painfully pinched and tortured with sundry punishments. In all of this, notwithstanding, he showed a constant heart and invincible faith, having these words in his mouth in the midst of his torments: “There is nothing in my mind that can be compared to the kingdom of heaven. Nor is all the world, if it were weighed in a balance, to be compared with the price of one soul. Who is able to separate us from the love of Jesus Christ our Lord? Shall affliction or anguish? ^{Rom 8.35} I have thus learned from my Lord and my king, not to fear those who kill the body and have no power to kill the soul, but rather to fear Him who has power to destroy both body and soul in hellfire.” ^{Mat 10.28} To make the story short, after he had suffered manifold torments, at last the sentence of death was pronounced upon him, which was that he should be beheaded. Menas being then led to the place of execution, said, “I give you thanks, my Lord and God, who have accepted me as a partaker of your precious death, and have not given me to be devoured by my fierce enemies, but have made me remain constant in your pure faith to this my latter end.” And so this blessed soldier fighting valiantly under the banner of Christ, lost his head, and won his soul.

Basil,⁸⁸ in a certain sermon concerning **forty martyrs**, mentions this story, which is not unworthy to be repeated here. The emperor’s marshal or officer came to a certain place, with the edict which the emperor had issued against the Christians: that whoever confessed Christ, would suffer death after many torments. And first certain men were secretly suborned to detect and accuse the Christians whom they had found out, or laid in wait for. Upon this, the sword, the gibbet, the wheel, and the whips were brought forth. At the terrible sight of these, the hearts of the beholders shook and trembled. Some fled for fear; some stood in doubt what to do; some were so terrified at beholding these engines, and these instruments of torture, that they denied their faith. But some began to suffer, and for a time abided the conflict and agony of martyrdom. But at length being vanquished by the intolerable pain of their torments, they made shipwreck of their consciences, and lost the glory of their confession. Among others, there were at that time forty young soldiers who, after the marshal had shown the emperor’s edict, and required of all men obedience to it, freely and boldly confessed themselves to be Christians. They declared their names to him.

The marshal, somewhat amazed at their boldness of speech, stands in doubt as to what was best to do. Yet immediately he tries to win them with fair words, advising them to consider their youth, and that they should not exchange a sweet and pleasant life, for a cruel and untimely death. After that, he promised them money and honorable offices in the emperor’s name. But little esteeming all these things, they break out into a long and bold oration, affirming that they neither desired life, dignity, nor money, but only the celestial kingdom of Christ. They said, further, that they are ready for the love and faith they have in God, to endure the affliction of the wheel, the cross and the fire. The rude marshal being offended with this, devised a new kind of punishment. He had seen in the middle of the city a certain great pond, which lay exposed to the cold northern wind, for it was winter. He caused them all to be put into this pond, and kept there all that night. But comforting one another, they received this appointed punishment with cheerfulness. They said, as they were putting off their clothes, “We do not put off our clothes, but we put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lust. ^{Eph 4.22} We give you thanks, O Lord, that along with our apparel, we may also put off, by your grace, the sinful man. For by means of the serpent we once put him on, and by the means of Jesus Christ we now put him off.” When they had spoken thus, they were brought naked into the place where they felt the most vehement cold

⁸⁸ *Basil: bishop of Caesarea (329-379).*

— insomuch that their bodies became stiff with it. As soon as it was day, they were brought to the fire, in which they were consumed, and their ashes thrown into the flood.

In this fellowship and company of martyrs, we cannot leave out, or forget the history of **Cyrus**. This Cyrus was a physician born in Alexandria. Fleeing into Egypt in the persecution of Diocletian and Maximian, he led a solitary life in Arabia, yet much spoken of for his learning. After a time one John, born in the city of Edessa, joined Cyrus, leaving the soldier's life which he had previously exercised. But while the persecution raged in a city in Egypt called Canope, a certain godly Christian woman, called Athanasia, and her three daughters, Theoctiste, Theodota, and Eudoxia (with whom Cyrus was well acquainted), were cast into prison for confessing their faith. Fearing their weakness, and accompanied with his brother John, he came and visited them for their better confirmation. At this time, Lirianus was chief captain and lieutenant of Egypt. Athanasius mentions in his apologies and in his epistles, this captain's wickedness and cruelty, especially against females. Cyrus and John were accused and apprehended as those by whose persuasions the daughters of Athanasia despised the gods and the emperor's religion, and could not be brought to do sacrifice. They were therefore put to death by the sword, after the publication of their faithful confession. Athanasia also, and her three daughters, were condemned to death.

There was a lieutenant-general of Diocletian named **Sebastian**, born in France. By his exhortations, he encouraged many martyrs of Christ to constancy, and kept them in the faith. Therefore, being accused to the emperor, he was commanded to be apprehended. He was brought into the open field, where he was shot through the body with innumerable arrows, by his own soldiers. Other martyrs suffered with Sebastian, among whom were Nicostratus, with Zoe his wife; Tranquillinus, with Martia his wife; Traglinus, Claudius, Castor, Tibertius, Castellus, Marcus, and Marcellinus, with many others.

In an exhortation of Ambrose, he commends the martyrdoms of **Agricola** and **Vitalis**, who also suffered in the same persecution. This Vitalis was servant to Agricola. Both had determined to give their lives with other martyrs, for the name of Christ. Vitalis, being sent before by his master, to offer himself to martyrdom, fell first into the hands of persecutors. They labored by all means to cause him to deny Christ. When he would in no case do this, but stoutly persisted in the confession of his faith, they began to exercise him with all kinds of torments. so unmercifully, that there was no whole skin left on his entire body. So Vitalis, in the midst of his agony and painful torments, commended himself to God in a short prayer, and gave up his life. After him, the tormentors set upon Agricola, his master. His virtuous manners being singularly well-liked, and known to his enemies, his suffering was deferred. But Agricola, not abiding the long delay and putting it off, provoked his adversaries to be quicker. He was at length fastened to the cross, and so he finished his martyrdom which he had so long desired.

No less worthy of commemoration is the lamentable martyrdom of **Vincentius**. He was a Spanish priest, a godly and virtuous man, who at this time suffered martyrdom at Valence, under Dacian, the president. Bergomensis gives an account of his martyrdom, taken out of a certain sermon of St. Augustine, as follows:

“Our heart did not conceive a vain and fruitless sight (as it were, in beholding lamentable tragedies), but certainly a great and marvellous sight. I received it with singular pleasure, when the painful passion of victorious Vincentius was read to us. Is there anyone so heavy hearted that he will not be moved in the contemplation of this immoveable martyr, so manly, or rather, so *godly*, fighting against the craft and subtlety of that Serpent, against the tyranny of Dacian, against the horrors of death, and by the mighty Spirit of his God conquering all?

But let us in few words recite the number of his torments, though the pains of them cannot be expressed in many words. First, Dacian caused that martyr to be laid upon the rack, and all the joints of his body distended, until they cracked. This being done in the most extreme and cruel manner, all the members of his painful body were grievously pierced with deadly wounds.

[65] A.D. 323.

Thirdly, they tore his flesh with iron combs sharply filed. And in order that the tormentors might not omit any cruelty on the meek and mild martyr's flesh, they themselves also were scourged at the president's commandment. And lest his pains might seem too easy, they laid his body, being all out of joint, on an iron grate. Tearing it with iron hooks, they seared it with fiery plates, sprinkling him with burning salt. Last of all, this mighty martyr was cast into a dungeon, the floor of which was thickly spread with the sharpest shells that could be gotten. His feet then being fast locked in the stocks, he was left alone without any worldly comfort. But the Lord his God was with him. The Holy Spirit of God (whose office is to comfort the godly afflicted), filled his heart with joy and gladness. Have you prepared a terrible rack, (O, cruel tyrant! O, devouring lion!) for the martyr's bed? The Lord shall make that bed soft and sweet to him. Do you rack his bones and joints all asunder? His bones, his joints, his hairs, are all numbered. Do you torment his flesh with mortal wounds? The Lord shall pour his oil of gladness abundantly into all his sores. Your scraping combs, your sharp fleshhooks, your hot searing irons, your parched salt, your nauseous prison, your cutting shells, your pinching stocks, will all work together for good to this patient martyr. All will work contrary to your expectation. He shall reap great joy into the barn of his soul, out of this mighty harvest of pains that you have brought him into. Yes, you shall find him *Vincentius* indeed, that is, a vanquisher, a triumpher, a conqueror, subduing your madness by his meekness, your tyranny by his patience, your manifold tortures by the manifold graces of God, with which he is plentifully enriched."

In this catalogue of holy martyrs, who suffered in this tenth persecution, there are very many more mentioned in various authors, besides those whom we have comprehended up to now. Such as **Philoromus**, a man of noble birth and great possessions in Alexandria. Being influenced by his friends to favor himself, and to consider his wife and children, not only rejected their counsels, but also was not moved by the threats and torments of the Judge. He kept the confession of Christ inviolate unto death, and was beheaded.

Of like dignity also was **Procopius** in Palestine. After his conversion, he broke his images of silver and gold, and distributed them to the poor. After all kinds of torments — racking, cording, tearing his flesh, goring, stabbing, and fire — at length he had his head struck off.

To these may be added also **Georgius**, a young man of Cappadocia, who stoutly inveighing against the impious idolatry of the emperor, was apprehended and cast into prison. Then he was torn with hooked irons, burnt with hot lime, and stretched with cords. After that, his hands and feet were cut off, with other members of his body. At last he had his head cut off with a sword.

With these aforementioned, add also Sergius and Bacchius; Panthaleon, a physician in Nicomedia; Theodorus of the city of Amasia; Faustus a martyr of Egypt; Gereon, with 318 fellow martyrs who suffered around Celeur. Hermogenes, the president of Athens. He was converted by the constancy of Menas and Eugephus. In their torments, they too suffered for the same faith; also Samonas Gurias and Abibus. Hieron also, with certain of his confessors, under Maximinus; Judes and Domuas, who suffered with many other martyrs at Nicomedia, mentioned above. Evelasius and Maximinus, the emperor's officers, whom Fausta, the maiden, converted in her torments. Also Thirsus, Lucius, Callinicius, Apollonius,

Philemon, Asilas, Leonides, with Arrianus, president of Thebaide. **Cyprian**, likewise, a citizen of Antioch. After he had continued a long time as a filthy magician, or sorcerer, he was at length converted and made a deacon, then a priest, and at last the bishop of Antioch. This Cyprian, with Justina, a maiden, suffered among the martyrs. Also Glicerios at Nicomedia, Felix a minister, Fortunatus, Achilleus, deacons in the city of Valent. Arthemius of Rome, Ciriacus, deacon to Marcellus the bishop, Carpophorus, priest at Thuscia, with Abundus, his deacon. Also Claudius Sirinus Antoninus, who suffered with Marcellinus, the bishop. Cucusatus, in the city of Barcinona. Felix, bishop of Apulia, with Adauctus, and Januarius his priest, Fortunatus and Septimus his readers, who suffered in the city Venusina, under Diocletian.

No less admirable and wonderful was the constancy of **WOMEN**. In the same persecution, they gave their bodies to the tormentors, and their lives for the testimony of Christ, with no less boldness of spirit than the men themselves. We will narrate some examples of those who seem most notable, beginning with **Eulalia**.

There is a city in Portugal called Emerita, in which a maiden born of noble parentage dwelt and was brought up. Her name was Eulalia. Emerita was a rich and celebrated city, yet it was more adorned and celebrated by the martyrdom, blood, and sepulcher of this blessed Eulalia. She had refused great and honorable offers in marriage as one not delighting in courtly dalliance, nor as one who took pleasure in purple and gorgeous apparel, or costly ornaments. But forsaking and despising all these pompous allurements, she showed herself most earnest in preparing her journey to her hoped inheritance and heavenly patronage. As she was modest and discreet in behavior, so was she also witty and sharp in answering her enemies. But when the furious rage of persecution forced her to join herself with God's children in the household of faith, and the Christians were commanded to offer incense and sacrifice to devils or idol gods, the blessed spirit of Eulalia began to kindle. Having a prompt and ready wit, and pouring out her heart before God, she thereby provoked the force and rage of her enemies against her. But the godly care of her parents, fearing that the willing mind of this damsel, so ready to die for Christ, might be the cause of her death, hid her and kept her close at their house in the country, a great way out of the city. Yet, disliking that quiet life, and not wishing any delay, she softly steals out of the doors in the night. Leaving the common road, she passed through the thorny and briary places. Though the silent night was dark and dreadful, she had with her the Lord and giver of light. Like the children of Israel coming out of Egypt had, by the mighty power of God, a cloudy pillar for their guide in the day, and a flame of fire in the night, so had this godly maiden. Fleeing from and forsaking the place where filthy idolatry abounded, she was not oppressed with the dreadful darkness of the night.

In the morning, with bold courage she goes to the tribunal; and in the midst of them all she cries out with a loud voice, "I pray you, is it not a shame for you to thus destroy and kill men's souls, and to throw their bodies alive against the rocks, and cause them to deny the omnipotent God? Would you know (O you unfortunate ones) what I am? Behold, I am one of the Christians, an enemy to your devilish sacrifices. I spurn your idols under my feet. I confess with my heart and mouth that God is omnipotent. Isis, Apollo and Venus, what are they? Maximinus himself, what is he? The first is nothing, for they are the works of men's hands; and the other but a castaway, because he worships them. Therefore, they are both frivolous. Maximinus is a lord of substance. And yet he himself falls down before a stone, and vows the honor of his dignity to those things that are much inferior to his vassals. Why then does he oppress so tyrannically, more worthy and courageous spirits than himself? He

must be a ‘good guide’ and an ‘upright judge,’ who feeds upon innocent blood, rents and tears the bodies of godly men, and what is more, takes delight in destroying and subverting the faith. Go to therefore! Burn, cut, and mangle these earthly members. It is an easy matter to break a brittle substance, but the inward mind you shall not hurt.”

Then the judge, in a great rage, said, “Hangman, take her, and pull her out by the hair of her head, and torment her to the uttermost, let her feel the power of our country’s gods, and let her know what the imperial government of a prince is.

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But you, O sturdy girl, before you die I would gladly have you (if it were possible), revoke your wickedness. Behold what pleasures you may enjoy by the honorable house you came from: your fallen house and progeny will follow you to death with lamentable tears, and the nobility of your kindred will make doleful lamentation for you. What do you mean to do? Will you kill yourself, so young a flower and so near these honorable marriages and great dowries that you may enjoy? Does the glittering and golden pomp of a bridal not move you? Does the piety of your ancestors not affect you? Who is not grieved by your rashness and weakness? Behold here the furniture, ready-prepared for your terrible death. Either you will be beheaded with this sword, or else you will be pulled in pieces by these wild beasts, or else being cast into the fiery flames, you will be consumed to ashes. What great matter is it for you, I pray you, to escape all this? If you will but take and put a little salt and incense into the censers with your fingers, you will be delivered from all these punishments.”

To this Eulalia made no answer, but throws down the idols, and spurns with her feet the incense prepared for the censers. Then without further delay, the executioners took her, and pulled one joint from another, and with the talons of wild beasts tore her sides to the hard bones. All this while she was singing and praising God in this way: “Behold, O Lord, I will not forget you. What a pleasure it is for those, O Christ, who remember your triumphant victories, to attain to these high dignities!” And she still calls upon that holy name, all stained and imbrued with her own blood. This she sang with a bold spirit, neither lamenting nor weeping, but being glad and cheerful, abandoning from her mind all heaviness and grief, when as out of a warm fountain, her mangled members bathed her white and fair skin with fresh blood. Then they proceeded to the last and final torment, which was not only the goring and wounding of her mangled body with the iron grate and hurdle, and terrible harrowing of her flesh, but they burned her on every side with flaming torches. When the cracking flame reached the crown of her head and consumed her, she rested in peace.

As you have now heard the Christian life, and constant death of Eulalia, worthy of praise and commendation, so no less worthy was the blessed **Agnes**, that constant damsel and martyr of God. As she was of honorable parents in Rome, so she lies honorably buried there. She was very young when she was first dedicated to Christ, and boldly resisted the edicts of the emperor, and would not deny or forsake the holy faith through idolatry. She willingly offered her body to hard and painful torments, not refusing to suffer whatever it might be, even if it were death itself. She was therefore ordered to be beheaded. And when she saw a sturdy and cruel fellow stand behind her, and approaching near to her with a naked sword in his hand, she said “I am now glad, and rejoice that you have come. I will willingly receive into my bosom the length of this sword, that thus married to Christ my spouse, I may surmount and escape all the darkness of this world. O eternal governor, grant to open the gates of heaven, once shut up against all the inhabitants of the earth, and receive, O Christ, my soul that seeks you!” Thus speaking, and kneeling upon her knees, she prays to Christ in

heaven, that her neck might be readier for the sword. The executioner then with his bloody hand finished her hope, and at one stroke cut off her head; and by such a short and swift death, he prevented her feeling the pain of it.

I have often complained that the histories of saints have been mixed up with many false additions, and the fabulous inventions of men. Either from a superstitious devotion, or an insidious practice, they have so mangled the saints' histories and lives, that very few remain simple and uncorrupted. I especially find this in the history of good **Katherine**, whom I now have in hand. Although I do not doubt that there was great holiness in her life, excellency in her knowledge, and constancy in her death, yet I do not affirm, nor am I bound to think that all the things told of her are true.⁸⁹ Bergomensis writes that because she openly resisted the emperor Maxentius to his face, in the sight of the people, and rebuked him for his cruelty, she was committed to prison. At length, after she had endured the rack, and the four sharp cutting wheels, she was beheaded, and so finished her martyrdom.

Among the works of Basil, a certain oration is extant concerning **Julitta** the martyr, who came to her martyrdom by the following occasion. A certain avaricious and greedy person of great authority, violently took from her all her goods, lands, chattels, and servants, contrary to all equity and right. She complained to the judges; a day was appointed when the cause should be heard. The spoiled woman, and the spoiling extortioner stood forth together. The woman declared her cause, the man, frowningly, beheld her face. When she had proved that the goods were her own, and that he had dealt wrongfully with her, the wicked extortioner, preferring vile worldly substance to the rightful claims of a Christian body, affirmed her action to be of no force, because she was an outlaw in not observing the emperor's gods. His allegation was allowed as good. Whereupon incense and fire were prepared for her to worship the gods; and unless she would do this, neither the emperor's protection, laws, or judgment, would be extended to her, nor would she enjoy life in that commonwealth. When this handmaid of the Lord heard these words, she said,

“Farewell life, welcome death; farewell riches, welcome poverty. All that I have, if it were a thousand times more, I would rather lose, than speak one wicked and blasphemous word against God my Creator. I yield to you, O my God, most hearty thanks for this gift of grace, that I can contemn and despise this frail and transitory world, esteeming Christian profession above all treasures.”

After this, when any question was demanded, her answer was, “I am the servant of Jesus Christ.” Her kindred and acquaintance flocking to her, advised her to change her mind. But she refused that, with detestation of their idolatry. Immediately the judge condemned her to the fire, and the joyful martyr embraced the sentence as a most sweet and delectable thing.

⁸⁹ Of the many strange fictions about Katherine, some seem incredible, some outright impudent. Such as where Petrus de Natalibus writing of her conversion declares how she was sleeping before a certain picture or table of the crucifix. Christ with his mother Mary appeared to her. And when Mary had offered her to Christ to be his wife, he first refused her for her blackness! The next time, she being baptized, Mary appeared again, and offered her to marry with Christ, who then being pleased, was espoused to him and married, having a golden ring at the same time put on her finger in her sleep! Bergomensis writes that because she openly resisted the emperor Maxentius to his face, in the sight of the people, and rebuked him for his cruelty, she was committed to prison. Then he writes, an angel came to her the same night, comforting her and exhorting her to be strong and constant unto the martyrdom, for she was accepted in the sight of God; and that the Lord would be with her, and that he would give her a mouth and wisdom which her enemies should not withstand — with many other things which I omit here. I also omit the part concerning the fifty philosophers whom she supposedly convicted in disputation, and converted to our religion, and who died martyrs for it.

She prepared herself for the flames, in countenance, gesture, and words, declaring the joy of her heart. And then, embracing the fire, she sweetly slept in the Lord.

Beside these, diverse godly women have been faithful martyrs. **Barbara**, a noble woman in Thracia, after miserable imprisonment, sharp cords, and burning flames put to her sides, was at last beheaded. **Fausta**, a maiden, suffered under Maximinus. By her, Euelasius, a ruler of the emperor's palace, and Maximinus, the president, were both converted, and they also suffered martyrdom. **Juliana**, a maiden of singular beauty, in Nicomedia, after diverse agonies, likewise suffered under Maximinus. **Anasia**, a maiden of Thessalonica, also suffered under Maximinus. **Justina**, who suffered with Cyprian, bishop of Antioch. **Tecla**, **Lucia**, and **Agatha**, were also martyrs; all of whom glorified the Lord Christ with their constant martyrdom in this tenth and last persecution of Diocletian.

Succession of Bishops during the Persecution

During the time of this persecution, the following bishops of Rome succeeded each other: Caius, who succeeded Sixtus, Marcellinus, Marcellus (whom Eusebius does not mention), Eusebius, and Miltiades; all of whom died martyrs in the tempest of this persecution.

[67] A.D. 323.

After the martyrdom of Caius, Marcellinus was ordained bishop. Being brought by Diocletian to the idols, he at first yielded to their idolatry, and was seen to sacrifice. But having been excommunicated by the Christians, he fell into such repentance, that he returned again to Diocletian, and standing to his former confession, and publicly condemning the idolatry of the heathen, he recovered the crown of martyrdom, suffering with Claudius, Cyrinus, and Antoninus.

Marcellus, likewise, was urged by Maxentius to renounce his bishopric and religion, and to sacrifice with them to idols. When he refused, he was beaten with sticks and expelled from the city. Having entered the house of Lucina, a widow, he assembled the congregation. When this came to the ears of Maxentius the tyrant, he turned the house of Lucina into a stable, and made Marcellus the keeper of the beasts. He died from the effects of this cruel treatment.

Among the decretal epistles, in the book of General Councils, there is a long account of the judgment and condemnation of Marcellinus. The patrons of popery in these days take great hold of this to prove the supremacy of the pope to be above all general councils, and that he should not be subject to the condemnation of anyone. The bishops of this Council of Sinuesse condemned Marcellinus, for the words of the council are plain. "They subscribed to his condemnation, and condemned him to be expelled out of the city." Moreover, the forty-two witnesses against Marcellinus were brought in by the same council, and the verdict of the witnesses was demanded and received. What does all this declare, if not that the bishop of Rome was called there, and appeared before the judgment-seat of the council. There he stood subject to their sentence and authority, by the which he was expelled from the city. For being urged by them to condemn himself, he did so, prostrating himself and weeping before them. Whereupon they immediately proceeded to the sentence against him, condemning and pronouncing him to be expelled from the city. Now, whether by this it may be gathered that the bishops of Rome should not be cited, accused, and condemned by any person or persons, let the impartial reader simply judge!

And thus have been given the histories and names of those blessed saints who suffered in the time of the persecution, from the nineteenth year of Diocletian to the seventh and last year of Maxentius, with the deaths and punishments of those tormentors and cruel tyrants

who were the captains of that persecution. And here ended (blessed be Christ) these persecutions in the western churches of Europe, so far as the dominion of Constantine chiefly extended. Yet in Asia, under Licinius, persecution did not cease for four years after.

Persecutions in Persia

In Persia, about this time, under king Sapor, many valiant and constant martyrs suffered, Acindimus, Pegasus, Anempodistus, Epidephorus, Simeon archbishop of Seleucia, Ctesiphon another bishop of Persia, with other ministers and religious men of that region, numbering 128. The idolatrous magicians in Persia, taking counsel together against the Christians, made an accusation to the king, accusing Simeon and Ctesiphon of being favorable to the Roman emperor, and of betraying Persia. Upon hearing this, Sapor was greatly irritated against the Christians, oppressing them with taxes and tributes, utterly impoverishing them, and killing all their priests with the sword.

After that, he calls for **Simeon** the archbishop, who there before the king, declared himself a valiant captain of Christ's church. For when Sapor had commanded him to be led to suffer torments, he neither shrunk for any fear, nor asked for any pardon. At this, the king partly wondering and partly offended, asked why he did not kneel down as he usually did before?" Simeon answered to this, "Before this time I was not brought to you in bonds to betray the true God, as I am now; and for so long I did not refuse to perform what the order and custom of the realm required of me. But now it is not lawful for me to do so, for now I come to stand in defense of our religion and true doctrine."

When Simeon had thus answered, the king persisting in his purpose, offered him the choice either to worship with him in his manner (promising him many great gifts, if he would do so) or if he would not, he threatened destruction to him and to all the other Christians within his land. But Simeon was neither allured by his promises, nor terrified by his threats. He continued constant in his purpose, so that he could not be seduced to perform idolatrous worship, nor to betray the truth of his religion. For this he was committed into bonds, and commanded to be kept until the king's pleasure might be known.

It happened as he was going to prison, that sitting at the king's gate was a certain eunuch, an old tutor or school-master of the king's, named Usthazares. He had been once a Christian, and afterward falling from his profession, he joined with the heathenish multitude in their idolatry. This Usthazares sitting at the door of the king's palace, and seeing Simeon passing by to prison, rose up and revered the bishop. Simeon again, with sharp words (as time would permit) rebuked him, and in great anger cried out against him, who being once a Christian, had cowardly revolted from his profession, and returned to the heathenish idolatry. Hearing these words, the eunuch forthwith burst into tears, and laying aside his courtly apparel, which was sumptuous and costly, he put on a black suit as the token of mourning. Sitting before the court gates, and weeping, he said, "Woe is me, with what hope, with what face will I look hereafter for my God, whom I have now denied, when as this Simeon my familiar acquaintance, thus passing by me, so much disdains me, that he refuses to greet me with even one gentle word?"

These words being brought to the ears of the king procured against him no little indignation. Whereupon, Sapor the king sent for Usthazares. First with gentle words and courtly promises, he began to speak to him, asking him what cause he had to mourn so, and whether there was anything in his house which was denied him, or which he did not have at his own will and asking? Usthazares, answering him, said that there was nothing in that earthly house which was lacking to him, or which he desired. "Yes, I would to God" (he said) "O king, that any other grief or calamity in all the world, whatever it was, had happened to

me rather than this, for which I most justly mourn! For this grieves me: that I am this day alive, who would rather have died long since, than see this sun, which for your pleasure, I appeared to worship against my heart and mind. For this cause I am doubly worthy of death: First, because I have denied Christ; secondly, because I dissemble with you.” Sapor being astonished at the sudden alteration of this man, and doubting whether to be angry with the enchanters or with him, whether to treat him with gentleness or with rigor, at length commanded Usthazares, his ancient servant and first tutor, to be beheaded. As he was going to the place of execution, Usthazares desired of the executioners to wait a little, so that he might send a message to the king, which was this: that for all the old and faithful service he had done to his father and to him, he would now requite him with this one office, to cause a public crier to proclaim the following words, “That Usthazares was beheaded, not for any treachery or crime committed against the king or the realm, but only because he was a Christian, and would not at the king’s pleasure deny his God.” And so according to his request, it was performed and granted. Usthazares desired the cause of his death to be published, because his shrinking back from Christ had been a great occasion to many Christians to do the same. So now those same Christians, hearing that Usthazares died for no other cause than the religion of Christ, they might learn by his example to be fervent and constant in their profession. And thus the blessed eunuch consummated his martyrdom. Simeon hearing of this in prison, was very joyful, and gave God thanks. The following day, being brought before the king, and still refusing at the king’s request to worship visible creatures, was likewise beheaded by the commandment of the king, with a great number more who suffered the same day, numbering a hundred and more.

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All of these were put to death before Simeon. He stood by exhorting them with comfortable words; admonishing them to stand firm and steadfast in the Lord; preaching and teaching them concerning death, resurrection, and true piety; and proving by the Scriptures that what he said was true. He declared moreover, that it was true life indeed to die this way, and that it was death indeed to deny or betray God for fear of punishment. He added further, that there was no man alive who must not die. “For as much as it is appointed for all men here to have an end. But those things which follow hereafter are eternal, things which shall not come to all men after one sort. But as the condition and trade of life differ in different men, and are not alike in all men, so the time shall come, when all men in a moment shall receive immortal rewards according to their doings in this present life. Those who have done well here, life and glory; those who have done evil, perpetual punishment.” With these words of comfortable exhortation, the holy martyrs willingly yielded up their lives to death. After them at last followed Simeon, with two other priests or ministers of his church: Abedecalaas and Ananias. They also with him were partakers of the same martyrdom.

At the suffering of those mentioned above, it happened that Pusices, one of the king’s officers, an overseer of his artificers, was present there. Seeing Ananias, an aged old father, shake and tremble somewhat at the sight of those who suffered, said “O father, a little moment, shut your eyes and be strong, and shortly you will see the sight of God.” Upon these words, Pusices was immediately apprehended, and brought to the king. There he confessed himself to be a Christian. And because he was very bold and dauntless before the king in this cause of Christ’s faith, he was most cruelly handled in the execution of his martyrdom. For they made a hole in the upper part of his neck to thrust in their hand, and plucked his tongue out of his mouth; and so he was put to death. At this time also, the daughter of Pusices, a godly maiden, was apprehended and put to death.

The following year, on the same day when the Christians celebrated the remembrance of the Lord's passion, which we call Good Friday before Easter, king Sapor I issued a cruel and sharp edict throughout all his land, condemning to death all who confessed themselves to be Christians. So that an innumerable multitude of Christians, through the wicked procuring of the malignant magicians, suffered death by the sword, both in the city and the towns. Some were sought out, and some offered themselves willingly, lest they seem to deny Christ by their silence. Thus all the Christians who could be found were slain — many also of the king's own court and household. Among them was Azades, a eunuch whom the king loved and favored. After the king understood that Azades was put to death, being very sorry for him, he commanded that no Christians should be slain except those who were the doctors (theologians) and teachers of the Christian religion.

During the same time, it happened that the queen fell into a severe disease. The cruel Jews, with the wicked magicians, falsely accused Trabula, the sister of Simeon the martyr, and also another sister of hers, of having worked secret charms to hurt the queen, to revenge the death of Simeon. This accusation being believed, innocent Trabula and her sister were condemned and cut asunder with a saw. Their quarters were hung upon stakes, and the queen passed between them, thinking by this to be delivered from her sickness.

Now as the king had commanded that no Christians should be put to death, but only those who were the teachers and leaders of the flock, the magicians left no means untried to further the matter. Thus great affliction and persecution arose among the bishops and teachers of the church.

Miserable, and almost innumerable were the slaughters under the reign of this Sapor, of bishops, ministers, deacons, monks, nuns, and other ecclesiastical persons, who clung to the doctrine of Christ, and suffered for it. The names of the bishops, besides the other multitude taken in the persecution, are Barbasimes, Paulus, Gaddiabes, Sabinus, Mareas, Mocius, Johannes, Hormisdas, Papas, Jacobus, Romas, Maares, Agas, Bochres, Abdas, Abiesus, Joannes, Abramius, Agdelas, Sabores, Isaac, Dausas, Bicorn with Maureanda his fellow bishop, and the rest of his churches under him, numbering 250 persons. It is not possible for any history to comprehend the whole multitude of those who suffered in this persecution, the manner of their apprehension, the cruelty of their torments, nor how and in what places they suffered. The number of them that can be reckoned comes to 16,000 men and women.

The rumor of this miserable affliction of the Christians in the kingdom of Persia, coming to the ears of emperor Constantine, put him in great heaviness, not knowing how to help in the matter, which indeed was very difficult for him to do. At the same time it happened that certain ambassadors were at Rome from Sapor, king of Persia; to whom Constantine readily granted all their requests, thinking thereby to obtain better friendship at their king's hands, and that at his request Sapor would be good to the Christians. He therefore wrote to Sapor in their behalf, and sent his epistle by the ambassadors. He declared that he would be much beholden to him, if at his request he would give some quiet and rest to the Christians; that there was nothing in their religion which he could justly blame. For, "in their sacrifices they kill nothing, and shed no blood, but only offer up unbloody sacrifices; in making their prayers to God; they do not delight in blood-shedding; but only in the soul that loves virtue, and follows that doctrine and knowledge which agrees with true piety. And, therefore, those men who learn to so believe and worship God, are more to be commended."

Bk. I. The 300 years after Christ – Ten Persecutions (64-324)

Moreover, he assures Sapor that he would find God more merciful to him, if he would embrace the godly piety and truth of the Christians, etc. At the end of the epistle Constantine adds these words:

“What joy — what gladness it would be to my heart, to hear that the state of the Persians also flourishes, as I wish it to do, by your encouraging the Christians. So that both you with them, and they with you, in long prosperity may enjoy as much felicity together as your hearts would desire, and in so doing, no doubt you shall. For so you shall have God, who is the Author and Creator of all this universal world, be merciful and gracious to you. These men, I therefore commend to you upon your kingly honor, and upon your clemency and piety with which you are endued. I commit them to you, desiring you to receive them according to your humanity and benignity, and convenient to your estate. In so doing you will now both procure to yourself grace through your faith, and also grant to me great pleasure and a benefit worthy of thanks.”

This letter, written by Constantine to King Sapor, shows what care this godly prince had for those who believed in Christ, not only in his own monarchy, but also in all places of the world.

By contrast, under the later emperor Julian the Apostate (r. 361-363),⁹⁰ many would suffer martyrdom by the idolaters. Sozomen and also Theodoret write this about the lamentable tragedy of bishop Marcus Arethusius —

“This man, at the commandment of Constantine, pulled down a certain temple dedicated to idols, and in its place, built a church where the Christians might congregate. The Arethusians (those who opposed Arethusius ⁹¹) remembering the little goodwill that Julian bore to him, accused Arethusius of being a traitor and an enemy to Julian. At first, as the Scripture teaches, he prepared himself to flee. ^{Mat 24.16} But when he perceived that certain of his kinsmen and friends were apprehended in his stead, he returned of his own accord, offering himself to those who thirsted for his blood. When they had him in their possession, as men neither pitying his old age and worn years, nor abashed at the virtuous conversation of a man so distinguished by both his life and doctrine, they first stripped him naked, and pitifully beat him.

[69] A.D. 323.

“Then they cast him into a foul filthy sewer, and bringing him out, they caused boys to pierce him with sharp sticks. Lastly, they put him in a basket, and anointing him with honey and broth, they hung him up in the heat of the sun, as meat for wasps and flies. And all this they did to him to force him either to rebuild the temple, or else to give as much money as would pay for its building. But purposing to suffer and abide their grievous torments, he refused to do what they demanded. At length, taking him to be but a poor man, and not able to pay such a sum of money, they promised to forgive him one-half, if he would pay the other half. But hanging in the basket pitifully wounded with the sharpened sticks, and bitten by the wasps, he not only concealed his pain, but also derided those wicked ones, and called them base, low, and worldly people; and declared himself to be exalted and set on high. When at length they demanded of him but a small sum of money, he answered, ‘It is as great wickedness to give one penny in a case of impiety, as to bestow the whole.’ Thus not being able to prevail against

⁹⁰ Julian the Apostate: born in Constantinople in 331; the nephew of Constantine the Great. Julian promoted paganism and restored ancient Roman religious traditions, to counter the spread of Christianity, hence “the Apostate.”

⁹¹ Sozomen ascribes the rage of the Arethusians against Christian virgins, to the efforts of Constantine, who had prevented their being used as prostitutes in the temple of Venus at Heliopolis — the temple that Arethusius tore down 30 years earlier. Hence their continuing rage against him now, under Julian the Apostate.

him, they let him down, and leaving him, they went their way — that in God’s provision, every man might learn from his mouth the example of true piety and faithfulness.”

Although addressing these persecutions of Persia somewhat strays out of the order of time and place, yet as these holy martyrs also gave so faithful a testimony of the Lord Jesus with their blood, I thought it improper to pass over them without some testimony. And here these persecutions of the primitive church ended.

The Ten Persecutions and the Apocalypse of John

It may perhaps astonish some, while reading the history of these terrible persecutions, that God the Almighty director of all things, should allow his own faithful servants, believing in his only begotten son Jesus, to be so cruelly and wrongfully tormented and put to death, and during so many years. I have nothing to answer such astonishment, but to say in the words of Jerome,

“We should not be astonished to see the wicked prevail against the holy; for, as in the beginning of the world, we see that Abel the just was killed by wicked Cain, and that the sons of Israel were afflicted by the Egyptians; so even the Lord himself was crucified by the Jews, Barabbas the thief being let go.”

Time would not suffice for me to recite how the godly suffer in this world while the wicked flourish and prevail. Whatever the cause may be, this is sufficient for us, and may it be to all men — that we are sure these afflictions and persecutions of God’s people in this world do not come by any chance or blind fortune, but by the appointment and forewarning of God. For so in the old law, by the affliction of the children of Israel, God prefigured these persecutions of the Christians. So by the words of Christ’s own mouth in the gospel, He forewarned his church of these troubles. Nor did he allow these great afflictions to fall upon his servants, before he had warned them sufficiently by special revelation in the Apocalypse of John, his servant.

In this book he declared to his church, not only what troubles were coming, where, and by whom they would come, but also in plain numbers — if the words of the prophecy are well understood — he assigns the true time, how long the persecutions would continue, and when they would cease. For as there is no doubt that the beast with seven heads, bearing the whore of Babylon, drunken with the blood of saints, signified the city of Rome, so in my judgment, the 42 months (in chapter 13 of the Apocalypse) is to be expounded by taking every month for a sabbath years. That is, reckoning a month for seven years, so that 42 such sabbaths of years add up to the number of years between the time of Christ’s death, and the last year of the persecution of Maxentius. This is when Constantine, fighting under the banner of Christ, overcame him, and made an end of all persecution within the monarchy of Rome.⁹² The number of these years amounted to 294. If the other 6 years of persecution under Licinius in Asia is added to these, it fills up a full 300 years. And that is how long the persecution of Christ’s people continued under the heathen tyrants and emperors of the monarchy of Rome, according to the 42 months specified in chapter 13 of the Apocalypse.

Because the matter is of no small importance, a better explanation of this greatly pertains to the public utility of the church. And lest any might suspect me of following any private

⁹² That our author has not succeeded in so elucidating this remarkable portion of Scripture, as to free it from the numberless difficulties that envelope it, is no more than must be said of every other commentator who has undertaken the exposition of unfulfilled prophecy. He has, however, miscalculated the dates of his first period of 300 years. For from the crucifixion of our Lord to the defeat of Maxentius by Constantine (A.D. 312), was a period of only 279 years, which added to the 6 years of persecution under Licinius would be only 285 years, instead of the precise 300. [Ed.]

interpretation of my own, I thought it good to communicate to the reader what has been imparted to me, in the opening of these mystical numbers in this aforesaid book of the Revelation, as follows.

While I was engaged in these histories, and considered the exceeding rage of these persecutions, the intolerable torments of the blessed saints — so cruelly racked, torn, and plucked to pieces, with all the kinds of tortures that could be devised, more bitter than death itself — I could not without great sorrow of mind, behold their grievous afflictions, nor write of their bloody sufferings. And the hotter the persecutions grew, the more my sympathy with them increased — not only pitying their woeful case, but almost reasoning with God, foolishly thinking this: Why would God out of his goodness, allow his children and servants to be so vehemently tormented and afflicted? If mortal things were governed by heavenly Providence (as it must be granted), then why did the wicked thus flourish, and the godly suffer? If sinners deserved punishment, and they alone were not sinners, why were His servants' deaths so sharp and bitter above all others? At least, why would the Lord allow the vehemency of these horrible persecutions to endure so long, showing no certain determined end of their tribulations by which, knowing the appointed determination of Almighty God, they might endure them with more consolation? For the Israelites in the captivity of Babylon were limited to 70 years; ^{Jer 29.10} and under Pharaoh they were promised a deliverance after 400 years; ^{Gen 15.13} and also under the Syrian tyrants, 62 weeks were assigned to them. ^{Dan 9.25} But in *these* persecutions I could find no end determined for their deliverance.

Whereupon, greatly marvelling with myself, I searched the Book of Revelation to see whether anything might be found there. And although I perceived the beast described there signified the empire of Rome, which had power to overcome the saints; yet concerning the time and continuance of these persecutions under the beast, I found nothing to satisfy my doubt. For although I read there of 42 months, of a “time, times, and half a time,” ^{Rev 12.14} of 1260 days; ^{Rev 11.3} yet all this, by computation, comes to only three and a half years. Nothing came near the long continuance of these persecutions which lasted 300 years. Thus being vexed in spirit about the reckoning of these numbers and years, it so happened that on a Sunday morning, as I lay in my bed and mused about these numbers, it suddenly occurred to my mind, to count these months by *sabbaths*, just as the weeks of Daniel are counted by sabbaths. Thereupon I began to reckon the 42 months by sabbaths, first by *months*. But that would not serve; then I reckoned by sabbaths of *years*, in which I began to feel some probable understanding. Yet not satisfied with this, and in order to make the matter more sure, I repaired to certain merchants of my acquaintance, one of whom is departed, a true faithful servant of the Lord. The other two are still alive, and are witnesses of this. The number of these aforesaid 42 months being propounded to them, and examined by sabbaths of *years*, the whole sum was found to amount to 294 years, which was the full time of these persecutions, neither more nor less.

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Now this one clasp being opened, the other numbers that follow are plain and manifest to the intelligent reader. For where mention is made of three and a half years, of one time, two times and half a time, also of 1260 days, all these come to one reckoning and signify 42 months — by which “months,” as said, signified the whole time of these primitive persecutions, as here it may appear in order.

The mystical numbers in the Apocalypse opened.

First, where mention is made (Rev 11.3), that the two prophets shall prophesy 1260 days; and also that the woman fleeing into the desert, will be fed there 1260 days (Rev 12.6), who does not know that 1260 days makes three and a half years? That is, 42 months.

Secondly, where we read (Rev 11.8-9) the bodies of the two aforesaid prophets will lie in the streets of the great city unburied for three and a half days, and after the said three and a half days they will revive again, etc., let the hours of these three and a half days (which is 42), be reckoned every day as a sabbath of years, or else every day as a month, and they come to 42 months.

Thirdly, where it is said (Rev 12.14) that the woman had two wings given her to fly into the desert for a time, times and half a time, give for one time one year, or one day; for two times, two years or two days; for half a time, half a year, or half a day; and so it is manifest, that these three and a half years amount to 42 months.

Fourthly, account these 42 months, during which the beast had power to make war (Rev 11), by sabbath of years; that is, seven years for a month, or every month for seven years, and it amounts to 294 years.

And so we just have the years, days, times, and months of these aforesaid persecutions under the beast, neither shorter nor longer — reckoning from the death of John Baptist under Herod, to the end of Maxentius, and of Licinius. These were the two last great persecutors, the one in the West, the other in the East, who were both vanquished by godly Constantine. And so peace was given to the church, although not so ample that many tumults and troubles did not afterward ensue; yet they did not last long. And the chief brunt of these Roman persecutions which the Holy Spirit especially considered above all others in his Revelation, thus ended in the time of Constantine. Then the great dragon, the devil, to wit, the fierce rage and power of his malicious persecuting, was chained for a thousand years after this, so that he could not prevail. But the power and glory of the gospel gradually increased and spread with great joy and liberty, so that at length it prevailed. It got the upper hand and replenished the whole earth, rightly verifying in this the water of Ezekiel, which issued out of the right side of the altar. ^{Eze 47.1} The further it ran, the deeper it grew, till at length it replenished the whole ocean, and healed all the fishes in it. So too, the course of the gospel proceeding from small and hard beginnings, still kept its stream. The more it was stopped, the swifter it ran. By blood it fed, by death it enlivened, by cutting it multiplied, through violence it sprang; till at last, out of thralldom and oppression, the gospel burst forth into perfect liberty, and flourished in all prosperity. If only the Christians could have used this liberty wisely and moderately, and not abused it, forgetting their former estate to their own pride, pomp, and worldly ease, as it afterwards came to pass. More is to be said about this (Lord willing) in the proper place and time.

And thus much regarding the prophetic numbers in the Apocalypse. In this, the eternal wisdom and high providence of Almighty God is to be magnified, so disposing and governing his church, that no adversity or perturbation happens to it at any time, which His wisdom does not foresee and preordain. Nor does He preordain or determine anything which he does not most truly perform, both foreseeing the beginning of such persecutions, and determining the end of them — how long to continue, and when to cease.

Thus much I have mentioned, by the way, lest anyone be surprised to read of the church being so long and for so many years under such miserable and extreme afflictions, in which neither chance nor fortune, nor disposition of man, has had any place, but only the fore-counsel and determination of the Lord governing and disposing them. He not only allowed them, and foresaw those persecutions before they occurred, but also appointed the times and years for how long they would last, and when they would have an end, such as by the 42 months in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of Revelation has been declared. These months, containing 294 years (if they are rightly gathered), make the full time between the first year of the persecution of Christ under the Jews and Herod, till the last year of persecution under Licinius. This was from the nativity of Christ, to the year 324. After this year, according to the preordinate council of God, when His severity had been sufficiently declared upon his own house, it pleased Him to show mercy again, and to bind up Satan the old serpent, according to chapter 20 of the Revelation, for the space of a thousand years; that is, from the time of Licinius to the time of John Wycliffe and John Huss.⁹³ During all this time, although certain conflicts and tumults have arisen among Christian bishops themselves in the church, yet no universal murdering persecution was stirring before the preaching of Wycliffe, Huss, and such others, as it will appear in the further process of this history (Christ willing and aiding us).

A Portrait of Constantine

Thus having discoursed at length about these horrible persecutions and heavy afflictions of the Christian martyrs; now by the grace of God, coming out of this red sea of bloody persecution, leaving Pharaoh and his host behind, let us sing gloriously to the worthy name of our God. Through the blood of the Lamb after long and tedious afflictions, He at length has visited his people with comfort, chained Satan, and sent his meek Moses (I mean gentle Constantine). By him it pleased the Lord to work deliverance for his captive people, to set his servants at liberty, to turn their mourning into joy, to magnify the church of his Son, to destroy the idols of all the world, to grant life and liberty (and not so much riches) to those who before were despised by all the world. ^{1Cor 4.13} And all this was by the means of godly Constantine, the meek and most Christian emperor. Concerning his divine victories against so many tyrants and emperors, against the persecutors of Christ's people, and lastly, against Licinius (A.D. 324); also his other noble acts and prowesses, his blessed virtues, and his happy birth and progeny – we comprehended these in part before. A part now remains to be declared.

This Constantine was the son of Constantius, the emperor, a good and virtuous child of a good and virtuous father, born in Britain (says Eutropius), whose mother was named Helena, daughter of King Coilus – although Ambrose, in his funeral oration on the death of Theodosius, says that she was an innkeeper's daughter. Constantine was a most bountiful and gracious prince, having a desire to encourage learning; he would often read and study. He had wonderful success and prosperity in all things he took in hand, the reason of which was supposed to be because he was so great a favorer of the Christian faith. Once he had embraced this faith, he ever after most devoutly and religiously revered it, and he commanded by special proclamation, that every man should profess the same religion throughout all the Roman empire. Though he had been addicted to the worship of idols through the allurement of his wife, Fausta, and had sacrificed to them, after the discomfiture of Maxentius in battle, he utterly abjured idol worship. Yet he deferred his

⁹³ Wycliffe too believed the thousand years had ended, and Satan was loose in his own time (late 1300s).

baptism to his old age, because he had determined to journey into Persia, and thought to be baptized in the Jordan. (Euseb. lib. 4. De vita Constantini.)

As to his natural disposition and wit, he was very eloquent, a good philosopher, and sharp and ingenious in disputation. He was accustomed to say that an emperor ought to refuse no labor for the utility of this commonwealth; yes, even to risk mangling his body to remedy it.

[71] A.D. 323.

He first entered into the empire by the mercy of God, who after long waves of doleful persecution would restore peace and tranquility to his church (A.D. 311), as Eusebius records in his chronicle. The church enjoyed great peace and tranquility under the reign of this good emperor, who took great pains in the preservation of it. First, before he had subdued Licinius, he set forth many edicts for the restitution of the goods of the church, for bringing the Christians back out of exile, for quieting the dissensions of the doctors or bishops of the church, for setting them free from public charges, and similar things, even as his Constitutions declare. In them is contained this prayer of the good Constantine:

“To you therefore I now pray, Oh most mighty God, that you will grant to be merciful, and pardon all the eastern parts and their inhabitants, being oppressed with calamity. And grant that by me, your servant, you will of your goodness help and relieve them. And I do not crave these things rashly at your hands, O Lord, most mighty and holiest God of all. For being persuaded by the only oracles, I have both begun and also finished wholesome and profitable things. And further, by bearing and showing your ensign, I have overcome a mighty and strong host. And when any necessity of the commonwealth committed to my charge requires it (following those signs and tokens of your virtues), I will boldly go forth and fight against my enemies. And for this cause I have sacrificed my soul to you, purified and cleansed with both your love and fear of You. Yes, truly, your name I sincerely love, and your power I reverence, which by many tokens and wonders have thereby shown and confirmed my belief and faith.

Therefore I will do my endeavor, and bend myself to this, so that I may rebuild your most holy house, which those wicked and ungodly emperors have laid waste. I desire to bring and establish your people in firm peace and tranquility, and to do that for the public utility of all the inhabitants of the earth. Those who yet err, and are out of the Way, enjoy the benefit of peace and quietness with and among the number of the faithful. For I trust that the restitution of the like society and participation, may be a means to bring those also who err, into the perfect Way of truth. Therefore, let no man be grievous to another, but what every man thinks best, let him do that. For those who are wise ought to be thoroughly persuaded that they mean only to live holily, as those should do whom the Spirit of God moves to take their delight and recreation in reading in His holy will. And if others willfully go out of the Way, clinging to the synagogues of false doctrine, they may do so at their own peril.

As for us, we have the most worthy house or church of God’s truth, which according to his own goodness and nature, He has given us. And this also we wish for them, that with like participation and common consent, they may feel with us the same delectation of mind. For this religion of ours is neither new, nor newly invented, but it is as old as we believe the creation of the world to be, and which God has commanded to be celebrated with such worship as pleases Him. But all living men are liars, and are deceived with diverse and sundry allusions. You, O God, for Christ your Son’s sake, do not suffer this wickedness to take root again. You have set up a clear burning light, that thereby as many as you have chosen may come to you, as your miracles prove. It is your power that keeps us in innocency and fidelity. The sun and the moon run their appointed course. Nor do the stars in ranging ways wander to whatever place of the world they choose themselves. The days, years, months, and times keep their appointed turns. The earth abides firm and unmovable at your word; and the wind

Bk. I. The 300 years after Christ – Ten Persecutions (64-324)

storms and blows at the times directed by you. The streaming watery floods ebb in time according to their flow. The raging sea abides within her bounded limits. And as the ocean stretches herself out in equal length and breadth with the whole earth, this must be wrought with some marvellous workmanship by Your own hand. This thing, without all doubt, unless it were made and disposed at your will, so great a difference and partition between, would before this time have brought utter ruin and destruction both to the life of man, and to all that belongs to man beside. Because they have such great and huge conflicts among themselves, as also the invisible spirits have, we give you thanks, O Lord most mighty, God of all gods, that all mankind has not been destroyed by it. Surely even as greatly as your benignity and gentleness are manifested by diverse and sundry benefits bestowed upon us, so much also these are set forth and declared in the discipline of your eternal word, to those who are heavenly wise, and apply themselves to the attainment of sincere and true virtue. But if there are any who little regard, or have but small respect for the consideration of this, let them not blame or lay fault on others who do the same. For that medicine by which health is obtained, is manifestly offered to all men.

Now, therefore, let no man go about subverting what experience itself shows (of necessity) to be pure and good. Let us therefore altogether use the participation of this benefit bestowed upon us — that is to say, the benefit of peace and tranquility, setting apart all controversy. And let no man hurt or be prejudicial to his fellow for that thing which he thinks he has done well. If he thinks he may profit his neighbor by what any man knows and has experienced, let him do it; if not, let him give it up, and remit it till another time. For there is a great diversity between the willing and voluntary embracing of religion, and when a man is forced and compelled to it.”

Such was the goodness of this emperor Constantine, or rather such was the providence of Almighty God toward his church in stirring him up, that all his care was how to benefit and enlarge it. Nor was it enough for him to deliver the church and people of God from the outward vexation of foreign tyrants and persecutors. His godly care was no less excited in quieting the inward dissensions and disturbance of the church, among the Christian bishops themselves. Nor did his vigilance less extend to erecting, restoring, and enriching the churches of God in all cities, and in providing for their ministers.

In writing to Miltiades, the bishop of Rome, and to Marcus, he declares in his letters how Cecilianus, bishop of Carthage, had been accused by diverse colleagues and fellow bishops of his. Therefore his will is that the said Cecilianus, with ten bishops who were his accusers, and ten others who were his defenders, should repair to him at Rome. There, with the assistance of the aforesaid Miltiades, Rheticus, Maternus, Marinus, and their fellow colleagues, the cause of Cecilianus might be heard and rightly examined, so that all schism and division might be cut off from among them. In this, Constantine’s fervent desire for peace and unity may well appear.

For like cause, he also writes to Chrestus, bishop of Syracuse. He was so desirous to nourish peace and concord in the church, that he offers to him, with his under ministers and three servants, his free carriage to come up to Constantine and to the council of other bishops, to find agreement in certain matters belonging to the church.

He likewise directs his edict in behalf of the Christians, to the provinces of Palestine and the parts around it, for the release of those who were in captivity, for restoring those who had sustained any loss in the former persecution, and for refreshing those who had been oppressed with any ignominy or molestation for their confession’s sake. He declared in the edict how his whole body, life, and soul, and whatever is in him, he owes to God and to the service of Him, etc.

Moreover, he writes another letter to Eusebius, for the edifying of new Christian churches, and restoring those which had been destroyed before by foreign enemies. And after he had gathered the synod of Nice for the study of peace and unity in the church, he writes about it to Alexander and Arius.

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In his letters he most lamentably uttered the great grief of his heart, to see and hear of their contention and division, by which the peace and common harmony of the church was broken, the synod provoked and resisted, and the holy people of the Lord divided into parts and tumults. This was contrary to the office of good and circumspect men, whose duty was rather to nourish concord, and to seek tranquility. He declared moreover in his epistle, that the first origin and occasion of their contentious dissension arose upon vain and trifling terms, vile causes and light questions, and pieces of questions about such matters that are neither to be moved, nor being moved, are to be answered. They are more curious to be searched, and more perilous to be expressed, than necessary to be inquired. Therefore he entreats them and persuades them by all means — not only with reasons, but also with tears and sighing sobs — that they would again restore peace to the church, and quietness to the rest of his life (which otherwise would not be sweet to him); and that they would return again to the communion of the reverend council.

Thus much I thought summarily to comprehend, by which the divine disposition and singular gentle nature of this meek and religious Constantine, might more plainly appear to all princes, for them to learn by his example what zeal they ought to bear toward the church of Christ, how gently they ought to govern it, and how to be beneficial to it.

Many other edicts and epistles written to other places and parties, are expressed at large in the second book of Eusebius' "Life of Constantine," in which the zealous care and princely beneficence of this noble emperor toward the church of Christ may appear. A brief recapitulation of that book follows here. (Sozo. lib. i. cap. 8, 9.)

First, he commanded all those to be set free, who for the confession of Christ had been condemned to banishment, or to the mines, or to any public or private labor. Those who were put to any infamy or shame among the multitude, he ordered to be discharged from all such ignominy. Soldiers who before were deprived either of their place, or their wages, had liberty given them either to serve again in their place, or to live quietly at home. Whatever honor, place, or dignity had been taken away from any man, he commanded to be restored to them again. And that the goods and possessions of those who had suffered death for Christ, however they were alienated, should return to their heirs or next of kin, or for lack of those, should be given to the church. He commanded, moreover, that only Christians should bear office. He charged and restrained the heathens, that they should neither sacrifice nor exercise any more divinations and ceremonies of the Gentiles, nor set up any images, nor keep any feasts of the heathen idolaters. He moreover corrected and abolished all such unlawful manners and usages in the cities as might be hurtful to the church.

Among the Romans was an old law, that those who had no children should be deprived of half their goods. Also, that those over twenty-five years of age and unmarried, should not have the same privileges as those who were married, nor should they be their heirs, to whom notwithstanding they were next of kin. These laws, because they seemed unreasonable, he abrogated and took away. There was also another law among the Romans, that those who made their wills, and were sick, had certain prescribed words appointed for them to use; and unless they did so, their wills were of no effect. Constantine also repealed this law,

permitting every man in making his testament to use whatever words or whatever witnesses he wished. Likewise among the Romans he restrained and took away the cruel and bloody spectacles and sights, where men would kill one another with swords. Where there were no churches, he commanded new ones to be built; where any were decayed, he commanded them to be repaired; where any were too small, he caused them to be enlarged, giving to them great gifts and revenues, not only out of public tributes and taxes, but also out of his own private treasures. When any bishops required any council to be held, he satisfied their petitions. And whatever they established in their councils and synods, if it was godly and honest, he was ready to confirm. He inscribed the armor of his soldiers with the sign of the cross, that they might sooner learn to forget their old superstitious idolatry. Moreover, like a worthy emperor, he prescribed a certain form of prayer instead of a catechism for every man to have, so that he might learn how to pray, and to invoke God. This form of prayer is recited in Eusebius' "Life of Constantine" (lib. 4) as follows:

"We acknowledge you to be our only God; we confess you to be our King; we invoke and call upon you our only Helper, for by you we obtain our victories, and by you we vanquish and subdue our enemies. To you we attribute whatever present benefits we enjoy, and by you we hope for good things to come. To you we direct all our prayers and petitions, most humbly beseeching you to preserve Constantine our emperor and his noble children in long life, and to give them victory over all their enemies, through Christ our Lord; Amen."

In his own palace he set up a house for prayer and preaching, and he used to pray and sing with his people. Also in his wars, he did not go without his tabernacle appointed for the same purpose. He commanded Sunday to be kept holy by all men, and free from all judiciary causes, from markets, fairs, and all manual labors, excepting only husbandry. He especially charged that no images or monuments of idolatry should be set up.

He gave men of the clergy and of the ministry in all places special privileges and immunities, so that if any were brought before the civil magistrates, and wished to appeal to his bishop for sentencing, it would be lawful for him to do so; and that sentence of the bishop would stand in as great force as if the magistrate or the emperor himself had pronounced it.

But here it is to be observed that the clerics and ministers then newly coming out of persecution, were in those days neither so great in number, nor in order of life, of like disposition to these now living in our days.

Constantine also had no less care and provision for the maintenance of schools pertaining to the church, and for the encouragement of the arts and liberal sciences, especially of divinity. He not only furnished them with stipends and subsidies, but also defended them with large privileges and exemptions.

Besides this, so far did his godly zeal and princely care and provision extend to the church of Christ, that he provided books and volumes of Scripture, to be plainly written and copied out, to remain in the public churches for the use of posterity. Writing to Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, in a special letter (Euseb. De vita Constant, lib. iv.) he desires him with all diligence to procure fifty volumes of parchment, well bound and compacted, in which he should cause to be written out of the Scripture in a fair and legible hand, those things he thought necessary and profitable for the instruction of the church, And he allows him for that business, two public ministers, etc.

In perusing and writing this history, and in considering the Christian zeal of this emperor, I wish either that our art of printing and the plenty of our books, had been available in his days, or that the same heroic heart towards the Christian religion, which was in this

excellent monarch, might appear to some extent in inferior princes reigning in our own printing-days.

The liberal hand of this emperor born to do all men good, was no less open and ready towards the need and poverty of those who either by loss of parents, or other occasions, were not able to help themselves. For them he commanded a due supply both of corn and raiment to be ministered out of his own coffers, to the necessary relief of the poor men, women, children, orphans, and widows. (Euseb. de vita Constant, lib. iv.)

The Donation of Constantine

Here it will be requisite to say something about the alleged donation of Constantine. It is upon this, as their chief anchor hold, that the bishops of Rome ground their supreme dominion and right over all the political government of the western parts, and the spiritual government of all the other sees and parts of the world. Many arguments might be adduced here, if leisure from other matters would allow me to prove that Constantine never gave this donation, and that the history of it is false, and a forgery. I offer these:

[73] A.D. 325.

First, No ancient history, nor yet any doctor, makes any mention of it.

Nauclerus reports it to be affirmed in the history of Isidorus. But in the old copies of Isidorus no such thing is to be found.

Gratian, the compiler of the decrees, recites that decree, not upon any ancient authority, but only under the title of Palea.

Gelasius is said to give some testimony of it (Dist. 15. Sancta Romana), but the clause of the said distinction regarding that matter is not extant in the ancient books.

Historian Otho Phrysingensis (Otto of Freising), about the time of Gratian, after he declares the opinion of those who favor the *papacy*, affirming that this donation was given by Constantine to Pope Sylvester, also mentions the opinion of those who favor the *empire*, affirming the contrary.

How could Constantine have yielded up to Sylvester all the political dominions over the west, when at his death, Constantine dividing the empire to his three sons, gave the western part of the empire to one, the eastern part to the second, and the middle part to the third?

Is it likely that Theodosius after them, being a just and a religious prince, would or could have occupied the city of Rome, if it had not been his right, but had belonged to the pope? — and so did many other emperors after him occupy the city.

The phrase of this decree, being compared with the phrase and style of Constantine in his other edicts and letters specified above, does not agree with them [*i.e.*, it is forged].

Seeing that the papists themselves confess that the decree of this donation was written in Greek, how does that agree with the truth, when it was written, not to the Grecians, but to the Romans? And also, Constantine himself, who did not understand the Greek tongue, was obliged to use the Latin tongue in the Council of Nice.

The contents of this donation (whoever its forger was), betrays itself. For if what is confessed there is true — that he was baptized at Rome by Sylvester, and the fourth day after his baptism this patrimony was given (which was before his battle against Maximinus, or Licinius, in A.D. 317, as Nicephorus records) then how does this accord with what follows in the donation — namely, for him to have given Sylvester jurisdiction over the other four

principal sees of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Jerusalem? Especially when the city of Constantinople had not yet begun before the death of Maximinus, or Licinius, and was not finished before the twenty-eighth year of the reign of Constantine (A.D. 339) — or if it is true (as Jerome calculated) that it was finished the twenty-third year of his reign, which was A.D. 334, long after this donation, by their own account.

Furthermore, where in the said Constitution it is said that Constantine was baptized at Rome by Pope Sylvester, and thereby was purged of leprosy. This fable does not agree with the truth of history.⁹⁴ For all the historians agree that he was baptized, not at Rome, but at Nicomedia; and moreover, as by their testimony it appears that it was not by Sylvester, but by Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia; and not before his battle against Maximinus, or Licinius, but in the thirty-first year of his reign, a little before his death.

Again, whereas Constantine in this donation allegedly appointed Sylvester to have the principality over the other four patriarchal sees, that makes Constantine contradict himself. For in the Council of Nice, he afterwards agreed with other bishops, that all four patriarchal sees should have equal jurisdiction, each one over his own territory and precinct.

To conclude briefly: whoever desires to be more abundantly satisfied regarding this matter, let him read the books of Marsilius Patavinus, entitled *Defensor pacis* (A.D. 1324); the books of Laurentius Valla (A.D. 1440); of Antoninus archbishop of Florence, who plainly denies in his history, that this donation is to be found in the old books of the decrees; the books of Cusanus Cardinalis, lib. 3. cap. 2, writing to the Council of Basel (A.D. 1460); of Aeneas Silvius *In dialogo*; of Hier. Paulus Cattalanus (A.D. 1496); of Raphael Wolateranus (A.D. 1550); of Lutherus (A.D. 1537), etc. All of these, by many and evident proofs, dispute and prove this donation not to proceed from Constantine, but to be something that is untruly pretended, or rather, an imagined fable, or else to be the deed of Pepin or Charles, or some other, if it were ever the deed of anyone.

And thus I have briefly collected the narration of the noble acts, and heavenly virtues of this most famous Emperor Constantine the Great. It is a singular spectacle for all Christian princes to behold and imitate, and worthy of perpetual memory in all congregations of Christian saints. His fervent zeal and piety toward all congregations, and to all the servants of Christ, was notable; but especially to be admired is the affection and reverence of his heart toward those who had suffered for the confession of Christ in the persecutions before. He held them principally in veneration, so much so, that he embraced and kissed their wounds and stripes. And if any bishops, or any other ministers brought him any complaints against one another (as they often did), he would take their bills of complaint and burn them before their faces; so studious and zealous was his mind to have them agree, whose discord caused more grief to him than it did to themselves. To commit to history all the virtuous acts, and memorable doings of this divine and renowned emperor, would be matter enough of itself to fill a great volume. Therefore we must be content with the above brief account. As it is impossible to say enough of him, I will not pursue his history any further.

And here is an end of the lamentable persecutions of the primitive church, during the space of 300 years from the passion of our Savior Christ, till the coming of Constantine. By him, as by the elect instrument of God, it has pleased his Almighty Majesty, by his determinate purpose, to give rest to his church after long trouble, according to that which St. Cyprian

⁹⁴ Eusebius, lib. 4. de vita Constantina. Hieronymus in Chron. Ruffin, lib. 2. cap. 11. Socrates, lib. 1. cap. 39. Theod. Ub. 1. cap. 31. Sozomenus, lib. 2. cap. 34.

Bk. I. The 300 years after Christ – Ten Persecutions (64-324)

declares before to be revealed by God to his church: that after darkness and stormy tempest, should come peaceable, calm, and stable quietness — meaning this time of Constantine. At this time it so pleased the Almighty, that the murdering malice of Satan should at length be restrained, and that he be chained up for a thousand years, through his great mercy in Christ, to whom, therefore, be thanks and praise, now and for ever. Amen.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

ACTS AND MONUMENTS

BOOK II.

CONTAINING

The next 300 Years in England, till Egbert

A.D. 462-794

With such things specially as have happened in England,
From the time of king Lucius, to Gregory,
And so after to the time of king Egbert.

By these persecutions it may be understood that the fury of Satan, and the rage of men, have done what they could to extinguish the name and religion of Christians. For, all that either death could do, or torments could work, or the gates of hell could devise, was attempted to the utmost. And yet, notwithstanding all the fury and malice of Satan, all the wisdom of the world and strength of men, doing, devising, and practicing what they could, the religion of Christ has had the upper hand. I wish this to be greatly noted and diligently pondered in considering these histories, which I trust will not be found unworthy of the reading.

Lucius, King of Britain.

Now, I propose in this second book to leave for a time the treatment of these general affairs of the universal church, and to pursue such domestic histories as more nearly concern England and Scotland. I will begin with **King Lucius**, with whom the Christian faith first began in this realm, as is the opinion of some writers. And because there may and does arise here a great controversy in these popish days, concerning the origin and planting of the faith in this realm, it will not be greatly outside of our purpose to stay and say something on this question: *Whether the church of England first received the faith from Rome or not?* Even if I were to grant this, being granted it little avails the purpose of those who would so have it. For even if England first received the Christian faith and religion from Rome in the time of Eleutherius their bishop (A.D. 180), and also in the time of Austin, whom Gregory sent here (A.D. 600), it does not follow that we must therefore still fetch our religion from there, as from the “chief fountain of all godliness.” And as they are not able to prove this, so neither have I any cause to grant the *other* — that is, that our Christian faith was first derived from Rome. I may prove this by six or seven good conjectural reasons.

The **first** I take on the testimony of our countryman, Gildas. In his history, he plainly affirms that Britain received the gospel in the time of the Emperor Tiberius,⁹⁵ under whom Christ suffered (*Lib. de victoria Aurelii Ambrosi*). He says moreover, that Joseph of Arimathea, after the dispersion of the Jews, was sent by Philip the apostle, from France to Britain about the year 63, and remained in this land all his life. And so, with his companions he laid the first foundation of Christian faith among the British people, whereupon other preachers and teachers who came afterward, confirmed and increased it.

The **second** reason is from Tertullian, who lived near the time of Eleutherius. In his book (*Contra Judaeos*) he plainly declares the same thing, where he testifies how the gospel was dispersed abroad by the preaching of the apostles. After reckoning up the Medes, Persians, Parthians, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Egypt, Pamphilia, and many other nations, at length he comes to the coast of the Moors, on the

⁹⁵ Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus (42 BC-AD 37); he succeeded his stepfather Augustus, the first Roman emperor.

borders of Spain and France.⁹⁶ And there, among others, he also recites the parts of Britain which the Romans could never overcome, and reports these were now subject to Christ. He also includes the places of Sarmatia, the Danes, the Germans, and the Scythians, with many other provinces and isles unknown to him. In all of these places (he says) the name of Christ reigns, which now begins to be common. Note here how, among other believing nations, he also mentions the wildest parts of Britain, and in his time these were Christianized. Therefore, Pope Eleutherius was not the first who sent the Christian faith into this realm. Rather, the gospel was brought here before his time, either by Joseph of Arimathea, as some chronicles record, or by some of the apostles, or by their own disciples, who preached Christ before Eleutherius wrote to Lucius.

My **third** proof I take from Origen, who calls this island “Christian Britain” (Hom. 4. in Ezechielem). By this it appears that the faith of Christ was spread in England before the days of Eleutherius.

For my **fourth** proof I take the testimony of Bede, who affirms that in his time, and almost a thousand years after Christ, Easter was kept in Britain in the manner of the eastern church. From this it is to be gathered that the first preachers in this land came from the *eastern* part of the world, rather than from Rome.

Fifthly, I may allege the words of Nicephorus (lib. ii. cap. 40), where he says that Simon Zelotes (the Zealot) spread the gospel of Christ to the western ocean, and brought it to the isles of Britain.

[75] A.D. 180.

Sixthly, the words of the abbot of Cluny may also be added here. In writing to Bernard, he affirms that the Scots in his time celebrated Easter, not in the Roman manner, but in the Greek. And as the Britons were not under the Roman order in the time of this abbot, neither were they, nor would they be, under the Roman legate in the time of Gregory; nor would they accept any supremacy of the bishop of Rome.

For the **seventh** argument, moreover, I make my proof by the plain words of Eleutherius. We may understand by his epistle written to King Lucius, that Lucius had received the faith of Christ in this land, before the king sent to Eleutherius for the Roman laws. For so the express words of the letter manifestly purport, as will be seen hereafter. From all of these proofs, it is more than probable that the Britons were taught first by the Grecians of the eastern church, rather than by the Romans.

Perhaps Eleutherius might help either to convert the king, or else to increase the faith then newly sprung up among the people, but it cannot be proved that he was the first. And if we grant that he was, as indeed the greater part of our English histories confess, what do they obtain by it? For to conclude this matter in few words, if the Christian faith was first derived by this nation from Rome, through Eleutherius, then let them but grant to us the same faith which was *then* taught at Rome, and from there it was derived here by Eleutherius, and we will desire no more. For then there was neither any universal pope above all churches and councils (which did not occur before the time of Boniface, 400 years later), nor any mention or use of the mass. The history of this will be seen hereafter. Nor was there any propitiatory sacrifice for souls in purgatory. But simply, the communion was frequented at Christian tables, where oblations and gifts were offered to God, by the people as well as by the priests. Nor was there any transubstantiation heard of for a thousand years after. Nor were there

⁹⁶ The Moors were mentioned by Tacitus as having revolted against the Roman Empire in 24 AD; it's an old term.

any images of departed saints set up in churches, for a great number of the saints who are worshipped in our time, were not then born. Nor were the churches yet built where they were worshipped, but they occurred long after, especially in the time of the Empress Irene (A.D. 781), and the Emperor Constans II (d. 668). Nor were relics or pilgrimages then in use. The marriage of priests was then as lawful (and no less received) than at present; nor was it condemned before the days of Hildebrand, almost 1000 years after (A.D. 1080). Their service was then in the vulgar tongue (native language), as Jerome witnesses; the sacraments were ministered in both kinds, to laymen as well as to priests, as Cyprian testifies. Yes, and worldly men who would not commune at Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas, were not then counted as catholics, as the pope's own distinction testifies. At funerals, priests did not then flock together, selling trentals and dirges for sweeping purgatory. Rather, a funeral concion alone was used (song of lament), with psalms of praises and halleluiahs sounding on high, which shook the gilded ceilings of the temple, as Nazianzen, Ambrose, Jerome, etc. witness.

In the supper of the Lord, and in baptism, no such ceremonies were used as have been introduced of late. Both Augustine and Paulinus then baptized in rivers, not in hallowed founts, as Fabian witnesses. Neither the ordinary⁹⁷ of Sarum, of York, of Bangor, with the daily matins and even-song; nor the orders of monks and friars, were then dreamed of — not for almost a thousand years after. So that, as I said before, if the papists would derive the faith and religion of this realm from Rome, then let them carry us back to where they found us. That is, let them allow us to stand content with that faith and religion which was then taught and brought from Rome by Eleutherius (as now we differ in nothing from that) and we desire no better. And if they will not, then let the reader judge where the fault is — in us, or in them. They will neither persist in the antiquity of the Romish religion which they boast of so much, nor will they permit us to do so.

And thus much, by the way, to answer the aforesaid objection (that England received its faith from Rome). We may now more readily return to the order and course of the history.

Therefore, granting to them what they so earnestly contend for — that the Christian faith and religion of this realm was brought from Rome, first by Eleutherius and afterward by Austin — the chronicles thus write about the matter.

About the year 180, King Lucius, son of Coilus, king of the Britons, hearing of the miracles and wonders done by the Christians at that time, directed letters to Eleutherius, bishop of Rome, desiring to receive the Christian faith from him, although there is great difference in authors about the calculation of the time. The good bishop hearing the request of the king, sends him certain preachers called Fagan and Damian, who converted the king and people of Britain, and baptized them with the baptism and sacrament of Christ's faith. They overthrew the temples of the idols, and converted the people from their many gods to serve one living God. Thus true religion increasing, superstition was decayed, with all other rites of idolatry. There were then in Britain twenty-eight head priests whom they called *flamines*, and three arch-priests who were called *archflamines*, having the oversight of their manners, and as judges over the rest. These twenty-eight *flamines* they turned to twenty-eight bishops, and the three *archflamines* to three archbishops. After this, King Lucius sent again to Eleutherius for the Roman laws, to whom Eleutherius writes as follows: —

⁹⁷ The *ordinary* is a regulated Christian liturgy, or the book that prescribes the order of that liturgy.

“You require us to send you the Roman laws and the emperors, which you may practice and put in force within your realm. The Roman laws and the emperors we may ever reprove, but the law of God we may not. You have received of late through God’s mercy in the realm of Britain, the law and faith of Christ; you have with you within the realm, both the parts of the Scriptures. Out of them by God’s grace, with the council of your realm take you a law, and by that law (through God’s sufferance) rule your kingdom of Britain. For you are God’s vicar in your kingdom, according to the saying of the psalm, ‘O God, give your judgment to the King, and your righteousness to the King’s son,’ etc. He said, not the judgment and righteousness of the emperor, but your judgment and justice; that is to say, of God. The King’s sons are the Christian people of the realm. They are under your government, and live and continue in peace within your kingdom, as the gospel says, ‘As the hen gathers her chickens under her wings,’ so the king gathers his people. The people and folk of the realm of Britain are yours. If they are divided, you ought to gather in concord and peace, to call them to the faith and law of Christ, and to the holy church, to cherish and maintain them, to rule and govern them, and to defend them always from those who would do them wrong, from malicious men and enemies. A king has his name for ruling, and not for having a realm. You will be a king while you rule well; but if you do otherwise, the name *king* will not remain with you, and you will lose it, which may God forbid. The Almighty God grant you so to rule the realm of Britain, that you may reign with Him forever, whose vicar you are in the realm.”

In this manner, the Christian faith was either first brought in, or else confirmed in this realm, not with any cross or procession, but only by the simple preaching of Fagan and Damian, through whose ministry this island was reduced to the faith and law of the Lord. This was according to what was prophesied by Isaiah, about this as well as other islands, where he says, “He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He has established justice in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law.”— Isa 42.4. The faith thus received continued and flourished for 261 years, till the coming of the Saxons, who then were Pagans.

Britain invaded by the Saxons.

But although Lucius, through the merciful providence of God, was then converted and the gospel almost generally received in the land, yet the state of it, as well as the religion of the commonwealth, could not be quiet, for the emperors and nobles of Rome were infidels and enemies to it — but especially because Lucius the Christian king died without issue.

[76]

For thereby such trouble and variance occurred among the Britons, that they not only brought upon themselves the idolatrous Romans, and at length the Saxons, but also they entangled themselves in much misery and desolation. For sometimes the idolatrous Romans, and sometimes the Britons, reigned and ruled as violence and victory would serve, one king murdering another, till at length the Saxons came and dispossessed them both, as will be seen later.

Thus the commonwealth was miserably rent and divided into two sorts of people, differing not so much in country as in religion. For when the Romans reigned, the people were governed by the infidels; and when the Britons ruled, they were governed by Christians. Thus it may easily be discerned how little quietness was or could exist in the church in such unquiet and doubtful days.

Notwithstanding all these heathen rulers of the Romans who governed here, yet (God be praised) we read of no persecution that touched the Christian Britons during all the persecutions mentioned in Book I, before the last persecution of Diocletian. This persecution was the first of many that followed in the church and realm of England. The

rage of Diocletian (as it was through all the churches in the world), was fierce and vehement in Britain. And all our English chronicles testify that Christianity was destroyed almost throughout the land. Churches were subverted, the Scriptures burned, and many of the faithful, both men and women, were slain.

Now, concerning the government of the kings of Britain, although I have little or nothing to note which greatly pertains to the matter of this ecclesiastical history, yet this is not to be passed over. First, Constantine, the great and worthy emperor, comes in the order of these kings, who was born a Briton by his mother Helena, who was the daughter of King Coilus. Also, by help of the British army (under the power of God) which Constantine took with him from Britain to Rome, he obtained peace and tranquility for the universal church of Christ. In consequence of his taking with him three legions of chosen and able British soldiers, the strength of this land was not a little impaired and endangered.

After Constantine, Maximian took with him all the remaining able and fighting men, in order to subdue France.

Thus poor Britain being left naked and destitute on every side, like a maimed body without might and strength, was left open to her enemies, unable to succor herself without the help of foreign friends; to whom the Britons were then constrained to flee, especially to the Romans, to whom they sent this message. "The groans of Britain — the barbarians drive us into the sea — and the sea drives us back to the barbarians. Thus we have before us two kinds of death: we must be either butchered or drowned!" The realm of Britain, almost from the beginning, was never without civil war. At length came wicked Vortigern, who cruelly caused his prince to be murdered, ambitiously invaded the crown, and then sent for the aid of the Saxons, who were then infidels. And not only that, but he also married an infidel, the daughter of Hengist, called Rowena. Not long after this, Vortigern was dispossessed of his kingdom with like treachery, and the people of Britain were driven out of their country, after the Saxons, under Hengist and his chiefs, had slain their chief nobles and barons.

These Saxons coming in daily, filled the land with their multitudes, so that the Britons at length were neither able to hold what they had, nor to recover what they had lost. They left an example to all ages and countries, of what it means to let foreign nations into their dominion, but especially what it means for princes to join in marriage with infidels, as this Vortigern did with Hengist's daughter. She was the mother of all this mischief; and gave the Saxons not only strength, but also occasion and courage to attempt what they did. The British lords and nobility being offended with this, deposed their king, and enthroned his son Vortimer in his place. Vortimer being a brave prince, the Saxons were repulsed and driven back into Germany, where they stayed till the death of Vortimer. Rowena, daughter of Hengist, caused him to be traitorously poisoned. Then Vortigern, being restored to his kingdom through the entreaty of his wife Rowena, sent to Germany for Hengist, who came in with a navy of 300 well-appointed ships. The nobles of Britain hearing this, prepared themselves on the other side in all force to resist them. But Hengist, through his daughter Rowena, influenced the king, and excused himself, saying that he did not bring the multitude to work any violence either against him or against his country. He said that he commits both himself and his people to king Vortigern, to appoint how few or how many of them he would permit to remain within his land, and the rest were to return.

And so it pleased the king to appoint a day and place where they might meet and talk together about the matter. Both Hengist and his followers would stand to such order as the king with his council might appoint. With these fair words, the king and his nobles, well contented, assigned both day and place, which was in the town of Amesbury, where he

meant to talk with them. He added this condition, that each party would come without any weapons. Hengist agreed, but gave a secret command to his followers that each man should secretly carry in his stocking a long knife. And a watch-word was also agreed on which, when they heard it, they were to draw their knives, and every Saxon kill the Briton with whom he talked. The British lords being slain, the Saxons took Vortigern the king, and bound him. For his ransom, they required the cities of London, York, Lincoln, Winchester, along with other of the best strongholds in the land to be delivered to them. This being granted, they began to make spoil and havoc of the nation, destroying the citizens, pulling down churches, killing the priests, burning the books of the holy Scripture, and leaving nothing undone that tyranny could work. This was about A.D. 462. The king, seeing this miserable slaughter of his people, fled to Wales.

Aurelius Ambrosius, and Uther Pendragon, brothers of King Constans whom Vortigern caused to be killed, were then in Little Britain. The Britons sent word to them, desiring their aid. Aurelius goes over to satisfy their desire, and being crowned as their king, he seeks out wicked Vortigern, the cause of all this trouble, and the murderer of his brother Constans. And finding him in a strong tower in Wales, where he had immured himself, Aurelius set his castle on fire, and thus Vortigern was burned to death. That being done, he shifted his power against the Saxons. He had several conflicts with them and with Elle, captain of the South Saxons (who had then newly come over).

Aurelius was poisoned by order of Pascentius, the son of Vortigern. He had suborned a man in the garb of a monk, to pass for a physician, and then poisoned Aurelius; After his death, his brother Uther, surnamed Pendragon, succeeded to the throne, about A.D. 497. Fighting against Octa and Cosa, he took them and brought them to London. But they broke out of prison, and returned to Germany for more aid. In the meantime, there was a daily influx of Saxons from Saxony, with whom the Britons had many conflicts, sometimes winning, sometimes losing. Not long after, Octa and Cosa returned again, and joined the other Saxons against the Britons. From this time, the state of Britain began to decay more and more, while the idolatrous Saxons prevailed in numbers and strength against the Christian Britons. They oppressed the people, tore down the churches and monasteries, murdered the prelates, and spared neither age nor person, but destroyed Christianity almost through the whole realm. Adding to these miseries it happened, that their king Uther was ill, and could not stir. But being grieved for the lamentable destruction of his people, he caused his bed to be brought into the camp, where God gave him the victory. Octa and Cosa were slain. Shortly after, Uther died of poison, put (it is said) into a fountain from which the king used to drink, about A.D. 516.

About this time the West Saxons came so violently upon the Britons, that those of the western part of the realm were not able to resist them. After this, the merciful providence of Almighty God raised up for them King Arthur, the son of Uther, who was then crowned after him, and reigned victoriously. The old British histories ascribe to Arthur twelve great victories against the Saxons, which gave the Britons some peace during his life, and that of certain of his successors. (*This is the King Arthur of legend.*)

[77] A.D. 180-596.

After Arthur, the next king of the Britons was Constantine. After him Aurelius Conanus (or Caninus), Then Vortiporinus; after whom followed Malgo. And after him the last king of the Britons was Carecius, all of whom were continually engaged in civil war, execrable to God and man. Being chased out by the Britons themselves, the land came into the possession of the Saxons (A.D. 568), by whom all the clergy of the Britons were utterly driven out.

Bk. II. The next 300 years in England till Egbert (462-794)

Theonus, archbishop of London, and Theodosius, archbishop of York, seeing their churches destroyed, and their parishes dispersed, left their sees in Britain, and fled into Cambria, which is now called Wales.

The race of the Saxon kings who thus expelled the British, divided their land into seven kingdoms. Many of them delighted in war and bloodshed, and few were sincere or good. But none escaped either being slain in war, or murdered in peace, or else being constrained to become a monk.

Now, although the example of those kings who became monks (in number seven or eight), is rare and strange, and much commended by the historians of the time, I cannot assent to their commendation. First, in altering their estate from kings to monks, if they did it to find more ease, and less trouble, I do not see how that excuse stands with the office of a good man, to change his public vocation for a private convenience. If fear of danger drove them to it, what praise or commendation do they deserve in so doing? Let the monkish histories judge what they like. I think that however much praise they deserve in providing for their own safety, they deserve to be discommended that much for forsaking the commonwealth. If they did it (as most likely they did) for holiness' sake, thinking to serve and please God better in that kind of life, or to merit more toward their salvation than in the estate of a king, they were greatly deceived. Not knowing that the salvation which comes from God is to be esteemed, not by man's merits, nor by any perfection of life, nor by any difference of vocation, but only by the free grace of the gospel, which freely justifies all those who faithfully believe in Christ Jesus. But here it will be said in reply, that perhaps in the solitary life of a monk there are fewer occasions for evil than in kings' courts. Therefore that life conduces more to holiness, and is more to be preferred than the other. To this I answer that to avoid the occasion of evil is good where strength is lacking to resist it. But otherwise, where duty and charge constrain us, to avoid the occasions of evil, where they should rather be resisted, only declares the weakness of the man, rather than deserving any praise.

These things thus premised, it remains to enter on such things as in the time of these kings happened in the church. First let me put the reader in mind of the former three or four persecutions within the realm, which happened before the coming of Austin into England.

The **first** was under Diocletian, and that was not only in England, but generally throughout all the Roman monarchy, as specified above. In this persecution Alban, Julius, Aaron, with many more Christian Britons were martyred for Christ's name.

The **second** persecution was by the invasion of the Huns and the Picts, who made miserable havoc of Christ's saints, spoiling and destroying churches without mercy either to women or children.

The **third** persecution was under Hengist and the Saxons, who likewise destroyed and wasted the Christian congregations within the land, like raging wolves flying upon the sheep, and spilling the blood of Christians, till Aurelius Ambrosius came, and restored again the destroyed churches.

The **fourth** destruction of the Christian faith and religion was by Gurmund, a Pagan king of the Africans, who joining in league with the Saxons, wrought much grievance to the Christians of the land; this persecution remained till the time of Ethelbert, king of Kent (A.D. 589).

In the reign of Ethelbert, who was the fifth king of Kent, the faith of Christ was first received among the Saxons by means of Gregory, bishop of Rome, in the following manner, as collected from the old histories.

Augustine (Austin) comes to Britain.

First then, the Christian faith received by King Lucius, endured in Britain till this time, over 400 years, when Gurmund (as said above) by fighting with the Saxons against the Britons, it was nearly made extinct in all the land, in the space of about 44 years. So that, the first springing up of Christ's gospel in this land was in A.D. 180. While the coming of Austin was not until A.D. 596. In that year Austin came into England, sent by Gregory I. The cause of Gregory sending him here was this:

In the days of Pelagius, bishop of Rome, Gregory chanced to see certain beautiful children in the marketplace of Rome, brought from England to be sold. He demanded to know where they were from. And understanding that they were heathens from England, he lamented the case of the land whose inhabitants, being so beautiful and angelic,⁹⁸ were subject to the prince of darkness. Asking moreover from what province they came, it was answered, out of Deira, a part of the North Saxons. Then, alluding to the name of *Deira*, he said, "These people are to be delivered '*De Dei ira*,' "that is, "from God's wrath." Moreover, understanding the king's name of that province to be Alle, and likewise alluding to his name, he said, "There *Allelujah* to be sung to the living God." Whereupon, being moved and desiring to go and help the conversion of that country, he sent Austin there, with forty other preachers. He directed letters to Austin and his fellows, exhorting them to go forward boldly to the Lord's work, as the following epistle indicates:

"Gregory, the servant of God's servants, to the servants of the Lord. Because it is better not to take good things in hand, than after they have begun, to think of turning back from them, therefore, you may not, nor cannot, dear children, turn back now. But with all fervent study and labor, you must go forward in that good business which, through the help of God, you have well begun. Do not let the labor of your journey, nor the slanderous tongues of men appall you. But with all urgency and fervency proceed and accomplish the thing which the Lord has ordained you to take in hand, knowing that your great labor shall be recompensed with a reward of greater glory hereafter. Therefore, as we send here Austin to you again, whom also we have ordained to be your governor, so humbly obey him in all things, knowing that it will be profitable for your souls, whatever you do at his admonition. May Almighty God with his grace defend you, and grant me to see in the eternal country the fruit of your labor. So that, although I cannot labor as I would with you, I may be found partaker of your recompense. For my good will is to labor in the same fellowship with you together. The Lord God keep you safe, most dear and well-beloved children.

Dated the tenth before the kalends (1st day) of August, in the reign of our sovereign lord Maurice, most virtuous emperor, the fourteenth year of his empire." [i.e., 596]

Thus being emboldened and comforted through the good words of Gregory, they went on their journey till they came to the Isle of Thanet. Near the landing-place then, was the palace of the king, not far from Sandwich. The king then reigning in Kent was Ethelbert, who had married a Christian Frenchwoman named Bertha. He had received her from her parents on the condition that he would permit her to retain her bishop, named Lebard, and to enjoy the freedom of her faith. By this means, he was soon induced to embrace the doctrine of Christ. Austin having arrived, sent certain messengers to the king, signifying that he had come from

⁹⁸ He asked what nation those beautiful children were from. He was told they were *Anglici* (English); on hearing this, he said that they should rather be called *Angelici* (Angelic). [ED.]

Rome, bringing with him glad tidings to the king and all his people, of life and salvation to reign eternally in heaven with the only true and living God forever, if he would as willingly hearken to this message, as Austin had gladly come to preach and teach it to him.

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King Ethelbert Converted To Christianity.

The king, who had heard of this religion before from his wife, within a few days comes to the place where Austin was, to speak with him. Austin, as the histories affirm, erected a banner of the crucifix (such was the grossness of that time), and preached to him the word of God. The king responded saying,

“The words are very fair that you preach and promise; nevertheless, because it is new to me, I cannot soon start away from my country’s laws to which I have so long been accustomed, and assent to you. Yet as you have come (as you say) so far for my sake, you shall not be molested by me, but shall be treated well, having all things ministered to you that are necessary for your support. Besides this, neither do we debar you, but grant you free leave to preach to our subjects, to convert whom you may to the faith of your religion.”

When they had received this comfort from the king, they went with procession to the city of Canterbury, singing Allelujah with the litany. The words of the litany were, “We beseech you, O Lord, in all your mercies, that your fury and anger may cease from this city, and from your holy house, for we have sinned, Allelujah.” The king having given them a mansion for their abode, they continued there preaching and baptizing those whom they had converted in the old church of St. Martin (where the queen usually resorted), to the time that the king himself was converted to Christ. At length, when the king had well-considered the honest conduct of their life, and being moved with the miracles wrought through God’s hands by them, he heard them more gladly. And lastly, by their wholesome exhortations and example of a godly life, he was converted and christened. After the king was thus converted, innumerable others were daily joined to the church of Christ; Ting specially embraced these, but he compelled none. For he had learned that the faith and service of Christ ought to be voluntary, and not compulsory. Then he gave Austin a place for the bishop’s see at Christ’s Church, and built the abbey of St. Peter and Paul in the east side of the city, where afterwards Austin and all the kings of Kent were buried. That place is now called St. Austin.

At this time Austin sailed to France, to be consecrated archbishop by the command of Gregory. Having heard of Austin’s success, he sends to the church of England more coadjutors and helpers, such as Melitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Ruffianus, with books and other such matters as he thought necessary for the English church. He also sends to Austin a Pall (vestment robe) along with letters, in which he appoints the two metropolitan sees, the one to be at London, the other at York. But he grants to Austin during his life, to be the only archbishop. And after Austin’s time, to then return to the two sees of London and York, as contained in the following epistle of Gregory to Austin:

“To the reverend and virtuous brother Augustine, his fellow bishop Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Although it is most certain that unspeakable rewards of the heavenly King lie laid up for all who labor in the word of the Almighty God, it shall be requisite for us to also reward them with our benefits, to the end that they may be more encouraged to go forward in their spiritual work. And now, as the new church of Englishmen is brought to the grace of Almighty God, through his mighty help and your labor, therefore we have granted to you the use of the pall, only to be used at the solemnity of your mass; so that it shall be lawful for you to ordain twelve bishops, those who will be subject to your province. So that hereafter the bishop of the city of London shall always be ordained and consecrated by his own proper

Bk. II. The next 300 years in England till Egbert (462-794)

synod, and to receive the pall of honor from the holy and apostolic see, in which I serve (by the permission of God). As regarding the city of York, we will also send a bishop there, whom you may think fit to ordain. So that if that city, with other places bordering it, receive the word of God, he will likewise have power to ordain twelve bishops, and to have the honor of a metropolitan. To him also, if God spares my life, I intend by the favor of God, to send a pall. This is provided that, notwithstanding, he will be subject to your brotherly appointment. But after your decease, the same metropolitan, to be over the bishops whom he orders, he will be in no way subject to the metropolitan of London after you. And hereafter, between these two metropolitans of London and York, let there be had such a distinction of honor, that he will have the priority, who is first ordained. With the common counsel, and affection of heart, let them both go together, disposing with one accord those things which are to be done for the zeal of Christ. Let them consider and deliberate together prudently; and what they deliberate wisely, let them accomplish with concord, not jarring or swerving one from the other. But as for your part, you shall be endued with authority, not only over those bishops that you constitute, and over the others constituted by the bishop of York, but you shall also have it over all other priests of the whole Britain, subject to our Lord Jesus Christ. This is to the end that through your preaching and holiness of life, they may learn both to believe rightly, and to live purely. And so in directing their life, both by the rule of true faith and virtuous manners, they may attain, when God calls them, the fruition and kingdom of heaven. God preserve you in health, reverend brother. *The tenth before the kalends of July, in the reign of our Lord Maurice most virtuous emperor.*”

Besides this, Gregory sends another letter to Melitus concerning his judgment as to what is to be done with the idolatrous temples and shrines of the English who are newly converted, which he thinks best not to pull down, but to convert the use of them, and so let them stand. And likewise concerning their sacrifices, and the killing of oxen, how these ought to be ordered, and how to be altered.

He directed another epistle to king Ethelbert, in which first he praises God, then commends the goodness of the king, by whom it pleased God to work such goodness for the people. Secondly, he exhorts him to continue in the profession of Christ's faith, and to be fervent and zealous in converting the multitude; in destroying the temples and works of idolatry; in ruling and governing the people in all holiness and godly conversation. Lastly, comforting him with the promises of the life and reward to come, with the Lord who reigns and lives forever.

Melitus, who was mentioned before, was sent specially to the East Saxons in the province of Essex, where he was made bishop of London, under Sigebert, king of Essex. Sigebert, together with his uncle Ethelbert, first built the church and minster (cathedral) of St. Paul in London, and appointed it to Melitus for the bishop's see. Austin, with Melitus and Justus, assembled and gathered together the bishops and doctors of Britain in a place which, taking the name of Austin, was called *Austin's Oak*. In this assembly, he charged the bishops that they should preach with him the word of God, and also that among themselves they should reform certain rites and usages in their church, for specially keeping Easter, baptizing in the manner of Rome, and other like things. The Scots and Britons would not agree to this, refusing to leave the custom which they had continued for so long time, without the assent of all who used it.

Then Austin gathered another synod, to which seven bishops of Britain came, with the wisest men of that famous abbey of Bangor. But first they took counsel from a certain wise and holy man among them, as to what to do; and whether they should be obedient to Austin or not. And he said, “If he is the servant of God, agree with him.” “But how will we know

that?" they asked. He answered, "If he is meek and humble of heart, then by that know that he is the servant of God." To this they said again, "And how will we know him to be humble and meek of heart?" "By this," (he says) "Seeing that you are the greater number, if at your coming into your synod he rises up, and courteously receives you, then perceive him to be a humble and a meek man. But if he scorns and despises you, being (as you are) the greater part, then despise him back." Thus the British bishops entered into the council. Austin, in the Romish manner, kept his chair and would not move.

[79] A.D. 596-616.

Being not little offended at this, and after some heated words, they departed from there in disdain and great displeasure. Austin then spoke to them and said that, "If they would not make peace with their brethren, they would receive war with their enemies. And if they disdained to preach with them to the English nation, the way of life, then they would suffer the revenge of death by their hands." Not long after, this came to pass by means of Ethelfride, king of Northumberland. Still being a pagan, and stirred with fierce fury against the Britons, he came with a great army against them. There was at the same time at Bangor in Wales, an exceeding great monastery, containing upwards of 2000 monks. They all lived by the sweat of their brow, and the labor of their own hands, having someone for their ruler, named Dino. Out of this monastery came the monks of Chester, to pray for the good success of Brocmaile, fighting for them against the Saxons. They continued three days in fasting and prayer. Ethelfride, seeing them so attentive to their prayers, demanded the cause of their coming there in such a company. And when he perceived it, he says, "Then, although they bear no weapon, they fight against us; and with their prayers and preachings they persecute us." Upon which, after Brocmaile was overcome, the king commanded his men to turn their weapons against the unarmed monks. He slew, or rather martyred 1100. Only 50 persons of that number escaped; the rest were all slain.

The authors who write of this lamentable murder, declare how the saying of Austin was here proven true upon the Britons, who because they would not join peace with their friends, he said they would be destroyed by their enemies. The reader may judge what he pleases about both these parties; I think both were to be blamed. And just as I cannot accuse the one, so I cannot defend the other. First, Austin in this matter can in no way be excused. Being a monk before, and therefore a scholar and professor of humanity, he showed so little humility in this assembly, to seven bishops and an archbishop who came to the council at his command, that he would not rise up at their coming in. Much less would his pharisaical solemnity have girded himself, and washed his brethren's feet after their journey, as Christ our great Master did to his disciples — seeing that his lordship was so high, or so heavy, or so proud, that he could not find it in his heart to give them a little moving of his body, so as to declare a brotherly and humble heart. Again, the Britons were as much or more to blame, who so neglected their spiritual duty in revenging their temporal injury, that they refused to join their helping labor, to turn the idolatrous Saxons to the way of life and salvation. In this respect, all private cases ought to give way and be forgotten. For this reason, although lamentable to us, it is no great marvel that the stroke of God's punishment lighted upon them according to the words of Austin, as declared before. But especially, the cruel king was most of all to blame for flying so furiously upon those who had neither weapon to resist him, nor any will to harm him.

Death of Austin, Pope Gregory, and Ethelbert.

About this time in Wales, St. David died (A.D. 600), who was first archbishop of Kaerlon. The see was then transferred from there to Menevia, near Cardiff, and is therefore called “David of Wales” (or, the diocese of St. David) Also about this time Gregory died (A.D. 604), bishop of Rome. It is said of him, that of all the bishops before him in primitive times, he was the worst; and of all those who came after him, he was the best. Not long after this, in England, Austin also died (A.D. 605).

Regarding the acts and deeds of Gregory I, it was sufficiently related at the beginning of this history (p. 17) — how he withstood the ambitious pride of John, patriarch of Constantinople, who wished to be the universal priest and only chief bishop of all the others, declaring that anyone who would assume that name and title for himself was no less than the forerunner of *antichrist* — and how and with what reasons he answered the letters of emperor Maurice in that matter. Gregory I, among many other things, introduced this title among the Roman bishops, to be called “the servant of the servants of God” — putting them in remembrance thereby, both of their humbleness and also of their duty in the church of Christ. Whoever wishes to read more concerning his decree for the single life of priests, which began and ended again; or concerning the order of Gregory’s mass book which was to be received by all churches, will find these when we come to the time of Pope Adrian I.

Pope Boniface III.

After the death of Gregory came Sabinian. Because he was a malicious detractor of Gregory and of his works, he did not continue long — scarcely two years. Boniface III succeeded him. Although he reigned but one year, in that one year he did more harm than Gregory could do good, even with so much labor and so many years. For what Gregory kept out, Boniface brought in. He obtained an edict from the wicked emperor Phocas, for himself and his papal successors after him, that the See of Rome would have pre-eminence above all other churches, and that the bishop of Rome would be the universal head of all the churches of Christ in Christendom. He alleged this frivolous reason: that St. Peter had and left to his successors in Rome, the keys of binding and loosing, etc. And thus Rome first began to take headship over all other churches, by means of Boniface III. Just as he lacked no boldness nor ambition to seek it, so neither did he lack an emperor fit and able to give such a gift. This was Phocas, a man of such wickedness and ambition (most like his own bishop Boniface) that in order to gain the empire, he murdered his own master, the Emperor Maurice and his children. Thus coming to be emperor after this detestable villainy, and thinking to establish his empire with the friendship and favor of his people, and especially with the bishop of Rome, he quickly condescended to all the pope’s petitions. And so he granted him (as said) to be what he wished for — the universal and head bishop over all Christian churches. But as blood commonly requires blood in return, so it came to pass on Phocas. For as he had cruelly slain the lord and emperor Maurice before, so he in like manner had his hands and feet cut off by Heraclius, the emperor, who succeeded him; and he was cast into the sea. And thus wicked Phocas, who gave the supremacy to Rome, lost his own. But Rome would not so quickly loose this supremacy once given, as the giver quickly lost his life. Ever since that day, it has held, defended, and maintained the same, and does so to this present day, by all force and policy possible. And thus much concerning Boniface, whom, by the words of Gregory, we may well call the forerunner of antichrist.

Mention was made a little earlier of Ethelbert, king of Kent, and also of Ethelfride, king of North Saxony. Ethelbert, having under his subjection all the other Saxon kings up to the

Humber,⁹⁹ and after he had first received the Christian faith by the preaching of Austin, caused it to be received by others. When he had reigned 56 years, he left this mortal life, about A.D. 616. Some histories say he was slain in a fight with Ethelfride, king of the North Saxons.

In the meantime Ethelfride, after the cruel murder of the monks of Bangor, did not escape long. For after he had reigned 24 years, he was slain in the field by Edwin, who succeeded him in Northumberland.

This Edwin was not the son of Ethelfride, but of Alia. He was first a panim or idolater, but was afterwards converted, and was the first christened king in Northumberland.

Quicelinus, with Kinegilsus, his brother, kings of the West Saxons, conspiring in the death of Edwin, king of Northumberland, sent a swordman on Easter day to secretly slay him. This swordsman or cutthroat, came to a city beside the water of Derwent, in Derbyshire, there to wait his time. Having found the king accompanied by few, he attempted to run him through with a poisoned sword. But one Lilla, the king's trusty servant, not having a shield or any other weapon to defend his master, leaped between the king and the sword, and was stricken through the body and died, thus saving the king. However, the king was wounded with the same stroke.

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The assassin having wounded another knight, was at last taken, and confessed by whom he was sent to work that treason. The second knight that was wounded and died, and the king lay sick a long time before he was healed.

Controversy about Easter — Colman and Wilfrid.

In this time there was such peace in Edwin's kingdom after his conversion, that a woman laden with gold might have gone from the one side of the sea to the other, and have no man molest her. Moreover, by the sides of the highway, throughout his kingdom, he caused a dish or bowl of brass to be chained by every well or spring, to take up water for refreshing those who went by the way. These bowls of brass remained there safe, and no man touched them during all the life of Edwin. Such was the tender care and study of Christian princes then, for the refreshing of their subjects.

This Edwin, who first brought the faith into the north parts, continued six years after his baptism. He was at length slain in battle by Cedwella, king of the Britons.

After the decease of Edwin and his son Offrick, Ofricus and Eaufridus reigned — the one in Deira, the other in Bernicia.

After them, the second son of Ethelfride succeeded, named Oswald. Much praise and commendation is written about this Oswald for his zeal in Christ's religion, his pity towards the poor, and other great virtues. Being well and virtuously disposed to setting forth Christ's faith and doctrine, he sent into Scotland for a certain bishop called Aidan, a famous preacher, to preach to his people. When he was in Scotland, the king had learned the Scottish tongue. Therefore, as this Aidan preached to the Saxons in his Scottish tongue, the king himself interpreted what he said. He did not disdain to preach and expound to his nobles and subjects in the English tongue.

⁹⁹ *Humber*: An estuary in central northeastern England formed by the Ouse River and the Trent River.

One day Oswald was sitting at meal with Aidan, being served in the manner of kings, on silver, when one of the servitors comes to him. He brings word that there is a great multitude of poor people sitting in the street, who desired some alms from the king. Upon hearing this, his pity and tenderness towards the poor and needy was such that, notwithstanding his princely calling, he commanded not only the food prepared for his table to be carried to them, but he also took a silver platter which stood before him, broke it in pieces and sent it among them. And so, he relieved his poor subjects, not only with the food from his table, but with the dishes also.

After Oswald had reigned nine years, he was slain by wicked Penda, king of the Mercians. Penda, at length, after all his tyranny, was overcome and slain by Oswy, Oswald's brother.

Oswy succeeded Oswald, and with him was joined his cousin Oswine. This Oswine was gentle and liberal to his people, and no less devout toward God. He had once given a princely horse to Aidan, the bishop, with the trappings and all that pertained to it, so that he would not travel so much on foot. Aidan, as he was riding on his kingly horse, meets way a poor man by the, asking for his charity. Having nothing else to give him, Aidan lighted down, and gave him his horse with all the trappings as he was. On hearing this, king Oswine, not being pleased as he was entering to dinner with Aidan, said, "What did you mean, father bishop, to give away my horse that I gave you, to the beggar? Did I not have other horses in my stable that might have served him well enough, but you must give away that which was picked out for you from among the best?" The bishop answered back, rebuking the king, saying, "What are these words that you speak, O king? Why did you set a higher price by a horse, which is but the foal of a horse, than you do by one who is the Son of Mary, indeed, which is the Son of God?" He had but said this, when the king immediately ungirding his sword from about him (as he was then newly come in from hunting), falls down at the feet of the bishop, desiring him to forgive him, saying that he would never again speak a word to him for any treasure he would afterwards give away of his.

Convocation concerning Easter and other practices

Oswine was later slain by the king of Bernicia. Oswy, with his son Egfrid, then reigned in Northumberland. In their time the question of Easter, and of shaving, and other ecclesiastical matters being moved, it was determined that a convocation should be held in the abbey called Sternhalt, so that these questions might be determined. To this place came the kings, Oswy and Egfrid, Bishop Colman, with his clergy from Scotland, and Agilbert, with Agathon and Wilfrid, priests. James and Roman were on their side; Hilda the abbess, with her company, took the Scottish part; and Bishop Cedda was appointed prolocutor for both parties. King Oswy began first with an oration, declaring that it was necessary for those who served one God, to live in one uniform order. This being said, he commanded his Bishop Colman to declare what was the rite and custom that he used. Then Colman said,

"The Easter which I observe, I received from my ancestors who sent me here a bishop, which all our forefathers, being men of God, celebrated in like manner. And lest it be contemned or despised by any man, it is manifestly apparent to be the very same one which the holy evangelist St. John (a disciple especially beloved of the Lord), customarily used in all churches and congregations where he had authority."

When Colman had spoken many things to this effect, the king commanded Agilbert to declare his opinion, and to show the order that he used, where it came from, and by what authority he observed it. Agilbert requested the king that his scholar Wilfrid, a priest, might speak for him, inasmuch as they both, with the rest of his clergy, were of one opinion in this.

He said that Wilfrid could utter his mind better, and more plainly in the English tongue, than he could himself. Then Wilfrid, at the king's command, said,

“The Easter which we keep, we have seen at Rome, where the holy apostles, Peter and Paul, lived and taught, suffered, and were buried. The same manner is also used in Italy and in France, in which we have travelled for learning; and we noted it is celebrated by them all. In Asia and also in Africa, in Egypt and in Greece, and finally in all the world the same manner of Easter is observed that we use, except by those present here, with their accomplices, the Picts and Britons.”

Colman replied, saying,

“I marvel that you will call this order foolish, that was used by so great an apostle as was worthy to lie on the Lord's breast, whom all the world well knows lived most wisely.”

And Wilfrid answered,

“God forbid that I should reprove St. John of his folly, who kept the rites of Moses's law, according to the letter — the church still being Jewish in many points. The apostles were not as yet able to rescind all the observations of the law ordained before. For example, they could not reject images invented by the devil, which all men who believe in Christ, should of necessity forsake and detest, lest they be an offense to those Jews who were among the Gentiles. For this cause, St. Paul circumcised Timothy; for this cause he sacrificed in the temple, and shaved his head with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth. All these things were done for no other purpose than to avoid offending the Jews. Hereupon James also said to Paul, ‘You see, brother, how many thousand Jews believe, and all these are zealous for the law. Yet seeing the gospel is so manifestly preached in the world, it is not lawful for the faithful to be circumcised, nor to sacrifice carnal things to God.’ Therefore John, according to the custom of the law, the fourteenth day of the first month at evening, began the celebration of the feast of Easter, not respecting whether it was celebrated on the Sabbath. But when Peter preached at Rome, remembering that the Lord arose from death on the first day after the Sabbath, thereby giving to the world hope of the resurrection, he thought it good to institute Easter on that day, and not on the fourteenth day of the first month according to the use and precepts of the law. Even so, John looking for the moon at night to see if it arose, and the next day after was Sunday (which was then called the Sabbath), he then celebrated Easter in the evening, like we are used to doing even at this day.

[81] A.D. 616-679.

“But if Sunday were not the next day after the fourteenth day, but fell on the sixteenth day, or seventeenth, or on any other day up to the twenty-first, he always waited for it, and began the holy solemnity of Easter on the next evening before the Sabbath. And so it came to pass, that Easter was always kept on the Sunday, and was not celebrated except from the fifteenth day to the twenty-first. Nor does this tradition of the apostle break the law, but fulfills it. In this it is to be noted that Easter was instituted from the fourteenth day of the first month at evening, to the twenty-first day of the same month at evening. All St. John's successors in Asia followed this practice after his death, and the catholic church throughout the whole world. That this is the true Easter was not newly decreed, but only confirmed by the Council of Nice. Upon this, it is manifest that you (Colman) neither follow the example of St. John, as you think, nor of St. Peter, whose tradition you willingly resist, nor of the church, nor yet of the gospel, in the celebration of Easter. For St. John, observing Easter according to the precepts of the law, did not keep on the first day after the Sabbath, but you precisely keep it on the first day after the Sabbath. Peter celebrated Easter from the fifteenth day of the moon to the twenty-first day. But you keep Easter from the fourteenth to the twentieth day. So that you oftentimes begin Easter the thirteenth day at night. Neither the law nor the gospel makes any mention of this

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manner. But our Lord in the Fourteenth day, either ate the old Passover at night, or else he celebrated the sacraments of the New Testament in remembrance of his death and passion. You also utterly reject from the celebration of Easter, the twenty-first day, which the law has chiefly willed to be observed. And therefore, as I said, in keeping Easter, you neither agree with St. John, nor with St. Peter, nor with the law, nor yet with the gospel.”

Then Colman again answered these things, saying,

“Did Anatholius then, a godly man, and one who is much commended in ecclesiastical history, write against the law and the gospel, who writes that the Easter was to be kept from the fourteenth day to the twentieth? Or should we think that Columba, our reverend father, and his successors, being men of God, who observed Easter in this manner, did it against the holy Scripture? Some of them were men of much godliness and virtue, as was declared by their wonderful miracles. And not at all doubting their holiness, I hereby endeavor to follow their life, order, and discipline.”

Then, Wilfrid said,

“It is certain that Anatholius was both a godly man, and worthy of great commendation. But what have you to do with him, seeing that you do not observe his order? For following the true rule in keeping his Easter, he observes the circle of nineteen years. Either you do not know this, or if you do, you condemn the common order observed in the universal church of Christ. And moreover, Anatholius so counts the fourteenth day, in observing Easter, that he confesses it to be the fifteenth day at night, in the manner of the Egyptians. And he likewise notes that the twentieth day in the feast of Easter, is the one landing on the twentieth in the evening. It appears that you do not know of distinction, in that you keep Easter on the thirteenth day before the full moon. Regarding your father Columba and his successors — whose order you say you follow, as moved to do by their miracles — I can answer you in this way. The Lord will answer many who will say in the day of judgment, that in His name they have prophesied and cast out devils, and have done many miracles, etc. that he never knew them. ^{Mat 7.23} But God forbid that I should say so about your fathers, because it is much better to believe well of those whom we do not know, than ill. ¹⁰⁰

“Thus I do not deny that they were the servants of God, and holy men who loved the Lord from a good intent, though of a rude simplicity. And I think the order which they used in observing Easter did not hurt them much, so long as they had none among them who could show them the right observation to follow. For I think, if the truth had been declared to them, they would have received it in *this* matter as they did in *others*. But you and your fellows, if you refuse the order of the Apostolical see, or rather of the universal church, which is confirmed by the holy Scripture, then without all doubt, you sin. And though your forefathers were holy men, is their fewness, being but a corner of an island, to be preferred before the universal church of Jesus Christ, dispersed throughout the whole world? And if Columba your father (and ours also, being of Christ Jesus) was mighty in miracles, is he therefore to be preferred before the prince of the holy apostles? The Lord said to him, ‘You are Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’ ^{Mat 16.18}

Wilfrid having thus ended his argument, the king said to Colman, “Is it true that the Lord spoke these things to St. Peter?” And Colman answered “Yes.” Then the king said, “Can you declare anything that the Lord gave to Colman?” Colman answered, “No.” Then the king

¹⁰⁰ Easter falls on the first Sunday following the first full moon on or after March 21st (the Spring equinox), as set by the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325. However, Gregory XIII's calendar reform in 1582 (replacing the Julian calendar with the Gregorian calendar) led to different dates for Easter between the Eastern and Western churches.

said, "Do both of you agree and consent in this matter without any controversy, that these words were principally spoken to Peter, and that the Lord gave him the keys of the kingdom of heaven?" And they both answered "Yes." Then the king concluded in this way:

"In so far that St. Peter is the door-keeper of heaven, I will not challenge him; but as far as I am able, I will obey his orders in every point, lest when I come to the gates of heaven, he shuts them against me."

Upon this simple and rude reasoning of the king, the multitude soon consented, and with them Cedda was also content to give up. Only Colman the Scot, then archbishop of York, left the realm in displeasure. And thus much concerning this matter of Easter.

Theodore sent to England by Pope Vitalian.

About this time, Theodore was sent by pope Vitalian from Italy to England, to be archbishop of Canterbury, and with him other monks of Italy. They were to set up here in England, Latin services, masses, ceremonies, and litanies, with other Romish practices. Theodore was made archbishop and metropolitan of Canterbury, but he began to act as if he was king, placing and displacing bishops at his pleasure. As for Cedda and Wilfrid, archbishops of York, he thrust them both out, under the pretense that they were not lawfully consecrated, notwithstanding that they were sufficiently authorized by their kings.

In Theodore's time, and by means of him, a provincial synod was held at **Thetford**, mentioned in Bede. The principal contents of which were these:

First. That Easter should be uniformly kept and observed through the whole realm, on one certain day, namely, the first full moon after the fourteenth day of the first month.

Secondly. That no bishop should intermeddle within the diocese of another.

Thirdly. That monasteries consecrated to God should be exempt and free from the jurisdiction of the bishops.

Fourthly. That the monks should not stray from one place (that is) from one monastery to another, without the license of their abbot; also to keep the same obedience which they promised at their first entering.

Fifthly. That no clergyman should forsake his own bishop, and be received in any other place, without letters of commendation from his own bishop.

Sixthly. That foreign bishops and clergymen coming into the realm, should be content with the benefit only of that hospitality offered to them; nor should they intermeddle any further within the precinct of any bishop, without his special permission.

Seventhly. That provincial synods should be held within the realm at least once a year.

Eighthly. That no bishop should prefer himself before another, but must observe the time and order of his consecration.

Ninthly. That the number of bishops should be augmented, as the number of people increases.

And *Tenthly.* That no marriage should be accepted, but that which was lawful; nor was any man to put away his wife for any cause, except fornication, after the rule of the gospel.

Iva King of West Saxony— Shaven Crowns.

In the year following was the sixth general council at Constantinople, at which Theodore was also present under Pope Agatho (r. 678-681). Here marriage was permitted to Greek priests, but forbidden to the Latin. In this council, the Latin mass was first openly said by John Portuensis, the pope's legate, before the patriarch and princes at Constantinople, in the temple of St. Sophia (*i.e.*, Hagia Sophia).

King Iva or Inas, who reigned in West Saxony after Cadwallader, the last king of Britain, began his reign about A.D. 689, and reigned with great valiantness over the West Saxons for thirty-seven years.

About the sixth year of the reign of Iva, we find mention of one whom they call St. Cuthlake, a confessor. At about twenty-four years of age, he renounced the pomp of the world, and professed himself a monk. Why this Cuthlake should be sainted for his doings, I see no great cause. Just as I cannot think that the fabulous miracles reported of him are true; such as, where the common people are made to believe that he enclosed the devil in a boiling pot, and caused wicked spirits to erect houses, with such other fables and lying miracles. Among these lying miracles may also be reckoned that which the stories mention to be done by one Brithwald, or Drithelme, who being dead a long season, was restored to life again, and told many wonders of strange things that he had seen, thereby causing great alms and deeds of charity to be done by the people!

About the sixteenth year of Iva, Ethelred, king of Mercia, after he had reigned there thirty years, was made a monk, and afterwards abbot of Bardney.

And about the eighteenth year of Iva's reign, the worthy and learned Bishop Adelme died. He was first abbot of Malmesbury, and afterwards bishop of Shirborne. There was learning and virtue in him above the rest at that time (after Bede), as the great number of books, epistles, and poems written by him will attest. However, concerning the miracles ascribed to him — such as, first, causing an infant only nine days old to speak at Rome, declaring that Pope Sergius, then suspected of being the father of that child, was indeed the father; also in hanging his vestment upon the sunbeams; also in making whole the altar-stone of marble brought from Rome; also in dragging a length one of the timber pieces used in building the temple in Malmesbury; also in saving the mariners at Dover, etc. These, and such other miracles attributed to him, I can only think are monkish contrivances, forged on behalf of their patrons, to establish the dignity of their houses.

Moreover, about the twenty-fifth year of Iva, St. John of Beverley died. He was then bishop of York, and was buried at the porch of the minster of Deirwood (or Beverley). In this porch it is recorded in monkish chronicles, that as John was praying in the porch of St. Michael in York, the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, sat before him on the altar in brightness shining brighter than the sun. This brightness being seen by others, the first to come running into the porch was one of his deacons. Beholding the bishop standing there in his prayers, and the whole place being filled with the Holy Spirit, he was struck by its light, having his entire face burnt, as it were, with hot burning fire! Notwithstanding, the bishop by and by cured the face of his deacon, charging him (as the story says) not to publish during his lifetime what he had seen, etc. This tale seems about as true as what we read done by St. Egwine, around the same time. When he had fettered both his feet in irons aboard ship, for certain sins done in his youth, and had fast locked them and cast the key into the sea, a fish afterward brought the key back into the ship, as he was sailing homeward from Rome!

Leaving these monkish fictions behind, we return again to the right course of the history. In the time of Iva, the correct observance of Easter day first began among the Picts and the Britons. In the observance of this day, three things are necessary to be observed: *First*, the full moon of the first month, that is, the month of March. *Secondly*, the dominical letter. *Thirdly*, the equinoctial day (Spring equinox), which was usually calculated in the eastern church, and especially among the Egyptians, to be about the seventeenth day of March.

So that, the full moon on the equinoctial day, or after the equinoctial day is observed, the next dominical day following that full moon, is to be taken for Easter day. Two things are to be diligently noted in this: *First*, the moon must be perfectly full, so that it is the beginning of the third week of the moon, which is the fourteenth or fifteenth day of the moon.

Secondly, it is to be noted that the perfect fulness of the moon, beginning the third week, must happen either in the very evening of the equinoctial day, or after the equinoctial day. For if it happens either on the equinoctial day before evening, or before the equinoctial day, then it belongs to the last month of the last year, and not to the first month of the first year, and so it does not serve the purpose.

This rite and usage in keeping Easter day being received in the Latin church, now began to take place among the Picts and Britons. This was through the exertions of Elbert the holy monk (as they call him), and of Colfrid, abbot of Sirwin in Northumberland. He wrote to Narcanus, or Naiton, the king of Picts, concerning this.

Shaving Priests' Heads

Among other things, he writes of the shaven crowns of priests, saying that it was as necessary for the vow of a monk, or the degree of a priest, to have a shaven crown to restrain their lust, as for any Christian man to bless him against evil spirits when they come upon him. I have annexed here a copy of this letter, as it is found in Bede. This is not for any great reason contained in it, but only to amuse the reader, so that he may see the foolish ignorance of that monkish age. The letter proceeds thus:

Of the Shaving of Priests.

“Concerning the shaving of priests (of which you wrote to me) I exhort you that it be decently observed, according to the Christian faith. We are not ignorant that the apostles were not all shaven in one manner; nor does the catholic church at this day agree in one uniform manner of shaving, as they do in faith, hope, and charity. Let us consider the former time of the patriarchs, and we will find that Job (an example of patience) even in the very point of his afflictions, shaved his head. And he also proves that in the time of his prosperity, he used to let his hair grow. And Joseph, an excellent doctor and executor of chastity, humility, piety, and other virtues, when he was delivered from prison and servitude, was shaved. By this it appears that while in prison, he was unshaven. Behold that both of these, being men of God, used an order in the habit of their body, one contrary to the other. Notwithstanding, their consciences well agreed in the like grace of virtues. But to speak truly and freely, the difference in shaving does not hurt those who have a pure faith in the Lord, and sincere charity towards their neighbor. Especially as there was never any controversy among the catholic fathers about diversity in this, as there has been about diversity in the celebration of Easter, and of faith.

“But of all the shavings that we find either in the church or elsewhere, there is none in my opinion that is so much to be followed and embraced, as that which Peter used on his head. The Lord said to him, ‘You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’ ^{Mat 16.18-19} Contrariwise, there is no shaving so much to be abhorred and detested, as that which Simon Magus used. St. Peter said to him, ‘Your money perish with you, because you thought the gift

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of God could be purchased with money — you have neither part nor lot in the matter.’ Act 8.20
We should be shaven on the crown only, not because St. Peter was so shaven, but because Peter was so shaven in remembrance of the Lord’s passion. Therefore, we who desire to be saved by the same passion, must wear the *sign* of the same passion with him upon the top of our head, which is the highest part of our body. Every church that is made a church by the death of the Savior, usually bears the sign of the holy cross in the front, so that by the power of that banner, it may better be kept from invasion by evil spirits. Likewise, by the admonition of regular shaving, we are taught to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts.

[83] A.D. 689-726.

“In like manner it behooves those who take the vows of monks, and have degrees of the clergy, to bind themselves with a stricter bit for the Lord’s sake. As the Lord bore a crown of thorns on his head in his passion, by which he took and carried away from us the thorns and pricks of our sins, so must every one of us, by shaving our heads, patiently bear and willingly suffer the mocks and scorns of the world for His sake. Thus we may receive the crown of eternal life which God has promised to those who love him, and who shall, by shaving their corporal crowns, bear the adversity and condemn the prosperity of this world.

But what faithful man does not detest the shaving which Simon Magus used, together with his magical art? At first appearance, this has a show of a shaven crown. But if you mark his neck, you will find that it curtailed in such a way that you might say it is better fit to be used by the Simonists than by Christians. And such are thought (by foolish men) worthy of the glory of the eternal crown! Whereas, indeed, for their ill living, they are worthy to be deprived not only of that, but also of eternal salvation. I do not say this against those who use this kind of shaving, and live catholicly in faith and good works. For I surely believe that various of them are very holy and godly men. Among them is Adamnan, the abbot and worthy priest of the Columbians (Columbanus). When he came as ambassador from his country to King Alfrid, he greatly desired to see our monastery. There he displayed a wonderful wisdom, humility, and religion, both in his manners and words. Among other talk, I asked him why, as someone who believed he would come to the crown of life that would never end, he used contrary to his belief, a defined image of a crown on his head? If you seek (I said) the fellowship of St. Peter, then why do you use the fashion of Simon Magus’ crown whom St. Peter accursed, rather than the crown of Peter with whom you desire to live eternally? Adamnan answered saying, ‘You know right well, brother, though I use Simon’s manner of shaving, in the custom of my country, I detest and with all my heart abhor his infidelity. Notwithstanding, I desire to imitate the footsteps of the holy apostle, as far forth as my power will extend.’ Then I said, ‘I believe this is so. But is it not apparent that you imitate those things which the apostle Peter did, from the bottom of your heart, if you do the same on your face, as you know he did. For I suppose your wisdom understands that it is right decent to *differ* in trimming or shaving your face, from the one whom you abhor in your heart. Contrariwise, just as you desire to imitate the actions of Him whom you desire to have as Mediator between God and you, so it is fitting that you imitate the manner of his apparel and shaving.’ Thus much I said to Adamnan, who then seemed to like our churches well. For he returned to Scotland and reformed many of his churches there, following our celebration. He could not do so among the monks, with whom he had limited authority. If able, he would also have endeavored to reform their manner of shaving.

And now, O king, I exhort your majesty to labor together with your people, over whom the King of kings, and Lord of lords has made you governor, to likewise imitate in all these points, the catholic and apostolical churches. So it shall come to pass, that at the end of your temporal kingdom, the most blessed prince of the apostles shall open to you the gates of the heavenly kingdom, together with the elect of God. The grace of the Eternal King preserve you, most dearly beloved son in Christ, long to reign over us, to the great tranquility of us all.”

When this letter was read before King Naiton, with other of his learned men, and diligently translated into his native language, he seemed to rejoice very much at the exhortation — so much that, rising up from among his noblemen, he kneeled on the ground, and gave God thanks that he had deserved to receive so worthy a present from England. And so, by public proclamation, he caused it to be immediately written out, learned, and observed throughout all the provinces of the Picts, voiding the errors that had been used there for 704 years. For all the ministers of the altar, and all monks were shaven on the crown, and all the people rejoiced for the new discipline of the most blessed prince of the apostle St. Peter, which they had received. (Beda, lib. 5. cap. 21.)

By this monkish letter annexed above, void of all Scripture, of all proofs and truth of history, the reader may note how this vain tradition of shaven crowns has come in, and upon how light and trifling an occasion. This indeed was none other than the dreaming fictions of monks of that time, falsely grounded upon the example of Peter, when by no old monument of any ancient record, can they ever prove that either Peter or Simon Magus had been shaven. In the letter it is also to be noted, how the Scottish clergy in that season, wore no such priestly crowns as our English churchmen then did.

King Iva is persuaded by his wife Ethelburga to become a monk.

But to cut off this matter of shaving, which is more worthy to be laughed at than recorded, let us now return to King Iva. By the importunate persuasion and subtle policy of his wife Ethelburga, he was allured to go to Rome, to be made a monk. Ethelburga had labored a long time to persuade him to leave the public world, but could not bring about her purpose. At one time, when the king and she had rested in a fair palace richly draped, and were to depart on the morrow, she caused the palace to be filled with all kinds of dirt and filth, and had hogs and vile beasts brought into the chambers as well as in the other parts of the house. A sow was laid in their own chamber, with her young pigs. And when she knew that this palace was thus deformed, she invited the king to visit it. Once she had brought him there, she said to him,

“I pray you, my lord, behold now this house, where now are the rich clothes of gold and silk and other apparel that we left here the other day? And where are the delicacies and pleasant servitors and costly dishes that you and I were recently served with? Have all these not passed and gone? My lord, in like manner *we* will vanish away. And our bodies, which are now delicately kept, will fall and turn into the refuse of the earth. Therefore bear in mind my words that I have often told you, and use your diligence to purchase that palace that shall ever endure in joy without changing.”

By means of these words, the queen turned the king's mind, so that he shortly after resigned his kingdom to Ethelard his nephew, and took upon himself the habit of a poor man. And setting apart all the pomp and pride of this wicked world, he fellowshipped with poor men, and travelled to Rome with great devotion — when he had been King of the West Saxons for thirty-seven years. After his departing, Ethelburga his wife went to Barking, where she continued in the nunnery of Barking, and so ended the rest of her life, when she had been abbess of the place a certain time. Malmesbury also testifies that this Iva was the first king who granted a penny for every fire-house through his dominion, to be paid to the court of Rome. Afterward this penny was called Rome-shot, or Peter-pence, and was paid long after in many places of England.

The Venerable Bede

Here I must mention Bede, a man of venerable memory. As I see writers do not agree, some saying that he was not an Englishman, I thought to report as much of him as I find by his own words, testified about himself in his Ecclesiastical History of England.

Bede declares that he was born in the territory of the monastery of Peter and Paul, where at the age of seven years, he was committed to the tuition of Benedict, and of Celfrid, abbots of the monastery. Continuing in this monastery from that time forward, all his long life, he gave himself and all his study to the holy Scripture. Whatever time or leisure he had from his daily service in the church, he spent either in learning, or teaching, or writing something. About nineteen years of age, he was made deacon; at thirty he was made priest. From this time, to the age of fifty-nine years, he occupied himself in interpreting the works of the ancient fathers for his own use and the necessity of others; and in writing treatises which numbered thirty-seven volumes in all, which he digested into seventy-eight books.

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Some say that he went to Rome, either to defend his books there as consonant with catholic doctrine, or else if they were found to be faulty, to amend and correct them, as he might be commanded. Though the reporter of Bede's life does not certainly affirm that he was ever at Rome, yet it is manifest in histories, that Bede was invited and called there. Also the epistle of Pope Sergius sufficiently proves it, declaring moreover in what estimation Bede was held in the court of Rome, as well as in other places.

So notable and famous was Bede's learning, that the church of Rome stood in need of his help, and required it in discussing certain controversies pertaining to learning. Moreover, the whole Latin church at that time admitted his mastery in judgment and in knowledge of the holy Scriptures. In all his explanations, his greatest scope and purpose was always to simply instruct and inform his reader in the sincere love of God and neighbor, without any curious style. The holiness and integrity of his life are not to be doubted. For how could he attend to any sinful idleness, or have any leisure for it, having read and digested so many volumes, and consumed all his time and thoughts in writing on the Scriptures? For so he testifies about himself in the third book of Samuel, saying,

“Even if my Treatise and Expositions bring with them no utility to their readers, yet for myself they conduce not a little to this: that while all my study and cogitation were set upon them, I had little mind for the slippery enticements and vain cogitations of this world.”

Thus he continued in this labor of study till age sixty-two. At length, drawing near his end, and being sick for seven weeks — besides other occupations of his mind, and other studies which he did not intermit — he also translated the gospel of St. John into English. At length, with great comfort of spirit, he departed this life, pronouncing many comfortable sayings to those who stood about him.

The Synod of Clovesho

Ceolwulf, king of Northumberland (A.D. 729-737), after he had reigned eight years, was made a monk in the abbey of Farne.¹⁰¹ His cousin Edbert succeeded him, brother to Egbert (who was bishop of York at the time). Egbert erected a noble library in York, whose example I wish other bishops now would follow.

¹⁰¹ Ceolwulf often consulted Bede. While praising Ceolwulf's piety, Bede had some reservations regarding Ceolwulf's ability to rule. Being a man with deep monastic interests, he was little suited to affairs of state. Bede dedicated his *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (History of the English Church) to Ceolwulf in 731.

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About the time of Edbert's reign (737-758), Cuthbert was archbishop of Canterbury. He collected a great synod of bishops and prelates in September (A.D. 747) near the place called Clovesho. In this synod the following decrees were enacted.

1. That bishops should be more diligent in seeing to their office, and in admonishing the people of their faults.
2. That they should live in a peaceable mind together, despite being in separate places.
3. That every bishop should go about all the parishes of his diocese once a year.
4. That the bishops, each in his own diocese, should admonish their abbots and monks to live regularly (orderly): and that prelates should not oppress their inferiors, but love them.
5. That they should teach the monasteries to live regularly, for secular men had invaded them, and could not then be taken from them.
6. That none should be admitted to orders, before his life was examined.
7. That in monasteries the reading of holy Scripture should be more frequent.
8. That priests should not be disposers of secular business.
9. That they should take no money for baptizing infants.
10. That they should both learn and teach the Lord's Prayer and Creed in the English tongue.
11. That all should join together in their ministry in one uniform rite and manner.
12. That they should sing in the church in a modest voice.
13. That all holy and festival days should be celebrated at one time together.
14. That the Sabbath day be reverently observed and kept.
15. That the seven canonical hours (times of prayer) be observed every day.¹⁰²
16. That the rogation days (supplication), both the greater and lesser, should not be omitted.
17. That the feast of St. Gregory and St. Austin our patron, should not be omitted.
18. That the fast of the four times should be kept and observed.¹⁰³
19. That monks and nuns should go regularly (properly) apparelled.
20. That bishops should see that these decrees are not neglected.
21. That the churchmen should not give themselves to drunkenness.
22. That the communion should not be neglected by the churchmen.
23. That the communion should also be observed by laymen, as time required.
24. That laymen should be first well tried before they entered into monkery.
25. That alms are not neglected.
26. That bishops should see that the people are notified of these decrees.
27. They disputed about the profit of alms.
28. They disputed about the profit of singing psalms.
29. That the congregation should be constituted according to the ability of their goods.
30. That monks should not dwell among laymen.
31. That public prayer should be made for kings and princes.

¹⁰² **Matins** (nighttime), **Lauds** (early morning), *Prime* (first hour of daylight), *Terce* (third hour), *Sext* (noon), *Nones* (ninth hour), and **Vespers** (sunset evening). Majors are in boldface, minors in italics.

¹⁰³ These were the Ember days, which occurred four times a year, with the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday of each ember week being days of fasting and abstinence.

These decrees and ordinances being thus concluded among the bishops, Cuthbert the archbishop, sent a copy of them to Boniface (c. 675-754), otherwise named Winfrid, an Englishman, and then archbishop of Mentz. He was afterwards made a martyr (as the popish stories term him). Boniface wrote a letter to Ethelbald, king of Merceland, who was also present at the synod. I thought this letter was not unworthy to be referenced here, not so much for the author's sake, as for some good matter that may perhaps be found in it. In this letter, is to be seen and noted,

First, the corruption and great disorder of life which from time to time has been found in these religious houses of nuns. Their compulsory vow of chastity has never yet been good for the church, nor profitable to the commonwealth, and least of all to themselves.

Secondly, No less are those also to be reprehended, who maintained these superstitious orders of unprofitable nuns and of other religions.

Among these was this Boniface. Although in this letter he justly reprehends the vicious enormities both of secular and religious persons, yet he himself is not without the same or greater reprehension. For he gave occasion for it in maintaining such superstitious orders of nuns and other religions, and restraining them from lawful marriage. For we discover in histories, that he was a great setter-up and upholder of such blind superstition, and of all popery. From this Boniface proceeded that detestable doctrine which now stands in the pope's registered decrees (*papal infallibility*, Dist. 40. cap. Si Papa).¹⁰⁴ In a certain epistle of his, is this doctrine: that if the pope were of the most abominable living, and forgetful or negligent of himself and of the whole of Christianity, so that he leads innumerable souls to hell with himself, yet no man ought to rebuke him in doing so. For he has power to judge all men, and ought not to be judged by any man.

About this time, Gregory III first brought into the mass-canon the clause for relics, the memorial, the offering, and sacrifice for the dead — just as Zachary brought in the priests' vesture and ornaments, and as Constantine was the first pope to have his feet kissed by the emperors.

[85] A.D. 747-794.

Ethelbert Murdered by Offa.

But now to turn back to the course of our English history. In the latter part of the reign of Offa, king of Mercia, Ethelbert, who was a learned and godly prince, came to the court of Offa to sue for the marriage of his daughter. But the queen falsely suspected that Ethelbert had come with his company under the pretense of marriage, to work some violence against her husband. She persuaded king Offa to seize him and to strike off his head. And thus the innocent king was wrongfully murdered about the year A.D. 793. Afterwards Offa understood the innocence of this king, and the heinous cruelty of his own act. He gave a tenth of his goods to the holy church; and he bestowed great lands on the church of Hereford. He built the abbey of St. Albans, and certain other monasteries. And afterwards he went to Rome for his penance, where he gave the church of St. Peter a penny for every house in his dominion. This was commonly called Rome-shot or Peter-pence, paid to the church of St. Peter. And there, at length, Offa was transformed from a king to a monk, about A.D. 794.

A little earlier, in speaking of certain bishops of Rome, I mentioned Pope Constantine I, Gregory II, Pope Gregory III, and Pope Zachary, who deposed Childerick and set up Pepin

¹⁰⁴ [Papal infallibility was defined by the First Vatican Council \(1869-70\), under Pope Pius IX \(1846-1878\).](#)

as the French king, etc. Next after this Zachary followed Pope Stephan II, to whom Pepin, to gratify the See of Rome for receiving his kingship, gave and contributed to the See of Rome, the Exarchate or principedom of Ravenna, the kingdom of the Lombards, and many other great possessions of Italy, with all the cities adjoining the borders of Venice. No doubt this donation of Pepin, if the truth were rightly tried, would be found to be the same one which has falsely been thought to be the “donation” of emperor Constantine (mentioned earlier).

Next to Stephan succeeded Paul I, who following his predecessors, thundered out great excommunications against Constantine, the emperor of Constantinople, for abrogating and plucking down the images set up in temples. Notwithstanding this, Constantine ignored the Pope’s vain curses, and persevered till the end of his life in his blessed purpose in destroying idolatry. Then came to be pope, Constantine II, a layman and brother to Desiderius, the king of Lombardy. For this cause he was shortly deposed, and thrust into a monastery, having his eyes put out.

In his stead succeeded Stephan III, who ordained that no layman should be pope. Moreover, he condemned the seventh Council of Constantinople as heretical, because in that council the worshipping of images was reprov'd and condemned. Contrary to that Council, this pope not only maintained the filthy idolatry of images in Christian temples, but also advanced their veneration, commanding them, most heathenishly, to be incensed.

Then in this race of popes, after Stephan III, comes Adrian I, who likewise followed in the steps of his fathers the popes. He added and attributed to the veneration of images more than all the others had done before, writing a book on the adoration and utility proceeding from them. Moreover, he held a synod at Rome against Felix, and all others who spoke against setting up such stocks (wooden carvings) and images. And just as Paul I before him made much of the body of Petronilia, St. Peter’s daughter, so Adrian clothed the body of St. Peter all in silver, and covered the altar of St. Paul with a pall of gold. Pope Adrian ratified the order of St. Gregory’s mass, above the order of St. Ambrose’s mass. For up to his time (about A.D. 780), the liturgy of St. Ambrose was more used in the Italian churches. I insert the history of this here, because it is registered in Durandus, Nauclenis, and Jacobus de Voragine, and so that the reader may understand when this usual mass of the Papists first became universal and uniform, and was generally received in churches. Jacobus de Voragine, in the life of Pope Gregory I, thus speaks concerning this matter:

“In time past, when the service which Ambrose made was more used in churches than the one which Gregory had appointed, the bishop of Rome, then called Adrian, gathered a council together, in which it was ordained that Gregory’s service should be observed and kept universally. The Emperor Charles diligently put into execution this determination of the council, visiting various provinces, and informing all the clergy, partly with threatenings and partly with punishments, to receive that order. And as to the books of Ambrose’s service, he burnt them to ashes in all places, and threw into prison many priests who would not consent and agree to the matter. Blessed Eugenius, the bishop, coming to the council, found that it was dissolved three days before his coming. Notwithstanding, through his wisdom he so persuaded the lord pope that he called back all the prelates who had been present at the council, and had since departed for the space of three days. Therefore when the council was gathered again, all the fathers consented and agreed in this, that both the mass-books of Ambrose and Gregory should be laid upon the altar of blessed St. Peter the apostle, and the church doors diligently shut, and most warily sealed with the signets of many and diverse bishops. And that they should again, the whole night, give themselves to prayer, so that the Lord might reveal, open, and show to them by some evident sign or token, which of these two services He would have used in the temples. Thus doing in all points as they had determined, in the morning they

opened the church doors, and found both the missals or mass-books open upon the altar; or rather (as some say) they found Gregory's mass-book utterly plucked apart, one piece from another, and scattered over all the church. Regarding Ambrose's book, they only found it open on the altar in the very same place where they previously laid it. Pope Adrian, like a wise expounder of dreams, interpreted this miracle thus: that just as the leaves were torn and blown abroad over the whole church, so should Gregory's book be used throughout the world. Thereupon they thought themselves sufficiently instructed and taught by God, that the service which Gregory had made, ought to be sent abroad and used throughout the world, and that Ambrose's service should only be observed and kept in his own church at Mediolanum, where he was bishop."

Thus the reader has heard the full and whole narration of this mystical miracle, with the pope's exposition upon it. Concerning this miracle, I need not admonish the reader to smell out the blind practices of these night-crows, to blind the world with forged inventions instead of true stories. Even if we grant the miracle to be most true, as to the exposition of it, another man besides the pope might interpret this great miracle thus: that God was angry with Gregory's book, and therefore tore it to pieces, and scattered it about; and the other, as good, lay sound, untouched, and was at least to be preferred. Yet, whatever is to be thought of this miracle with the exposition, thus the matter fell out that only Gregory's service had the preference. And to this day, in the greatest part of Europe, the service of Ambrose is excluded. And thus much regarding the great act of Pope Adrian for setting up the mass. By the relation of this, the reader may at least understand how commonly in Christian nations abroad, no uniform order of any missal or mass book was yet received.

Charlemagne

Now to return again from the popes to the emperors. Pepin, the father of Charles the Great, called Charlemagne, had given to the papal see all the principedom of Ravenna, with other donations and revenues and lands in Italy. So Charlemagne, following his father's devotion, confirmed it, adding the city and dominion of Venice, Istria, the dukedom Forojuleinse, the dukedom Spoletanum, and Beneventanum, and other possessions to the patrimony of St. Peter — thus making pope Adrian the prince of Rome and Italy. To recompense Charles' kindness, the pope gave him the title "most Christian king," and ordained him alone, to be emperor of Rome. For these reasons, Charlemagne bore no little affection for Adrian above all other popes.

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The Empress Irene— End of the Kingdom of Northumberland.

This affection was also partly because Charlemagne's older brother Carloman had died, and his wife Bertha, with her two children, came to pope Adrian to have them confirmed in their father's kingdom. The pope, to show a pleasure to Charlemagne, would not agree to this. Instead, he gave the mother with her two children, and Desiderius, the Lombard king, along with his whole kingdom, and his wife and children, into the hands of Charlemagne, who led them captive into France with him, and he kept them there in servitude during their life.

Thus Charlemagne being proclaimed emperor of Rome, through Adrian and Pope Leo III, who succeeded Adrian, the empire was transferred from the Grecians to the French (about A.D. 801). There it continued over one hundred years, till the coming of Conrad and his nephew Otto, who were Germans. And so it has continued among the Germans to this present time. Charlemagne built many monasteries. He was beneficial to the churchmen, also merciful to the poor, valiant and triumphant in his undertakings, and skillful in all

Bk. II. The next 300 years in England till Egbert (462-794)

languages. He held a council at Frankfort where the Council of Nice was condemned, and also Irene, for setting up and worshipping images, etc. ¹⁰⁵

Concerning the Council of Nice, and the things concluded and enacted there (so that no one will think detesting images was something new) I find this recorded in an ancient history of Roger Hoveden:

“In A.D. 792, Charles, the French king, sent a book containing the acts of a certain synod, to Britain, directed to him from Constantinople. In this book (it is lamentable to be told) many things are to be found that are inconsistent and contrary to the true faith; especially that by the common consent of almost all the learned bishops of the Eastern church, numbering over three hundred, it was there agreed that images should be worshipped. The church of God has always abhorred this. Alcuine wrote an epistle against this book, substantially grounded on the authority of holy Scripture. Alcuine presented to the French king this epistle with the book, in the name and person of our bishops and princes.”

And thus much of Romish matters, by the way. Now to return again to the Northumberland kings, where we left at Edbert who (as declared before) succeeded Ceolwulf, after he was made a monk. And Edbert, following the devotion of his uncle Ceolwulf, and Kenred before him, was likewise shorn a monk, after he had reigned twenty years in Northumberland. He left his son Osulphui to succeed him.

After the reign of King Edbert, there was such trouble and perturbation in the dominion of Northumberland — with slaying, and expelling and deposing their kings one after another — that after the murder of Ethelbert, none dared take the government upon himself, seeing the great danger. It went so far that the kingdom lay void and waste for thirty-three years, after which this kingdom of Northumberland, with the kingdoms of the other Saxons, came altogether into the hands of Egbert, king of the West Saxons (Wessex), and his progeny. This monarchy began A.D. 827.¹⁰⁶

In the meantime, Irene, empress of the Greeks, was busy at Constantinople. First, through means of Pope Adrian, she took up the body of Constantine, emperor of Constantinople, her own husband's father. Once she had burned it, she caused the ashes to be cast into the sea because he disannulled images. Afterwards, she reigned with her son Constantine VI, who was son to Leo IV (who was excommunicated for removing images). Being at odds with him, she had him taken to prison. Afterward, through the influence of friends, he was restored to his empire. But at last she caused him, though her own son, to be cast into prison, and his eyes to be put out, so that within a short time he died. Afterward, Irene held a council at Nice, with the advice of Therasius, bishop of Constantinople,. There it was decreed that images should again be restored to the church. This council was repealed by another council held at Frankfort by Charlemagne (as mentioned earlier). At length, she was deposed by Nicephorus (who reigned after her), expelled from the empire, and ended her life in much penury and misery.

Up to here I have laid out the confused and turbulent reigns of the seven Saxon kings who, after the expulsion of the Britons, ruled and reigned in sundry quarters of this land together, up to the time of Egbert, king of the West Saxons. Through him, it pleased God to begin to

¹⁰⁵ [Empress Irene of Athens ruled the Byzantine Empire from 797 to 802, becoming the first woman to rule as emperor in Byzantine history. During her reign, she restored the veneration of icons.](#)

¹⁰⁶ [Egbert reigned for 37 years, from 802-839, as recorded in Foxe's Book III. Egbert was accepted as king in Kent, Sussex, Surrey, and Essex. But about 827 \(or 829\), he conquered *Mercia*, then lost it the following year.](#)

reduce and unite all these scattered kingdoms into one monarchical form of dominion. This is why, just as Egbert begins another alteration of the Commonwealth here in this land among the Saxons, my purpose (Lord willing) is to begin my third book with this same Egbert. But first I will briefly recapitulate those things in this second book which are to be noted, especially regarding the monasteries that were built, the kings who entered the monastic life and profession, and also the queens and queens' daughters who at the same time professed a solitary life in the monasteries which they or their ancestors had erected.

Up to now we have set forth and declared these seven kingdoms: first, the names and lineal descent of the kings; then what were their doings and acts same — how first being pagans, they were converted to the Christian faith; what things happened in their time in the church, how many of them were made monks; how devout they were then to the holy church and to the churchmen, and especially to the church of Rome. But the churchmen then were very different in life to what they afterwards declared themselves to be. Through the devotion of these kings, the Peter-pence or Rome-shots first entered this realm, as by Iva and then Offa. Afterwards they were brought in and ratified throughout the realm by Adelwulph.

Construction of Abbeys and Nunneries

It is also to be noted that the greatest abbeys and nunneries in this realm were first begun and built by the kings and queens of the Saxons, as seen in part by the following examples.

- First, the church or minster of St. Paul in London was founded by Ethelbert, king of Kent, and Sigebert, king of Essex (about A.D. 604).
- The first cross and altar in this realm was set up in the northern parts in Hevenfield, on the occasion of Oswald, king of Northumberland, fighting against Cadwalla; in the same place he set up the sign of the cross, kneeling and praying there for victory, A.D. 635. (Polychron. lib. 5. cap. 12.)
- The church of Winchester was first begun and founded by Kinegilsus, king of the Mercians, having nine miles around it; afterwards it was finished by his son Kenwalcus, where Wine was first English bishop, A.D. 636. (Guliel. Malms, lib. de gestis pont. Ang.)
- The church of Lincoln was first founded by Paulinus, a bishop (A.D. 629).
- The church of Westminster was first begun by a citizen of Loudon, through the instigation of Ethelbert king of Kent; before that it was an isle of thorns (A.D. 614).
- The common schools first erected at Cambridge by Sigebert. king of Eastangles (A.D. 636).
- The abbey of Knowisburgh was built by Furceus the Hermit (A.D. 637).
- The monastery of Malmesbury was built by one Meldulphus, a Scot, up to about A.D. 640, afterwards enlarged by Agilbert, bishop of Winchester.
- The monastery in Gloucester, first built by Ofricus king of Mercia, as Cestrensis says; but as William Malmesbury writes, it was by Ulferus and Ethelred, brethren to Kineburga, abbess of the same house (A.D. 679).
- The monastery of Melrose, by the flood of Tweed, by Aidanus, a Scottish bishop.
- The nunnery of Heorenton by Hevi, the first nun in Northumberland (Beda. lib. 4. cap. 1.)
- The monastery of Hetesey by Oswy king of Northumberland, who also with his daughter Elfrid, gave possessions for twelve monasteries in the parts of Northumberland (A.D. 606).
- The monastery of St. Martin in Dover, built by Whithred, king of Kent.
- The abbey of Lestingy by Ceadda (whom we call St. Ced) through the grant of Oswald, son to St. Oswald, king of Northumberland (A.D. 651).

Bk. II. The next 300 years in England till Egbert (462-794)

[87] A.D. 794—827.

- The monastery of Whitby, otherwise called Stenhalt, by Hilda, daughter to the nephew of Edwin, king of Northumberland (A.D. 607).
- A monastery called Hacanos, not far from the same place, built by Hilda the same year.
- The abbey of Abbingdon, built by Sissa king of Southsex (A.D. 666).
- An abbey, Joanno, in the east of Lincoln, by St. Botolph, A.D. 654 (Polych. lib. 5. cap. 16).
- The monastery in Ely, founded by Etheldred or Etheldrida, daughter of Anna, king of Eastangles, and the wife of Elfride king of Northumberland (A.D. 674).
- The monastery of Chertsey in Southery, by Erkenwald, bishop of London (A.D. 674), thrown down by the Danes, and afterward re-built by King Edgar.
- The nunnery of Berking, also built by Erkenwald, bishop of London, about the same time.
- The abbey of Peterborough, otherwise called Modehamsted, founded by King Ethelwald, king of the Mercians (A.D. 675).
- Bardney abbey by Ethelred, king of the Mercians (A.D. 700).
- Glastonbury by Iva, king of the West Saxons, and after repaired and enriched by King Edgar (A.D. 701).
- Ramsey built in the time of King Edgar, by Ailwinus. a nobleman (A.D. 973).
- King Edgar built forty monasteries in his time; he reigned A.D. 901.
- The nunnery of Winburne built by Cuthberga, sister to Ingilsus, King Iva's brother, A.D. 717.
- The monastery of Sealsey by the Isle of Wight, by Wilfridus, bishop of York (A.D. 678).
- The monastery of Wincombe by Kenulphus king of the Mercians (A.D. 737).
- St. Albans built by Offa, king of the Mercians (A.D. 755).
- The abbey of Evesham by Edwin, bishop (A.D. 691).
- Ripon in the north, by Wilfrid, bishop (A.D. 709).
- The abbey of Echlinghey, by King Alfred (A.D. 891).
- The nunnery of Shaftsbury, by Alfred, the same year.

Thus we see what monasteries began to be founded by the Saxon kings, newly converted to the Christian faith, within the space of 200 years. As they seemed to have a certain zeal and devotion to God, according to the leading and teaching that then was, so it seems to me that there were two things to be wished in these kings. *First*, that those who began to erect these monasteries of monks and nuns in order to live solely and singly by themselves, had foreseen what danger, and what absurd enormities might and did ensue, both publicly to the church of Christ, and privately to their own souls. *Secondly*, that to their zeal and devotion had been joined like knowledge and doctrine in Christ's gospel, especially in the article of our *free justification by the faith of Jesus Christ*. This is because by the lack of it, both the builders and founders, as well as those who professed the same faith, seem to have run the wrong way, and to have been deceived. Although there was a devotion and zeal of mind in those who thought to do well in doing this (which I will not reprehend here), the end and cause of their deeds and buildings cannot be excused, for it was contrary to the rule of Christ's gospel. For it appears they did these things seeking merit with God, the remedy their souls, and remission of their sins, as testified in their own records.

By the contents of these records, it may well be understood how great the ignorance and blindness of these men was. Lacking no zeal, only lacking knowledge to rule it with, they sought their salvation not by Christ alone, but by their own deservings and meritorious deeds. I do not recite this here to any infamy or reprehension of them, but rather to put us

in mind of how much we at this present time are bound to God for the sincerity of His truth. It was hidden from our ancestors so long before, and is now opened to us by the good will of our God, in his Son Christ Jesus. I am only lamenting this by the way: to see them have such works, and to lack our faith; and for us to have the right faith, and to lack their works. The blind ignorance of that age was the cause not only for these kings to build so many monasteries, but also why so many forsook their vocation of princely government, to give themselves over to the monastic profession — or rather, to willful superstition.

Kings and Queens who became Monks and Nuns.

It was sufficiently declared before concerning the names and number of kings who were professed monks. We showed seven or eight of them within these 200 years. Such then was the superstitious devotion of kings and princes; and it is no less to be noted also in the daughters of queens and kings, along with other noble women of the same age and time. It would take too long to recite all their names here. But they include Hilda, daughter to the nephew of Edwin king of Northumberland, abbess of Ely. Erchengoda, with her sister Ermenilda, daughters of Ercombertus king of Kent. Erchengoda was professed in St. Bridget's order in France. Edelberga wife and queen to King Edwin of Northumberland, and daughter of King Anna, was also made a nun in the same house of St. Bridget. Etheldreda, whom we call St. Eldred, wife to King Ecfride of Northumberland, was professed a nun at Helings. Werburga was the daughter of Ulferus King of Mercians, and made nun at Ely. Kenreda, sister of King Ulferus, and Kineswida her sister, were both professed nuns. Sexburga daughter of King Anna, king of Mercians, and wife of Ercombert, king of Kent, was abbess at Ely. Elfrida daughter of Oswy, king of Northumberland, was abbess of Whitney. Mildreda, Milburga, and Milguida, all three daughters of Merwardus, king of West Mercians, entered the profession and vow of devoted nuns. Kineburga, wife of Alfride king of Northumberland, and sister to Ofricus, king of the Mercians, and daughter of King Penda, was professed abbess of the monastery in Gloucester. Elflada, daughter of king Oswy and wife of Peda (son of King Penda), likewise enclosed herself in the same profession and vow. Also Alfritha wife to King Edgar, and Editha, daughter to Edgar, with Wolfride her mother, etc. All of these holy nuns, with diverse more, have been canonized as saints by the Romish catholics, who put most of them in their calendar, only because of the vow which they solemnly professed. Concerning this I will say that even if they kept that vow ever so perfectly, it is not *that* which makes saints before God, but only the blood of Christ Jesus, and a true faith in him.

It likewise remains that as we have declared the devotion of these noble women who professing the monastic life, cast off all worldly dignity and delights, so we should also treat those noblemen who, among the Saxon kings in like zeal of devotion, have given themselves over from the world (as they thought) to the contemplative life of the monkish profession. There are nine of these.

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|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Kinigils, king of the West Saxons. | 6. Kenred, king of Mercia. |
| 2. Iva, king of the West Saxons. | 7. Offa, king of the East Saxons. |
| 3. Ceolulf, king of Northumberland. | 8. Sebbi, king of the East Saxons. |
| 4. Edbert, king of Northumberland. | 9. Sigebert, king of East Angles. |
| 5. Ethelred, king of Mercia. | |

What is to be thought of these kings and their doings, the reader has seen before.

By these histories it is apparent what changes, what perturbations, and what alterations of state have been seen in this realm of Britain, first from British kings to Roman; then to British again; and afterward to Saxon. First, to seven reigning together, then to one, etc. And

this alteration not only happened in the civil government, but it also followed in the ecclesiastical state. For as in the Britons' time the metropolitan see was in London, so in the Saxons' time, after the coming of Austin, it was moved to Canterbury. The catalogue and order of these metropolitans, from the time of Austin to Egbert, is thus described in the history of Malmesbury.

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The Archbishops of Canterbury, from Austin to the time of Egbert.

Here are the names and order of the archbishops of Canterbury from Austin to the time of King Egbert, of whom the first seven were Italians or other foreigners.

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|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Austin. | 7. Theodorus. | 13. Lambrichtus, or Lambertus. |
| 2. Laurentius. | 8. Berctualdus. | 14. Ethelardus. |
| 3. Melitus. | 9. Tacuinus. | 15. Ulfredus. |
| 4. Justus. | 10. Nothelmus. | 16. Feolegeldus. |
| 5. Honorius. | 11. Cutbertus. | 17. Celnothus. |
| 6. Deusdedit. | 12. Berguinus. | |

During the course of these seventeen archbishops of Canterbury, there were thirty-four popes in Rome, whom we have declared in part.

And thus much regarding the time of the seven kingdoms of the Saxons, ruling together in England, from the reign of Hengist to Egbert, the first monarch of the whole land, after the expulsion of the Britons.

It now remains (by the grace of Christ) in the next book, to give the history of those kings who, principally reigning alone, had this realm in their possession, from the time of Egbert king of the West Saxons, to the coming of William the Conqueror, the Norman. This will comprehend the rest of the next three hundred years, with the acts and state of religion in the church during that period. In this time, the decline of the church and of true religion may appear, preparing the way for antichrist, which followed not long after.

THE END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

ACTS AND MONUMENTS

BOOK III.

CONTAINING

The 300 years from Egbert to Wm. the Conqueror

A.D. 795-1067.

What now remains, as I described before, is the descent and diversity of the seven kings, all reigning and ruling together in this land, so as to prosecute in a similar order the lineal succession of those who, after Egbert, king of the West Saxons, governed and ruled solely, until the conquest of William the Norman. And first, the succession of King Egbert.¹⁰⁷

In the reign of Brightric, about A.D. 795, there was a noble personage called Egbert, who was feared by Brightric because he was of kingly blood, and he was by force and conspiracy chased out of Britain into France, till the death of Brightric. After hearing of it, Egbert came back to his country, where he obtained the government of the kingdom of the West Saxons.

Bernulph, king of Mercia, with other kings, held Egbert in much derision. They scoffed and made jests at him, all of which he sustained for a time. But when he was more established in his kingdom, he assembled his knights and battled Bernulph. He won the field. This being done, he made war on the Saxons of Kent, and obtained the victory. He subdued Northumberland, and caused the kings of these three kingdoms (West Saxon, Kent, and Northumberland) to live under him as tributaries. After these and other victories, he called a council of his lords at Winchester, where by their advices he was crowned king and chief lord over this land. Before that day the land was called *Britain*. But then Egbert sent out into all the land his commands and commissions, charging straitly that from that day forward, the *Saxons* should be called *Angles*, and the land be called *Anglia*.

About the thirtieth year of the reign of Egbert, the Danes had shortly before made a horrible destruction in Northumberland, especially in the isle of Lindefarne. There they pillaged the churches, and murdered the ministers, with men, women, and children, in a cruel manner. They now entered this land a second time with a great host, and pillaged the isle of Sheppy in Kent. Egbert assembled his people, and met with them at Charmouth. But he did not succeed as well in that conflict as he had done before. With his knights he was compelled to forsake the field. Notwithstanding, in the next battle Egbert overthrew a great multitude of them with a small force, and so he drove them back. The next year the Danes returned again. After that, they continually abided in one part or another of the realm of England, till the time of Hardecanute. Though they were often driven out of the land, and chased from one country to another, they always gathered new strength and power, and continued to abide in the land.

Egbert died after ruling the West Saxons and the greater part of England for thirty-seven years. He was buried at Winchester, leaving his kingdom to his son Ethelwolf, who first was bishop of Winchester, and afterwards, by necessity, was made king (A.D. 839-858).

Ethelwolf had entered into the order of sub-deacon; some say he was made bishop of Winchester. But afterwards, being the only son of Egbert, he was made king through the dispensation of the pope. Ethelwolf (having once been in that order) was always good and devout to holy church and religious orders, in that he gave them the tithes of all his goods and lands in West Saxony, with liberty and freedom from all servage and civil charges.

¹⁰⁷ Also spelled Ecgberht.

From this it may appear how and when the churches of England began first to be endued with temporalities and lands; and became enlarged with privileges and exemptions.

Having done these things in his realm, Ethelwolf went to Rome in 853 with Alfred, his youngest son.¹⁰⁸ He committed himself to support Pope Leo IV (r. 847-855). He gave and granted to Rome a penny to be paid for every fire-house throughout his land, as King Iva in his dominion had done before. He also gave and granted, towards maintaining the light of St. Peter, 100 marks, to be paid annually; to the light of St. Paul, 100 marks; and for the use of the pope, another 100.

Ethelwolf always had two bishops about him, whose counsel he was most ruled by: Swithin, bishop of Winchester; and Adelstan, bishop of Sherborne. One was more skillful in temporal and civil affairs regarding the king's wars and filling his coffers. The other (Swithin) was of a contrary disposition, wholly inclined to spiritual meditation and to minister spiritual counsel to the king. He had previously been schoolmaster to the king. And in this appeared one good feature in this king's nature, among his other virtues — not only in following the precepts of his old schoolmaster, but also, like a kind and thankful pupil, he so revered Swithin, that he made him bishop of Winchester.

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From the time of Pope Adrian I, to Pope Adrian II, the emperors had some hand in the election (at least in the confirmation) of the Roman pope. But several of these popes began to endeavor to bring their own purpose about. Yet none of their devices could take full effect before Adrian III. So that all this while, the emperors had some authority in choosing the popes, and in assembling general councils. Therefore, by the commandment of Emperor Louis,¹⁰⁹ in the time of pope Gregory IV (r. 827-844), a general synod was commenced at Aquisgrane (or Aachen, A.D. 836), where the following things were decreed by Gregory and his assistants: first, that every church should have sufficient of its own proper lands and revenues to keep its priests, that none should lack or go begging. Also, that none of the clergy, of whatever order or degree, should use any vesture of any precious or scarlet color. Neither should they wear rings on their fingers unless it is when prelates are at mass, or give their consecrations. Also, that prelates should not keep too great a house or family, nor keep many horses, use dice, or be guilty of immoral conduct; and that the monks should not be excessive in gluttony or riot. Also, that none of the clergy, being either anointed or shaven, should use either gold or silver in their shoes, slippers, or girdles, like Heliogabalus.¹¹⁰ By this it may be conjectured what sort of pomp and pride had crept into the clergy in those days. Moreover, the feast of All Saints was first brought into the church by Pope Gregory IV.

After this pope, came Sergius II, who first began the alteration of the pope's names, because he was previously named "Swines-snout." He also ordained that the *Agnus Dei* be sung three times at the mass, and the communion host be divided into three parts.

After him was Pope Leo IV (r. 847-855). It was first enacted by this pope, in a council, that no bishop should be condemned with less than 72 witnesses, as you see was practiced at the condemnation of Stephen Gardiner.¹¹¹ Also contrary to the law of his predecessor, Gregory

¹⁰⁸ Then aged 5, later to be Alfred the Great (r. 871-886).

¹⁰⁹ Emperor Louis the Pious (r. 814-840), son of Charlemagne.

¹¹⁰ Or Elagabalus (c. 203–222), the extravagant Roman Emperor mentioned on page [45].

¹¹¹ Stephen Gardiner, Catholic bishop of Westchester (1531-1555); he was John Foxe's arch-enemy.

IV, this pope ordained the cross (all set with gold and precious stones) to be carried before him ... like a pope.

Pope Joan, a Female Pope.

And next comes the whore of Babylon (Rev 17.5; 19.2), rightly in her true colors, by the permission of God, to appear manifestly to the whole world; and that is not only in the spiritual sense, but in the very letter. For after this Leo IV, mentioned above, the cardinals proceeding to their ordinary election (after a solemn mass of the Holy Spirit, to their perpetual shame, and that of the see), instead of a male pope, they elected a woman, called Joan VIII, to minister sacraments; to say masses; to give orders; ^{1Tim 2.12} to constitute deacons, priests, and bishops; to promote prelates; to make abbots; to consecrate churches and altars; to have the reign and rule of emperors and kings. This woman's proper name was Gilberta. She went out of the Abbey of Fulda in a man's apparel, with an English monk, to Athens; and through her wit and learning, she was promoted to the popedom. There she sat for two years and six months. ¹¹² At last, openly in the face of a general procession, she gave birth to a child, and so she died. She was succeeded by Benedict III (r. 855-858), who first ordained that the dirge was to be said for the dead.

The Epistle of Huldrike - Marriage of Priests is Lawful.

After him came Pope Nicholas I (r. 858-867), who enlarged the pope's decrees with many constitutions, equalling their authority with the writings of the apostles. He ordained that no secular prince, nor the emperor himself, should be present at their councils unless in matters concerning the faith, to the end that those whom they judged to be heretics, they should execute and murder. Also, that no laymen should sit in judgment upon the clergymen, or reason upon the pope's power. Also, that no Christian magistrate should have any power over any prelate, alleging that a prelate is called God. Also, that all church services should be in Latin, yet allowing the Slavonians and Polonians (Polish) to still retain their native language. Sequences in the mass were first allowed by him.¹¹³ By this pope, priests were first barred from marrying. Huldrike, bishop of Ausburgh (a learned and holy man), sent a letter to the pope about this. He gravely and learnedly refutes and declaims against the pope's indiscreet proceedings in this matter. I judged his lengthy letter fit for the instruction of the reader, and worthy to be inserted here, as follows: —

“A learned epistle of Huldrike, Bishop of Ausburgh, sent to Pope Nicholas I, proving by substantial proofs, that priests should not be restrained from marriage.

¹¹² This extraordinary event has naturally been disputed by the modern advocates of the church of Rome. The election and accession of a woman, who is incapable of orders, in the seat of the pontiff, is such a sundering of the links of apostolic succession in the papal chair, and such an impeachment of the orders of some in that church, that it would be passing strange if every effort that talent, learning, and ingenuity could devise, were not made to obliterate such a fact from the page of history. There is however this broad, plain, and unquestionable fact, which requires an answer more cogent than any it has yet received, namely, that for *five hundred years* after the time of Pope Joan, it was acknowledged as an historical event of as great notoriety as any other concocted with the papal chair, and that it was never called in question till the church of Rome began to feel the necessity of defending herself against those who openly opposed her assumed authority. Marianus Scotus, who lived very 'near the time of Pope Joan, mentions her as “Joanna Mulier,” and adds that she was pope for two years, five months and five days, and all the historians for some centuries — even though all were members of the church of Rome — in like manner acknowledge the facts. And even since the Reformation, a large number of Romish divines (among whom are some of their best learned men) have admitted it.

This much at all events is certain: that if this matter is an invention or falsehood, it does not rest on Protestants, but on the Romanists themselves. [Ed.]

¹¹³ Sequences are hymns or poems sung or recited during the Mass, particularly during Easter and Pentecost.

Bk. III. The 300 years from Egbert to Wm. the Conqueror (795-1067)

“Huldrike, bishop only by name, to the reverend father Nicholas, the vigilant provisor of the holy church of Rome, with due commendation, sends love as a son, and fear as a servant. Understanding, reverend father, that your decrees which you sent to me concerning the single life of the clergy, are far from all discretion, I was troubled partly with fear, and partly with heaviness. With fear because, as it is said, judging the pastor, whether it is just or unjust, is to be feared. For I was afraid lest the weak hearers of the Scripture (who scarcely obey the just sentence of their pastor, and much more despise this unjust decree) through the onerous transgression of their pastor, might show themselves disobedient. I was troubled with heaviness and with compassion, because I doubted what the members of the body might do, their head being so greatly out of frame. For what can be more grievous, or more to be lamented touching the state of the church, than for you, being the bishop of the principal see, to whom pertains the government of the whole church, to swerve ever so little out of the right way? Certainly you have not a little erred in this, in that you have gone about to constrain your clergy to singleness of life, through your imperious tyranny — those whom you should rather stir up to the honorable estate of marriage. For is this not to be accounted a violence and tyranny in the judgment of all wise men, when a man is compelled by your decrees to do that which is against the institution of the gospel and the proceeding of the Holy Spirit? Seeing, then, that there are so many holy examples in both the Old and New Testaments, teaching us, as you know, due information, I desire your patience not to think it grievous for me to bring a few here out of many.

“First, in the old law, the Lord permits marriage to the priests, which afterward in the new law we do not read to be restrained. But in the gospel He says thus: ‘There are some eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it,’ Mat 19.12. Therefore, the apostle says, ‘Concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord, yet I give my judgment,’ 1Cor 7.25. This counsel also, all men do not take, as with the commandment of the Lord before. But there are many false dissemblers and flatterers who seek to please men and not God, whom we see fall into horrible wickedness under a false pretense of holiness.

[91] A.D. 858-870.

“And, therefore, lest through the infection of this wicked pestilence, the state of the church should too much go to ruin, the apostle said, ‘Let every man have his own wife.’ Regarding this saying, our false hypocrites lie and pretend as though it only pertained to the laity, and not to them. And yet they themselves, seeming to be set in the most holy order, are not afraid to do outrageous things in all manner of wickedness.

“These men have not rightly understood the Scripture. For the saying of the apostle, ‘Let every man have his own wife,’ excepts none indeed, but only him who has the gift of continency. Therefore, O, reverend father it is your part to cause and oversee that whoever has made a vow of celibacy, and would afterward forsake it, should either be compelled to keep his vow, or else be deposed from his order by lawful authority.

“And to bring this to pass, you should not only have me, but also all others of my order, be helpers to you. But so that you may understand, those who do not know what a vow means, are not to be violently compelled to it. Hear what the apostle says to Timothy: ‘A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife,’ 1Tim 3.2. This sentence, lest you turn and apply it only to the congregants, mark what he infers after: ‘If a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?’ And ‘Let the deacon be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well,’ 1Tim 3.5,12. And this wife, how she is customarily blessed by the priest, I suppose you sufficiently understand by the decrees of holy Sylvester the pope.

“To these and such other holy sentences of the Scripture, the writer of the rule of the clergy also agrees, writing in this manner about the clerics: ‘Let them have one wife.’ From this it is to be gathered that the bishop and deacon are noted infamous and reprehensible if they are married to more than one woman. Otherwise, if they forsake one under a pretense of religion, they (the bishop as well as the deacon) are here condemned by the canonical sentence which says, ‘Let no bishop or priest forsake his own wife, under the color and pretense of religion. If he forsakes her, let him be excommunicated. And if he so continues, let him be dragged.’ St. Augustine also (a man of discreet holiness) says that, ‘There is no offense that is so great or grievous; but it is meant to avoid a greater evil.’

“Furthermore, we read in the second book of the Tripartite History,¹¹⁴ that when the Council of Nice was about to establish the same decree, which would enact that bishops, priests, and deacons, after their consecration, should either utterly forsake their own wives, or else be deposed, then Paphnutius (one of those holy martyrs, whose right eye the Emperor Maximus had put out, and hacked off their left legs) rising up among them, withstood their purposed decree. He confessed marriage to be honorable. And so he dissuaded the council from making that law, declaring what evil might come of it. This much Paphnutius (being unmarried himself) declared to them. And the whole council commending his sentence, agreed to it, and left the matter freely, without compulsion, to the will of every man to do in this as he thought.

“Notwithstanding, there are some who take St. Gregory for their defense in this matter, whose temerity I laugh at, and whose ignorance I lament. For they do not know, being ignorantly deceived, how dangerous the decree of this heresy was (the one being made by St. Gregory). He afterwards revoked it, with much repentance.

“Perhaps if these men had read with me what happened through this decree, I think they would not be so rash in their doing and judging, at least fearing the Lord’s commandment, ‘Do not judge, that you be not judged.’^{Mat 7.1} And St. Paul says, ‘Who are you to judge another man’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he shall be held up, for God is able to make him stand.’^{Rom 14.4} Therefore let your holiness cease to compel and force those whom you should only admonish, lest through your own private commandment (which God forbid) you be found contrary to the Old Testament as well as to the New. For as St. Augustine says to Donatus, ‘This is only what we do fear in your justice, lest (not for the consideration of Christian lenity, but for the grievousness and greatness of transgressions committed) you be thought to use violence in executing punishment of that which we only desire you (by Christ) not to do. For transgressions are to be so punished, that the life of the transgressors may repent.’ Also another saying of St. Augustine we would have you remember, which is this, ‘Let nothing be done through the greediness of hurting, but all things through the charity of profiting. Nor let anything be done cruelly, nothing ungently.’ It also is written by the same Augustine, ‘In the fear and name of Christ I exhort you, who do not have the goods of this world, do not be greedy to have them. Those who have them, do not presume too much upon them. For, I say, to have them is no damnation; but if you presume upon them, *that* is damnation — if in having them you seem great in your own sight, or if you forget the common condition of man through the excellency of anything you have. Therefore, use due discretion in this, tempered with moderation. This cup of discretion is drawn out of the fountain of the apostolic preaching, which said, ‘Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.’ It follows there that, ‘those who have wives be as though they had none ... and those who use this world, as not abusing it.’ 1Cor 7.27-31.

¹¹⁴ *The Historiae Ecclesiasticae Tripartitae Epitome*, also known as the Tripartite History, is a compilation of church histories from the early Christian period. It was compiled around 550 AD by Epiphanius Scholasticus (Socrates) under the direction of Cassiodorus. It summarizes the works of Scholasticus, Sozomen, and Theodoret.

Bk. III. The 300 years from Egbert to Wm. the Conqueror (795-1067)

“Concerning the widow, he says, ‘She is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord,’ 1Cor 7.39. To marry in the Lord is nothing else but to attempt nothing in contracting matrimony, which the Lord forbids. Jeremiah also says, ‘Do not trust in these lying words, saying. the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these,’ Jer 7.4. Jerome, expounding on this saying of Jeremiah, says, ‘This may agree also, and be applied to those nuns who boast of their vow, and do not know how the apostle defines the virgin, that she should be holy in body and also in spirit. For what does the purity of the body avail, if the mind is inwardly unholy? Or if it does not have the other virtues, which the prophetic sermon describes?’

“These virtues, in so far as we see them partly in you, and because we are not ignorant that this discretion, even though it is neglected in this part, yet in the other actions of your life, it is kept honestly by you, we do not despair of you soon amending the little which is still lacking. And therefore, with as much gravity as we can, we do not cease to call upon you to correct and amend your negligence in this. For although, according to our common calling, a bishop is greater than a priest, and Augustine was less than Jerome — notwithstanding, the good correction proceeding from the lesser to the greater was not to be refused or disdained, especially when the one who is corrected is found to strive against the truth to please men. For as St. Augustine says, writing to Boniface, ‘The disputations of all men, however catholic or approved these persons may be, they should not be had instead of the canonical Scriptures.’ So that, we may disapprove or refuse (saving the honor and reverence which is due them) anything that is in their writings, if anything there is found contrary to truth. And what can be found more contrary to the truth than this? The truth itself, speaking of abstaining from marriage, says, ‘He that can receive it, let him receive it.’ These men (moved by what, I do not know) turn this saying, and say instead, ‘He that cannot receive it, let him be accursed.’ What can be more foolish among men, than when any bishop or archdeacon runs himself headlong into all kinds of sin, and yet says that the marriage of priests is an abomination. And, as if void of all compassion and true righteousness, they do not desire or admonish their clerics, as their fellow-servants, to abstain from marriage, but they command them, and violently force them as servants, to abstain.

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“To this imperious commandment of theirs, or counsel (if you would call it that), they also add this foolish and wicked suggestion, saying that, ‘It is better to sin privately, than openly in the sight of men, to be bound to one wife.’ Truly they would not say this, if they were either of Him or in Him who says, ‘Woe to you, Pharisees, who do all things to be seen by men.’^{Luk 11.44} And so the psalmist says, ‘Because they please men, they are confounded, for the Lord has despised them,’ Psa 53.5. These are the men who *ought* to teach us that we should be ashamed to sin secretly in the sight of Him to whom all things are open, rather than seem to be holy in the sight of men. These men therefore, even though through their sinful wickedness they deserve no counsel of godliness to be given to them, we do not forget our humanity, and will not cease to give them counsel by the authority of God’s word. For His word seeks all men’s salvation, desiring it out of the compassion of charity. We say with the words of Scripture, ‘You hypocrite; first take the beam from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter from your brother’s eye.’^{Mat 7.5}

“Moreover, we desire them to attend to what the Lord says about the woman taken in adultery. ‘He that is without sin among you, let him be the first to cast a stone at her.’^{Joh 8.7} It is as though he said, ‘If Moses bids you, I also bid you. Yet I require you who are the competent ministers and executors of the law, take heed what you add to it. Take heed also (I pray you) of what you are yourselves. For if (as the Scripture says) you well consider yourself, you will never defame another.’

“Moreover, it is also signified to us that there are some of them who (when they should, like good shepherds give their lives for the Lord’s flock) are puffed up with such pride, that without all reason they presume to rend and tear the Lord’s flock with whippings and beatings. St. Gregory bewails such unreasonable doings, saying, ‘What shall become of the sheep when the pastors themselves are wolves?’ Who is overcome, if not the one who exercises cruelty? Or who will judge the persecutor, if not the one who patiently gave his back to stripes? This is the fruit which comes to the church by such persecutors, and which comes to the clergy by such spiteful handling of their bishops, or rather infidels. For why may you not call them infidels, whom St. Paul speaks of in this way, and writes to Timothy about? That ‘in the latter days some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils: speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with an hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods,’ etc., 1Tim 4.1-3. These are the ones who bring heresy into the church of God (like blind guides leading the blind), that it might be fulfilled which the Psalm speaks of, foreseeing the errors of such men, and cursing them in this manner: ‘Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always,’ Rom 11.10. For no man who knows you (O apostolical Sir) is ignorant that if through the light of your discretion you had understood and seen what poisoned pestilence might come into the church through the sentence of your decree, you never would have consented to the suggestions of certain wicked persons. Therefore we counsel you by the fidelity of our due subjection, that with all diligence you would put away so great a slander from the church of God. And that through your discreet discipline, you will remove this Pharisaical doctrine from the flock of God. Do not separate the holy people and the kingly priesthood from her spouse, who is Christ, through an unrecoverable divorce, seeing that no man without holiness shall see our Lord, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns forever. Amen.”

By this epistle of bishop Huldrike, it is easy to conceive what was then the opinion of learned men concerning the marriage of ministers.

After Pope Nicholas I, succeeded Adrian II (r. 867-872), John VIII (r. 872-882), and Martin II (actually Marinus I, r. 882-884). And after these came Adrian III (r. 884-885) and Stephen VI (896-897). It was first decreed by Adrian III that no emperor after that time should intermeddle or have anything to do in the election of the pope.¹¹⁵ And thus the *emperors* first began to decay, and the *papacy* began to swell and rise.

Now to return where we left King Ethelwolf. About the latter end of his reign, the Danes who before had invaded the realm in the time of King Egbert, made their re-entry again, with thirty-three ships arriving around Hampshire.

Concerning the occasion given by the Englishmen, which first moved the Danes to invade the realm, I find two causes most specially assigned in certain histories. The first was given by Osbright, the reigning under-king of the West Saxons. Osbright had treated with violence the wife of one of his nobles, called Bruer. Whereupon Bruer, after consulting with his friends, first went to the king, resigning into his hands all the service and possessions which he held from him. He then took shipping and sailed into Denmark. There he made his complaint to king Codrinus. He desired his aid in revenging the villainy of Osbright against him and his wife. Codrinus hearing this, and glad to have some just quarrel to enter that land, levied an army with all speed. Preparing all things necessary for the venture, he sends an innumerable multitude of Danes into England, who first arrived at Holderness. They burnt up the country, and killed without mercy both men, women, and children, whomever

¹¹⁵ In 1059, Pope Nicholas II decreed that only cardinals would elect the pope, laying the groundwork for the formal role of the College of Cardinals.

they could lay hands upon. Then marching towards York, they entered into battle with Osbriht, where he along with most of his army was slain. And so the Danes took possession of the city of York.

The second cause assigned by some historians for the invasion of the Danes is as follows. A certain Danish nobleman called Lothbroke, entering with his hawk into a skiff or small boat alone, was driven by a tempest to the coast of Norfolk. Being found and detained there, he was presented to king Edmund. The king understanding his parentage, and seeing his case, entertained him in his court accordingly. Every day, as the king perceived more and more Lothbroke's great dexterity in hunting and hawking, he bore special favor to him. It was so much that the king's falconer, or master of his game, bearing secret envy against Lothbroke, murdered him as they were hunting together in a wood, and threw him into a bush. In two or three days, Lothbroke began to be missed in the king's house; no tidings could be heard from him. But a spaniel dog of his, continued in the wood where the corpse of his master lay, and at various times the dog came and fawned upon the king. This went on for so long that at length they followed the trace of the hound, and were brought to the place where Lothbroke lay. Upon this discovery, an inquisition was made. At length, by certain evidence, it was known how Lothbroke was murdered by the king's huntsman. Being convicted, he was put into the same boat alone and without any tackle, to be driven by the sea — either to be saved by the weather, or drowned in the deep. Just as it chanced that Lothbroke was driven from Denmark to Norfolk, so it happened that the murderer was carried from Norfolk into Denmark, where Lothbroke's boat, being well known, hands were laid on the huntsman, and an inquisition was made. In his torments, in order to save himself, he uttered an untruth about King Edmund, saying that, "The king had put Lothbroke to death in the county of Norfolk," Whereupon, the Danes being very angry, appointed an army, and sent great multitudes into England to revenge that fact.

In the meantime. King Ethelwolf, when he had chased the Danes from place to place, causing them to take to the sea, departed from both land and life. He left behind him four sons, who reigned every one in his order, after the decease of his father.

King Ethelbald, the eldest son of Ethelwolf, succeeded his father in the province of West Saxony, and Ethelbright in the province of Kent. They reigned together for five years. After these two succeeded Ethelred, the third son, who in his time was so incumbered with the Danes bursting in on every side, especially around York, that in one year he stood in nine battles against them.

[93] A.D. 870-901.

In the latter part of Ethelred's reign, about A.D. 870, certain of the Danes being possessed of the northern country, took shipping from there, landed in Norfolk, and came to Thetford. Edmund, then under-king of that province, assembled a host and gave them battle. The king, put to the worse, fled to the castle of Framingham, where being compassed on every side by his enemies, he yielded himself to their persecution. And when he would not deny Christ, they most cruelly bound him to a tree, and shot him to death. Lastly, they struck his head from his body, and cast it into the thick bushes.

Tidings soon after were brought to king Ethelred, about the landing of Osrike, king of Denmark, who with the assistance of the other Danes had gathered a great host, and were encamped upon Ashdon. King Ethelred, with his brother Alured (called Alfred), hastened to this battle to withstand the Danes. The king stayed a little behind to offer up prayer to God. Alfred coming before him, had already entered into the fight with the Danes, who struck

together with huge violence. Afterwards, through the grace of God and their godly manhood, the king came with fresh soldiers, and so discomfited the Danes that in fleeing away, they not only lost the victory, but many of them lost their lives — their king Osrike, and five of their dukes were slain.

After this the Danes re-assembled their people, and gathered a new host. So that within fifteen days they met at Basingstoke, and there battled king Ethelred, and had the better of it. Then the king again gathered his men at the town of Merton, and he give the Danes a sharp battle. But they had the honor of the field, and king Ethelred was wounded there.

After these two battles were won by the Danes, they spread over a great circuit of ground, and destroyed man and child who would not yield to them. They turned churches and temples into stables, and used them for other vile occupations.

Thus the king was beset with enemies on every side. Seeing the land so miserably oppressed by the Danes, his knights and soldiers consumed, his own land of the West Saxons in such desolation, and being wounded himself, he wished to die honestly rather than reign in such trouble and sorrow. Not long after, he deceased, and was succeeded by his brother.

King Alured, otherwise called Alfred the Great.

Among the Saxon kings, I find none to be compared to Alfred, for great and singular qualities worthy of high renown and commendation. We behold in him the valiant acts and manifold trials which he sustained against his enemies in wars during almost all his reign, for the public preservation of his people. We consider his godly and excellent virtues, joined with a public and tender care, and a zealous study for the common peace and tranquility of the public weal. This appears in his prudent laws as well as by the virtuous institution of his life. We respect his notable knowledge of good letters, with a fervent love and princely desire to promote the same throughout his realm, which before his time was both rude and barbarous. All these heroic properties joined together in one prince, is a rare thing and seldom seen in princes now-a-days. So I thought these were more to be noted and exemplified in this good king. Therefore, to discourse about these things in order, we will first treat his acts and painful trials sustained in defense of the public realm, against the raging tyranny of the Danes.

King Alfred, the first of all the English kings,¹¹⁶ took his crown and unction at Rome from Pope Leo.¹¹⁷ In the beginning of his reign, Alfred perceived his lords and people were much wasted and decayed because of the great wars of Ethelred against the Danes. Yet he gathered his people as best he could, and in the second month that he was made king he met with the Danes beside Wilton, where he battled them. But being far out-numbered by the enemy, he was put to the worse there, although not without a great slaughter of the Pagan army. The next year the Danes left those parts, and withdrew to Lindsey, robbing and pillaging the towns and villages as they went, and holding the common people under their bondage. Afterwards, the three Danish kings joined forces, and grew in mighty force and strength, till the fourth year of King Alfred. In that year (A.D. 875) Alfred's men had a conflict on the sea with six of the Danes' ships. They took one, and the others fled away. The army of the three Danish kings returned again to West Saxony. They entered the castle of Wareham, where Alfred with a sufficient force was ready to assault them. But seeing his strength, the Danes dared not attempt it with him. In the meantime they were constrained to seek a truce. Leaving sufficient pledges in the king's hand, and promising moreover upon

¹¹⁶ King Alred ruled over the Western Saxons 871-886, and over the Anglo-Saxons 886-899.

¹¹⁷ It was Alfred's father (Ethelwolf) who received his crown from Leo IV in 853. Adrian II was pope in 871.

their oath to leave the country of the West Saxons, the king let them go upon the surety. But falsely breaking their agreement, they secretly broke out in the night, taking their journey toward Exeter. In this voyage they lost 120 of their small ships by a tempest. Then king Alfred followed after the horsemen of the Danes, but could not overtake them before they came to Exeter. There he took from them pledges and fair promises of peace, and so he returned. Notwithstanding, the number of the Pagans only increased, so much that in one day 30,000 of them were slain; shortly after, they increased double as many again.

The next year, the Danes ruled the whole northern part of England, from the river Thames, disdainful that Alfred would bear any dominion on the other side of the Thames southward. Whereupon the three kings, with all the forces and strength they could gain, marched with such a multitude that the king with all his people were not able to resist them. Of the people who inhabited there, some fled over the sea, some remained with the king, and many submitted themselves to the Danes. Thus Alfred being overrun with a multitude of enemies, and forsaken by his people, having neither land to hold, nor hope to recover what he had lost, withdrew himself with a few of his nobles, into a certain wood country in Somersetshire called Etheling. There he had little to live on but such as he and his people might procure by hunting and fishing. This Etheling stands in a great marsh or moor, so that there is no access to it without ship or boat. And it has in it a great wood called Selwood, and in the middle a little plain of about two acres of ground in which there was an isle with venison and other wild beasts, with fowls and fishes. At his first coming into this wood, king Alfred spied a certain cottage of a poor swineherd, keeping swine in the wood. The king who was then unknown to him, was entertained and cherished with such meager fare as the swineherd and his wife could make him. King Alfred afterwards set the poor swineherd to learning, and made him bishop of Winchester.

Notwithstanding, the king in process of time was strengthened and comforted through the providence of God, respecting the miserable ruin of the English. First, the brother of King Halden the Dane came with thirty-three ships, and landed about Devonshire. There, by chance, they were resisted by an ambush of King Alfred's men (who lay there in garrison for their safeguard); 1300 men were slain, and their ensign called the Raven was taken. Both commanders Ingvar and Hubba were slain among the other Danes. After this, King Alfred being better cheered, showed himself more at large, so that the men of Wiltshire, Somersetshire, and Hampshire daily resorted to him, till he was strongly accompanied.

The Danes Subdued

Then the king undertook a bold and dangerous adventure. Dressing himself as a minstrel, with his musical instrument in hand (as he was very skillful in all Saxon poems), he entered into the camp of the Danes, which then lying at Eddendun. While playing his interludes and songs, he espied all their sloth and idleness, and heard much of their counsel. Shortly after, he fell upon the Danes suddenly in the night and slew a great multitude of them, and chased them from that coast. Through his strong and valiant assaults, he clearly voided the country of them between there and Selwood. His subjects soon heard of his valiant victories and manful deeds, and drew to him daily from all coasts. Through the help of God, he held the Danes so short, that he won from them Winchester and other towns.

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At length he forced them to seek peace, which was concluded on certain covenants, of which the principal was that Gutrum, their king, should be christened. The other was that those who would not be christened, would depart the country.

About the fifteenth year of the reign of Alfred, the Danes returned from France to England, landed in Kent, came to Rochester, and besieged that city. They lay there so long that they built a tower of timber against the gates of the city. But by the strength of the citizens, that tower was destroyed, and the city was defended, till King Alfred came and rescued them. The Danes were so distressed by this, and so nearly trapped, that for fear they left their horses behind, and fled to their ships by night. But the king, when he was aware of this, sent after them, took sixteen of their ships, and slew many of the Danes. This being done, the king returned to London, and repaired that city. He made it habitable, where before it was decayed and enfeebled by the assaults of the Danes.

About the twenty-first year of his reign, the Danes again landed in four places of this land — in the east, in the north, and in two places in the west.

When King Alfred ascertained that the Danes had landed, he went forth against them from where he was in East Anglia,. He pursued them so sharply, that he drove them out from those parts. They then landed in Kent, where the king, with his people, in like manner drove them out. After this, the Danes took shipping and sailed into North Wales; there they robbed and pillaged the Britons.

The fourth host of the Danes, the same year, came to Chester, which at length they won. But then the country adjoining pressed so sorely upon them, and besieged them so long, keeping them within the city, that at last the Danes, wearied with the long siege, were compelled to eat their own horses for hunger. Meanwhile, Alfred marched there with his host. Then the Danes, leaving their strongholds and castles which were furnished with men and victuals, and again took shipping. They so set their course that they landed in Sussex, and came to the port of Lewes. From there they headed toward London, and built a tower or castle twenty miles from London. But the Londoners hearing of this, sent out a number of men of arms. With the assistance of those from that country, they pushed the Danes from that tower, and afterward beat it down to the ground. Soon after, the king came down there. To prevent the dangers that might ensue, he commanded the river of Lea to be divided in three streams; so that where a ship might have sailed previously, a little boat might scarcely row. From there the Danes left their ships and wives, and were forced to flee that country. They took their way again toward Wales, to the river of Severn. There, on its borders, they built a castle, resting themselves there for a time. The king soon pursued them with his army. The following year, the Danes divided their host. Part went to Northumberland, some to Norfolk, and part sailed to France. Others came to Westsax (Wessex), where they had conflicts with the English, both by land and sea. Some of them were slain, many perished by shipwreck, others were taken and hanged, and thirty of their ships were taken.

Not long after this, Alfred, when he had reigned twenty-nine years and six months, quit this mortal life. And thus much we write touching the painful labors and trials of this good king. He no less valiantly achieved these, than he patiently sustained them for the defense of his realm and subjects.

Character of King Alfred.

Now if there are any who desire to see and follow the virtuous and godly disposition of this king, touching both the institution of his own life, and also concerning his careful government of the commonwealth, the histories record this: —

That when young, perceiving himself disposed to dissoluteness and vice, he did not give himself to all kinds of license and dissolute sensuality, as many young princes and kings' sons in the world do now. But wishing to avoid the temptation, he besought God that he

would send him some continual sickness, by which he might be kept from any dissolute habits, be more profitable to the public business of the commonwealth, and be more apt to serve God in his calling.

This bountiful goodness joined with prudence in this man, in the ordering and disposing of his riches and rents, is not unworthy to be recited. He divided his goods into two equal parts. The one he appropriated to secular uses, the other to spiritual or ecclesiastical uses. He divided the first of these two principal parts into three portions: the *first* to the support of his house and family; the *second* to the workmen and builders of his new works, in which he had great delight and cunning; and the third to strangers. Likewise the other half (for spiritual uses) he divided into four portions: one to relieving the poor, another to the monasteries, the third portion to the schools of Oxford for maintaining good letters; and the fourth he sent to foreign churches outside the realm.

He was most sparing and frugal with his time, as a most precious thing in this earth. He so divided the day and night into three parts (if he were not hindered by wars and other great business), so that he spent eight hours in study and learning, eight hours in prayer and alms-deeds (charity), and eight hours in his natural rest, sustenance of his body, and the needs of the realm.

His laws issued and devised by him may declare how careful he was of the commonwealth, and for maintaining public tranquility. In these, it was especially provided by him for the extirpating and abolishing of all thieves out of the realm. By this means the realm was brought into such tranquility, or rather perfection, that at every crossroads or turn through his dominion, he caused to be set up a golden brooch, or at least silver-gilded, and none were found so hardy as to take it down either by day or night. He diligently searched out the doings of his officers, and especially of his judges, so that if he knew any of them to err, either through covetousness or unskillfulness, he removed them from their office.

And thus much concerning the valiant acts and noble virtues of this worthy prince. Although there were other ornaments besides these, they were sufficient to set forth a prince worthy of excellent commendation. Now, besides these other qualities and gifts of God's grace in him, there remains another part of no little praise and commendation. This is his learning and knowledge of good letters. He was not only excellent and expert in them himself, but he was also a worthy maintainer of them throughout his dominions. There was no grammar or other science practiced, except through the industry of the king. Schools began to be erected, and studies to flourish — though among the Britons (Alfred was Saxon) in the town of Chester, both grammar, philosophy, and foreign languages were then taught. After that, some other writers record that in the time of Egbert, king of Kent (A.D. 664-673), this island began to flourish with philosophy. About this time also, some think that the university of Grantchester was founded by Bede, near what is now called Cambridge. Before these times, it is thought that there were two schools or universities within the realm, the one was for Greek, at the town of Greglade, afterward called Kirkelade; the other was for Latin, at a place then called Latinlade, afterward Lethelade, near Oxford.

But however it chanced, the knowledge and study of good letters, once planted in this realm, afterward went to decay. King Alfred deserves no little praise for restoring or rather increasing it. By this we may see what it means to have a prince who is learned himself, who feeling and tasting the price and value of science and knowledge, is thereby not only more apt to rule well, but also to instruct and frame his subjects from a rude barbarity, to a more civil life. Although it was somewhat late before Alfred learned, such was the docility of his nature that, being a child, he had learned the Saxon poems (those which were used then in

his own tongue) by heart and memory. Afterwards with age, he grew up in great perfection of learning and knowledge. This is even more to be marvelled at, for he was twelve years of age before he knew any letters at all.

[95] A.D. 901.

At this time his mother, having by chance a book in her hand which he wished to have, promised to give it to him if he would learn it. Upon which, through his desire to possess the book, he soon learned the letters. His master was Pleimundus, afterwards bishop of Canterbury. He so grew more and more in knowledge, that at length he translated a great part of the Latin library into English. Among the books translated by him, were Orosius,¹¹⁸ Gregory's *Pastoral*, the history of Bede, and Boetius on the *Consolation of Philosophy*. He also wrote a book in his own tongue, which he called a Hand Book. Besides translating Bede's history into the Saxon tongue, he compiled a history himself in the same style, called *The History of Alfred*, etc. As he was excellently learned himself, so he likewise inflamed all his countrymen with the love of letters. He also allured his nobles to embrace good letters, so that they all sent their sons to schools; or if they had no sons, they caused their servants to be taught. Moreover, he began to translate the Psalter into English, and had almost finished it, when death prevented him.

John Scot.

Moreover, among other learned men who were around King Alfred, histories mention John Scot (a godly divine, and a learned philosopher). He is described as having a sharp wit, of great eloquence, well expert in the Greek tongue, and of a pleasant and merry nature, as appears by many of his doings and answers. He left his own country of Scotland because of the great tumults of war, and went to France. There he was worthily entertained; and for his learning, he was held in great estimation by Charles the Bald, the French king; so that he was commonly and familiarly around the king. One day the king was sitting at meal, and seeing something in John Scot which did not seem very courtly, he merrily asked him what the difference was between a Scot and a sot? Scot sitting opposite the king, somewhat lower, replied suddenly, rather than advisedly (yet merrily), *only the table*. He thereby implied the king was the Scot, and so by craft, he was calling the king a sot. How other princes might have taken this word, I do not know, but Charles, for the great reverence he bore to Scot's learning, turned it to laughter among his nobles, and so he let it pass.

Another time, the same king being at dinner, was served with a certain dish of fish, in which there were two great fishes and a little one. After the king had his part of the repast, he sent the fish down to John Scot, to distribute to the other two clerics sitting with him. They were two tall and mighty persons, and he himself was but a little man. John, taking the fish, takes and carves for himself the two great ones; the little fish he offers to the other two. The king perceiving how his division was made, reprehended it. Then John, whose manner was ever to reveal some honest matter to delight the king, answered so as to prove that his division stood just and equal. "For here" (he said) "are two great, and a little," pointing to the two great fishes and himself; "and likewise, here again is a little one and two great, pointing to the little fish, and the two great persons. I ask you" (he said) "what odds is there, or what distribution can be more equal?" The king with his nobles being much delighted at this, laughed merrily.

¹¹⁸ Paulus Orosius (c. 375–420 A.D.), Roman priest, historian, and theologian, and student of Augustine of Hippo.

Moreover, Scot compiled a book which contains the resolution of many profitable questions. But he is thought to follow the Greek church rather than the Latin, for he was considered by some to be a heretic. This was because there were some things in that book which do not accord in all points with the Romish religion. Therefore the pope, writing to King Charles, complains that a certain man called John, a Scottish man, had translated the book of Dionysius the Areopagite,¹¹⁹ about the names of God and the heavenly orders, from Greek into Latin. This book, the pope said, according to the custom of the church, should first have been approved by our judgment. Thus, although Scot was said to be a man of great learning and science, in times past he was noted as a man who was not of upright or sound doctrine in certain points. And for this reason, he was constrained to leave France, and come to England. He was allured by the letters of King Alfred, who entertained him with great favor. Scot continued a long time in the king's company, till at length (whether before or after the death of the king is uncertain) he went to Malmesbury.¹²⁰ There he taught certain scholars for a few years, until at last he was most impiously murdered, slain by these scholars with their penknives; and so he died.

King Alfred having these helps of learned men about him, and no less learned himself, passed his time to the great utility and profit of his subjects. Alfred had two sons, Edward and Ethelward, and three daughters, Elfleda, Ethelgora, and Ethelguida. Edward, his eldest son, succeeded him in the kingdom. The second son, Ethelward, died before his father. Ethelgora, his middle daughter, became a nun, the other two were married, the one in Merceland, the other to the Earl of Flanders. Thus King Alfred, the valiant, virtuous, and learned prince, after he had thus christianly governed the realm for twenty-nine years and six months, departed this life, November 5, 901. He lies buried at Winchester. Moreover, I find this greatly noted and commended in history, and not to be forgotten here for its rare example — that wherever he was, or wherever he went, he always carried with him a little book containing the Psalms of David, and certain other prayers of his own collecting. He was continually reading or praying these, whenever he had any leisure.

Pope Formosus and the Succession of Popes.

As to the course and proceedings of the Romish bishops, I last mentioned Pope Stephen VI. After his time there was so much brawling in the election of the bishops of Rome, one contending against another, that in the space of nine years, there were nine bishops! The first was Formosus, who succeeded Stephen VI. He was made pope against the mind of certain ones in Rome, who preferred Sergius. When he was a bishop, Formosus had offended Pope John VIII (r. 872-882). For fear of the pope, Formosus then left his bishopric. Being sent for by the pope, he would not return to Rome; and for this he was excommunicated. At length, coming to make his satisfaction to the pope, he was degraded from a bishop into a secular man's habit. He swore to the pope that he would no longer enter the city of Rome, nor claim his bishopric again. Moreover, he subscribed with his own hand, that he would continue from that time forward, in the state of a secular person. But then Pope Martin (*i.e.*, Marinus I, the next pope after John) released Formosus from his oath, and restored him again to his bishopric. By this means, Formosus not only reentered Rome again, but shortly after, he obtained the papacy. Thus being placed in the popedom, there arose a great doubt or controversy among the divines about his consecration, whether it was lawful or not. Some held against him, that as he was solemnly deposed, degraded, and

¹¹⁹ Dionysius the Areopagite was converted by St. Paul at Athens (Act 17.34). He was said to be the first bishop of Athens. About 500, probably in Syria, some writings were forged in his name (referred to as *Pseudo-Dionysius*) by a Christian Neoplatonist with Monophysite leanings, hence the heresy referred to here. (*Ency. Brit.*)

¹²⁰ Site of Malmesbury Abbey, famed for its learning; and one of Alfred's fortified burgs to defend against the Vikings.

unpriested, and also he was sworn not to reassume the ecclesiastical state, he should therefore not be taken to be other than a secular man. Others alleged again, that whatever Formosus was, for the dignity of the order and for the credit of those whom he ordained, his consecration ought to stand in force — especially as Formosus was afterwards received and absolved by Pope Martin from his perjury and degradation, etc. In the meantime, Formosus sent to King Arnulphus for aid against his adversaries.¹²¹ When then marching toward Rome, he was kept from entering by the Romans. But Arnulphus obtaining the city of Rome, rescues Pope Formosus, and beheads his adversaries. To gratify him in return, the pope blesses and crowns him as emperor. Thus Formosus, sitting as pope for four or five years, followed his predecessors. After his time (as I said before) there were nine bishops within the space of nine years, as follows below. But concerning Formosus, I would gladly ask, and more gladly learn from some impartial good catholic person who, being a papist — not in obstinacy, but in simple error — would answer his conscience, whether he thinks the holy order of priesthood which he takes for one of the seven sacraments, is an indelible character or not? If it is not indelible, that is, if it is such a thing that it may be put aside, then why does the pope's doctrine pretend that it is indelible and unremovable?

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Or if it is indeed of an indelible character, as they teach and affirm, then why did (or could) Pope John annihilate and evacuate one of his seven pope-holy-sacraments, making of a priest a non-priest, or a layman, uncharactering his own order which (as he says) is a character which in no way may be blotted out or removed? Again, however Pope John is to be judged in this matter, as either good or not good, I would know this: whether he did well in dispriesting and discharacterizing Formosus for such private offenses? If he did well, then how does this stand with his own doctrine which teaches the contrary? If he did not do well, then how does his doctrine stand with his actions, which teaches that the pope, along with his synod of cardinals, cannot err? Moreover, if this Pope John did not err in disordaining Formosus, how then did his successor Martin not err in repealing the act of his predecessor? Or how did Pope Formosus not err, who being unpriested by Pope John without reiterating the character or order of priesthood, in taking it upon himself to be pope, and to make acts and laws in the church? Again, if Formosus, when he was pope, did not err, then how did Pope Stephen, his successor, not err afterwards, by annihilating the consecration and all other acts of Formosus as erroneous? Or, again, if we say that Stephen with his synod of cardinals did right, then how could it be that Pope Theodore, and Pope John IX, who came after Stephen, did not err, who approving of the consecration of Formosus, condemned and burned the synodical acts of Stephen and his cardinals, who had previously condemned Formosus?

After Formosus had governed the See of Rome for five years (r. 891-896), Boniface VI succeeded, who continued only twenty-five days. Then came Stephen VII,¹²² who so hated the name of his predecessor Formosus, that he abrogated and dissolved his decrees. And digging up his body after it was buried, he cut two fingers off his right hand, and commanded them to be cast into the Tiber. And then he buried the body in a private or layman's sepulcher!

¹²¹ Arnulf of Carinthia, ruled as king of East Francia from 887 and emperor from 896 until his death in 899.

¹²² Pope Stephen VI is often numbered V, and Stephen VII is then numbered VI. Historians may say "Steven V or VI" and "Stephen VI or VII." There is no confusion as to the person meant, only his title. This period is called "obscure."

Bk. III. The 300 years from Egbert to Wm. the Conqueror (795-1067)

After Stephen had sat in the “chair of pestilence” one year (896-897), Pope Romanus succeeded, and sat three months (Aug-Dec 897), repealing the acts decreed by Stephen against Formosus. Next to him came Theodore II who, siding with Formosus against Stephen, reigned but twenty days. Then sat Pope John IX who, to confirm the cause of Formosus more surely, held a synod at Ravenna of seventy-four bishops, with the French king and his archbishops present. At this council all the decrees and doings of Formosus were ratified, and the contrary acts of the synod of Stephen VII were burned. John IX continued not quite two years. After him succeeded Benedict IV, who kept the chair three years. After him Leo V, who within forty days of his papacy, was taken and cast into prison by Christopher, his own chaplain. This Christopher, being pope for about seven months, was himself driven from his papal throne by Sergius III, as he had done to his master before.

And thus within the space of nine years, nine popes had succeeded one after another. Then Sergius III occupied the seat seven years (r. 904-911), after he had thrust out Pope Christopher (antipope from 903 to 904), shorn him as a monk, and put him into a monastery. Sergius was a rude and unlearned man, very proud and cruel, who had before been kept from the popedom by Formosus, mentioned above. Therefore, to revenge himself on Formosus, he caused the body of Formosus to be taken up from where it was buried. Afterwards, sitting in the papal see (in his pontificalibus, or vestments) he first degraded him, then commanded his head to be struck off, with the other three fingers that were left, and then commanded his body to be thrown into the Tiber. Likewise he deposed all those who had been consecrated and invested by Formosus. This body of Formosus, thus thrown into the Tiber, was afterward (our writers say) found and taken up by certain fishermen, and so it was brought into St. Peter’s temple. At the presence of this (they say) certain images standing by, bowed themselves down and revered the body! But such deceivable miracles of stocks and images in monkish temples are no news to us, especially here in England, where we have been so inured with the like. There are so many, that such wily practices cannot be invisible to us, though this crown-shorn generation thinks it dances in this net. But the truth is, while they think to deceive the simple, these wily beguilers most of all deceive themselves, as they will find unless they repent. By this Pope Sergius first came up with the custom of carrying around candles on Candlemas-day for purifying the blessed Virgin ¹²³ — as if the sacred conception of Jesus the Son of God were to be purified as an impure thing, with candlelight.

After Sergius came Pope Anastasius III (r. 911-913). After Anastasius had sat two years, Pope Lando followed, the father (some historians think) of Pope John XI. This John is said to have been set up by Theodora, an infamous woman of Rome, to succeed Lando. Another historian, Luitprand of Cremora, mentions Theodora and Pope John X, saying “Theodora had a daughter named Marozia, who had a son *by Pope Sergius*, who later became Pope John XI.” Marozia then married Guido, marquis of Tuscia. Through Guido and his friends at Rome, she had Pope John X smothered with a pillow after he had reigned thirteen years, so that her son might succeed him, as John XI. But because the clergy and people of Rome did not agree to his election, Pope Leo VI was set up instead; he reigned seven months. After him Pope Stephen VII reigned for two years (928-931). Being poisoned, Pope John XI, the son of Sergius and Marozia, was again set up in the papacy, where he reigned nearly five years (931-936). I will let pass the wickedness of Marozia, how she married two brothers,

¹²³ [Candlemas commemorates Jesus’ presentation at the Temple by Joseph and Mary, as well as Mary’s purification 40 days after the birth of Jesus.](#)

one after the death of the other, and how she governed all of Rome, and the whole church at that time. After John XI, followed Pope Leo VII, who reigned three years and four months. Pope Stephen IX, three years and four months. Pope Martin three years and six months; after him Pope Agapetus eight years and six months. About his time, or a little before, began the order of monks called, "The monks of Cluny," etc. But now to leave these monstrous matters of Rome behind, we return again to our country of England, where we left off.

King Edward the Elder.

After the reign of Alfred, his son Edward succeeded. This Edward began his reign (A.D. 901) and governed valiantly and nobly for twenty-seven years. He was not to be compared to his father in knowledge of good letters and learning, but otherwise — in princely renown, in the civil government, and in martial prowess — he was not at all inferior, but rather excelled him. Through his valiant acts, he subdued first the principedom of Wales, then the kingdom of Scotland, under king Constantine II. Edward added moreover to his dominion, the country of East Anglia — that is, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. He also recovered all Merceland and Northumberland out of the hands of the Danes. In all his wars, he never went lightly or without victory. The subjects of his provinces and dominions were so inured and hardened in continual practice and feats of war, that when they heard of enemies coming (never waiting to be bid by the king or his dukes) they straightway encountered them, always excelling their adversaries both in numbers and in the knowledge of the art of war.

About the twelfth year of his reign, the Danes repented of their covenants, and intended to break them. They assembled a host, and met with the king in Staffordshire, at a place called Totenhall, and soon after at Wodenfield. At these two places, the king slew two kings, two earls, and many thousands of Danes that occupied the country of Northumberland.

Thus the importunate rage of the Danes being assuaged, and King Edward now having some leisure given from wars to other studies, he gave his mind to building or repairing the cities, towns, and castles that had been razed, shattered, and broken by the Danes.

Regarding the laws and statutes of Edward, and also of his father Alfred, I omit to record them here on account of their length. Yet notwithstanding, I think it good to note that in the days of these ancient kings of England, the authority both of conferring bishoprics and spiritual promotions, and also of prescribing laws for churchmen as well as the laity, and of ordering and intermeddling in merely spiritual matters, was then in the hands of the kings ruling in the land, and not only in the hand of the pope, as appears by the laws of Alfred.

[97] A.D. 928—965.

From this it may appear how the government and direction of the church in those days did not depend on the pope of Rome, but on the king who governed the land. To this, the example of King Edward's time also gives testimony. For Edward, along with Pleimundus, archbishop of Canterbury, and other bishops assembled in a synod. They assigned and elected seven bishops in seven metropolitan churches of the realm. In this election, the king's authority alone then seemed to be sufficient, etc.

King Ethelstan, or Adeleston.

Ethelstan succeeded, after the death of Edward his father (A.D. 928), and was crowned at Kingston. He was a prince of worthy memory — valiant and wise in all his acts, not at all inferior to his father. He was held in like worldly renown of civil government, joined with

much prosperous success in reducing this realm under the subjection of one monarchy. For he both expelled the Danes, subdued the Scots, and quieted the Welshmen.

Among the victorious and noble acts of this king, one blot is written about him in which he is as worthy to be reprehended, as the others were to be commended; that is, the innocent death and murder of his brother Edwin. The occasion of was this. Ethelstan was born of Egwina, the wife of Edward, *before* he was married to her. He feared his younger brother Edwin, who was rightly born. Ethelstan was especially stirred to this fear by the sinister accusations of his butler. He felt such dislike for Edwin, that he had him put in an old rotten boat in the broad sea, without any tackling or other provision. There the young and tender prince, being dismayed by the rage of winds and floods, and now weary of his life, cast himself overboard into the sea, and so he was drowned. The king, afterwards coming to his senses, was stricken with great repentance for seven years. At length he was revenged against the one who was the accuser of his brother Edwin. This accuser was the king's cup bearer (as God the righteous judge of all things would have it) at a certain solemn feast. He was bearing the cup to the king, when he chanced in the middle of the floor to stumble with one foot, helping and recovering himself with the other. He said, "Thus one brother helps another." These words being spoken in the hearing of the king, so moved his mind, that he immediately commanded the false accuser of his brother to be executed. I would wish his just recompense to be a warning to all men, what it means to sow discord between brothers.

King Ethelstan (besides his seven years lamentation for this act) built the two monasteries of Middleton and Michlenes for his brother's sake, or (as the histories say) for his soul. By this it may appear what was the cause in those days of building monasteries — to wit, for releasing the sins both of those who were departed, and those who were alive. Let the Christian reader try and examine with himself, how this cause stands with the grace and verity of Christ's gospel, and of His passion. This cruel act of the king towards Edwin caused him afterward to be more tender and careful towards his other brothers and sisters left in his hands, unmarried. He bestowed these sisters in great marriages — one to the king of Northumberland; another to Louis king of Aquitaine;¹²⁴ and the third (Eadgyth) to Otto I, who was the first emperor of the Germans.

The fourth of his sisters being of singular beauty, Hugh the French king ¹²⁵ required that she be given to him. He sent to King Ethelstan precious and sumptuous presents, such as were not seen in England before. Among these presents and gifts — besides the rare aromas of sundry favors, and fine spices; and besides the precious and costly gems, and besides many beautiful coursers and palfreys richly trapped — was especially one jewel. It was a certain vessel finely and subtly made of the precious onyx stone, so radiantly wrought, that in it appeared the lively corn growing, and men's images walking, etc. Besides these, there was also sent the sword of Constantine the Great, with the name of its possessor, written in golden letters. In the handle of it, all beaten in gold, was one of the iron nails with which our Savior was nailed on the cross. Among them, moreover, was the spear (it is reported) with which the side of our Savior was opened, with a portion likewise of the holy cross enclosed in crystal; also a part of the crown of thorns in like manner enclosed, etc. As to the truth of all these relics, I am not much disposed to say all that I suspect about them.

¹²⁴ There was no such king. This sister, Eadgifu, is said to have married Charles III (the Simple), King of the West Franks (Aquitaine), and son of Louis the Stammerer. The king of Northumberland was actually the Norse king of York.

¹²⁵ Foxe is referring to Hugh the Great, duke of the Franks (r. 936-956). This half-sister was named Eadhild.

Ethelstan also prescribed certain constitutions concerning tithes, where he proclaimed:

“I, Ethelstan King, charge and command all my officers through my whole realm, to give tithes to God of my proper goods, in living cattle as well as in the corn and fruits of the ground, and that my bishops likewise tithe of their proper goods, and my aldermen, and my officers and headmen, shall do the same. Also this I will: that my bishops and other headmen declare the same to those who are under their subjection, and that is to be accomplished at the term of St. John the Baptist. ^{Luk 3:8-14} Let us remember what Jacob said to the Lord, “Of all that you give me I will surely give a tenth to you.” Gen 28.22.

And thus much briefly concerning the history of King Ethelstan, who reigned about sixteen years. And because he died without issue, his brother Edmund therefore succeeded him (A.D. 940). He reigned six years.

King Edmund.

Edmund, the son of Edward, and brother of Ethelstan, was twenty years of age when he began his reign. He had two sons, Edwin and Edgar, who both reigned after him. Edmund continued his reign six and a half years. The Danes, Scots, Normans, and all foreign enemies were expelled out of the land by him, and then the king set his mind to redressing and maintaining the state of the church, all of which then stood in building monasteries and furnishing churches, either with new possessions, or restoring the old which were taken away before. In the time of Edmund, I find this written in an old history:

“In the time of this king, there was a scattering or dispersion made of the monks out of the monastery of Evesham, and canons (clergy) were substituted in their place, through the doing of Athelm and Ulric, laymen, and of Osulfus bishop,” etc.

Here, concerning this matter between monks and others of the clergy, it is first to be understood that in the realm of England, before the time of Dunstan, the bishops' sees and cathedral churches were not filled with monks, but with priests and canons, then called clerics or clergy. After this, a difference begins to rise between these two parties, in strictness of life and in habit; so that those who lived after a strict rule were called *monks*, and professed chastity — that is, to live a single life (for so chastity was defined in those blind days) as though holy matrimony were not chastity. The other sort who were not monks, but rather priests or clergy, lived more freely from those monkish rules and observances. They were then commonly (or at least lawfully) married, and in their life and habit they came nearer to the secular state of other Christians. Because of this, there was great disdain and emulation among them. So that in many cathedral churches, where priests were before, monks were put in; and sometimes where monks had intruded, priests and canons were again placed there, and the monks were thrown out. More will be made apparent later (by the grace of Christ) when we come to the life of Dunstan. In the meantime, to satisfy the reader, who would know about monks first coming into this realm and church of England, the following is to be noted.

About this time of King Edmund, or shortly after, when strictness of life was joined with superstition, held in veneration, and counted for great holiness then either to win fame with men, or merits with God, men gave themselves to lead a strict life.

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They thought that the stranger their conversation was, and the further from the common trade of vulgar people, the more perfect it was towards God and man. At that time there was a monastery in France named Floriake, in the order of Benedict. From this monastery

sprung a great part of our English monks. Being professed there, and afterward returning into England, they congregated men daily to their profession. Partly for the strangeness of their rule, partly for their outward holiness of life, and partly for the opinion of holiness that many had of them, they were in great admiration, not only with the rude sort, but with kings and princes. They founded their houses, maintained their rules, and enlarged them with possessions. Among these monks was one Oswald, first a monk of Floriake, and then bishop of Worcester and York. He was a great patron and establisher of monkery. More will be said later about this Oswald, bishop of York; Dunstan, bishop of Canterbury; and Ethelwald, bishop of Winchester — how they filled various monasteries and cathedral churches with monks, and how they discharged married priests and canons from their houses, to plant monks in their cells.

In the time of king Edmund, **Dunstan** was not yet archbishop of Canterbury, but only abbot of Glastonbury. Many fabulous narrations pass among the writers about him, of which the following is one of the first. When Edgar was born, Dunstan being abbot of Glastonbury (as the monkish fables dream) heard a voice in the air, of certain angels singing in this tenor and saying, “Now peace comes to the church of England in the time of this child, and of our Dunstan,” etc. I mention this so that the Christian reader might better ponder the impudent and abominable fictions of this Romish generation. They have also forged from the same mint, how at another time Dunstan heard the angels sing — which is about as true as the harp hanging in a woman’s house, played the tune of an anthem by itself. What would these deceivers *not* pretend in matters that are likely, if in things that are so absurd they are not ashamed to lie and to forge so impudently and so manifestly?

Through the instigation of Dunstan, King Edmund built and furnished the monastery of Glastonbury, and made Dunstan its abbot. By the laws of King Edmund (ordained and set forth for the redress of church matters, as well as of civil government) it may appear that the state of both temporal and spiritual causes then pertained to the king’s right (despite the false pretended usurpation by the bishop of Rome) as seen by these laws:

- By the advice of his lords and bishops, the king enacted and determined laws concerning the pure life of ecclesiastical ministers, and those who were in the orders of the church, with penalties for those who transgressed them.
- Also for tithes to be paid by every Christian man, for church fees, alms fees, etc.
- Concerning professed women, whom we call nuns, etc.
- For every bishop to see his churches are repaired by his own proper charge; and to boldly inform the king whether the houses of God were well-maintained, etc.
- For fleeing into the church for sanctuary, etc.
- Concerning cases and determinations on matrimonial questions, etc.

All of these constitutions declare what interest kings took in those days in ecclesiastical matters as well as others within their dominion, and not only in disposing the ordinances and rites that pertained to the institution of the church, but also in placing and setting bishops in their sees, etc.

In Edmund’s time, Ulstan was archbishop of York, and Odo archbishop of Canterbury. Odo continued as bishop for twenty years. After him, through favor and money, Elsinus was elected and ordained by the king to succeed. He went to Rome for the pope’s pall, but on his journey over the Alps, Odo died through the cold, upon which Dunstan succeeded him. Before this, however, king Edmund died, and was buried by Dunstan at Glastonbury.

Edmund was succeeded by his brother Edrid, (A.D. 948), who governed as protector until Edwin, the eldest son of Edmund, came of age.

King Edwin.

Edwin, sometimes called Edwy, began his reign A.D. 955, being crowned at Kingston by Odo the archbishop of Canterbury. It is reported that the first day of Edwin's coronation, while sitting with his lords, he suddenly left them for the company of a certain lady, whom he retained (it not being known whether she was his wife), to the great displeasure of his lords, and especially of the clergy. Dunstan was still but abbot of Glastonbury. Following the king, he brought him back, and accused him to Odo the archbishop, by whom the king was suspended out of the church. Because of this, the king was displeased with Dunstan, and banished him. About the same time, the order of Benedictine monks, or *black monks* (as they were called), began to multiply and increase in England. So that where there had been other priests and canons, these monks were installed, and the secular priests (as they were then called, or canons) were put out. But king Edwin, for the displeasure he bore to Dunstan, so vexed *all* the orders of monks, that in Malmesbury, Glastonbury, and other places, he threw out the monks, and set *secular* priests in their stead.

Notwithstanding, it was not long before these priests and canons were again removed, and the monks restored in their stead, both in the aforesaid houses, and in many other cathedral churches, besides. In brief, king Edwin being hated by all his subjects, he was removed from his kingly honor, and his brother Edgar was received in his stead.

King Edgar and the Spread of Monks

Edgar, the second son of Edmund, being sixteen years of age, began his reign A.D. 959. But he was not crowned till fourteen years later. The causes of this will be declared shortly. In the beginning of his reign, Edward called home Dunstan, whom king Edwin had exiled. Then Dunstan, who was abbot of Glastonbury, was made bishop of Worcester, and then of London. Not long after this, Odo the archbishop of Canterbury deceased, after he had governed that church for over twenty years. After him Brithilinus, bishop of Winchester, was first elected. But because he was thought not sufficient, Dunstan was ordained archbishop, and the other was sent home again to his old church. Note by the way, how in those days the donation and assigning of ecclesiastical dignities remained in the king's hand. Except that they brought their pall from Rome as a token of the pope's confirmation. So Dunstan, being made archbishop by the king, took his journey to Rome for his pall from Pope John XIII. After obtaining his pall, and shortly after his return from Rome, Dunstan entreats king Edgar that Oswald might be promoted to be bishop of Worcester, which was granted to him. Not long after, through Dunstan, Ethelwold was made bishop of Winchester.

The monks began first to swarm into the churches of England, that is, in the days of Edgar, by means of these three bishops, Dunstan, Ethelwold, and Oswald. Although Dunstan was the chief ringleader, Ethelwold now being bishop of Winchester, and Oswald bishop of Worcester, were not far behind. By the instigation and counsel of these three, King Edgar is recorded to have either newly built, or to have re-built more than forty decayed monasteries. In setting up and building, Ethelwold was a great founder under the king. Moreover, through the influence of Dunstan and his fellows, in many of the great houses and cathedral churches where there had been prebendaries and priests before, King Edgar displaced the priests and brought in monks.

After the king was thus persuaded to advance monkery, Oswald, bishop of Worcester, who was also made archbishop of York — having his see in the cathedral church of St. Peter —

began with fair persuasions to test the mindset of the canons and priests, whether they would be content to change their profession, and be made monks or not.

[99] A.D. 965.

When he saw that it would not take effect, he practiced this policy with them: near the church of St Peter, within the churchyard, he erected another church of our lady, which he filled with monks. He continually frequented there, and was always seen there, by which the other church was left naked and desolate, for all the people gathered where the bishop was. The priests seeing themselves so neglected both by the bishop and the people, were driven either to relinquish the house, or else become monks. Ethelwold also drove out the canons and priests from the new monastery in Winchester, and in Oxford, and Mildune, with other places. The secular priests with their wives were expelled to give way to monks. The cause of this is thus pretended by certain writers: the priests and clerics were thought negligent in their church service, and set vicars in their stead, while they themselves lived in pleasure, and misspent the patrimony of the church. Then king Edgar gave the vicars the same land which before belonged to the prebendaries. But not long after, they showed themselves to be as negligent as the others. Therefore king Edgar, by the consent of Pope John XIII, removed the priests and ordained monks there.

Monks in the Primitive Age were Laymen

Having mentioned monks and nuns, and their profession that is so greatly commended in our monkish histories, perhaps the reader may be deceived by hearing that monks are such an ancient thing in Christian life (even from the primitive church after the apostles' time), and think that monkery is admirable. Therefore, to prevent all error in this, it will not be unprofitable to say something concerning the original institution of monks, what they were, who were called monks in olden times, and how monks in the primitive time differed from the monks of the middle ages, and from the monks of this later age. Moreover, how all three of these differ from priests (as we call them) and from the clergy.

To answer the superstitious scruple of those who allege the antiquity of the term *monks*, I grant that the name and order are of old continuance, from 300 years after Christ. Several old authors write about them, such as Augustine, Jerome, Basil (who was himself one of the first instituters and commenders of that superstition), Chrysostom, Nazianzen, Evagrius, Sozomen, Dionysius, and others. Among these monks (who then were divided into hermits or anchorites, and cenobites) were Antony, Paul, and John, with various other recluses. Cassian the ascetic mentions a certain monastery in Thebes, in which there were over 5000 monks, under the government of one abbot. And here also in England, mention was made before of Bangor, in which there were 2200 monks under one man's ruling (A.D. 596). By this, it appears that monks were then, and 200 years before then, in the primitive church. But these monks were those who were driven into solitary and desert places by persecution; or else those who were not constrained by anything, but by their own voluntary devotion (joined with some superstition) they withdrew from all company. And all these were then nothing else but **laymen** — of whom there were two sorts: one sort was of the vulgar and common people; these were only partakers of the sacraments; the other sort, following a monastic life, were called *monks* (but were nothing but laymen), leading a more severe and stricter life than the others.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ August, lib. de moribus ecclesiae, cap. 13. Item, lib. de operibus Monachorum. Item, Epistola ad Aurelium. Also by Hierome ad Heliodorum. Also the same appears likewise by the fourth canon of the Council of Chalcedon, where it is provided, “ne monachi se ecclesiasticis negotiis iramisceant;” that is, “that monks should not intermeddle with

Monks in the former age of the church, although they lived a solitary life, they were only laymen, differing from priests, and differing from the other monks who succeeded them in the middle age of the church. They differed in three points:

First, they were bound to no prescribed form, either of diet or apparel, or any thing else.

Secondly, they remained in the order of laymen (only having a stricter life than the rest) and had nothing to do in ecclesiastical matters.

Thirdly, the monks of that age (although most of them lived single) some of them were married; and certainly none of them were forbidden or restrained from marriage. Of those who were married, Athanasius says in *Epistola ad Dracontium*, that he knew both monks and bishops who were married men, and fathers of children, etc.

And yet the monks of the old time, though they were better than those who followed, superstition began to creep among them into the church, through the crafty subtlety of Satan, and all for the ignorance of our *free justification by faith in Jesus Christ*. Examples declare the vain and prodigious superstition of these men. Two or three will suffice for many, which I here insert, so that the mind of the godly reader may better consider and understand how shortly after the time of Christ and his apostles, the doctrine of Christian justification began to be forgotten; true religion turned to superstition; and the price of Christ's passion was obscured through the vain opinion of men's merits. A certain abbot named Moses thus testifies of himself in the collations of Cassian, that he so afflicted himself with fasting and watching, that sometimes for two or three days together, he not only felt no appetite to eat, but also had no remembrance of any food at all, and because of this, he was also driven from sleep. So that he was obliged to pray to God for a little refreshing sleep to be given him some part of the night. In the same author is mentioned a certain old man, a hermit, who because he had conceived in himself a purpose never to eat meat unless he had some guest or stranger with him, he was sometimes constrained to abstain for five days until Sunday, when he came to the church, and brought some stranger or other home with him.

I will add two other examples out of Cassian, to show how the subtlety of Satan, through superstition and a false color of holiness, blinds the miserable eyes of those who attend to men's traditions rather than to the word of God. A certain abbot named John, in the desert wilderness of Scythia, sent two novices with figs to someone who was sick, eighteen miles away from the church. It chanced that these two young novices, missing the way, wandered so long in the wild forest or wilderness, and could not find the cell, that for emptiness and weariness they waxed faint and tired. And yet they would rather die than taste the figs committed to them to carry, and so they did. For shortly after they were found dead, their figs were lying whole by them.

He recites another story of two monastical brethren, who making their progress in the desert of Thebes, purposed to take no sustenance except what the Lord himself would minister to them. It happened as they were wandering in the desert, and almost fainting for want, certain Mazises — a people who are fierce and cruel by nature — notwithstanding, were suddenly altered into a new nature of humanity. They came forth, and of their own accord, offered them bread. The one thankfully received this bread as sent by God; the other, counting it sent by man and *not* of God, refused it, and so he perished.

matters of the church," etc. Et Leo Epistola, 62, vetat monachos et laicos, "etsi scientiae nomine gloriantur, admitti ad officium docendi et concionandi."

I might also add the story of Mucins who, to show his obedience, did not hesitate at the command of his abbot, to cast his son into the water, not knowing whether any were ready to rescue him from drowning. That is how far the monks in those days were drowned in superstition. What is this, if not for man's traditions and commandments to transgress the commandment of God, which says, "You shall not murder; you shall not tempt the Lord your God?" What man is so blind that he does not see by these and many other examples, what pernicious superstition began to creep into the church because of this monkery, almost from the beginning? I cannot marvel enough at this, seeing that that age of the church had so many learned doctors who not only approved and followed these monastical sects, but were themselves authors and institutors of the same. Among them may be reckoned Basil and Nazianzen, who with immoderate austerity so reduced themselves, that when they were called to the office of bishops, they were not able to bear the labor of it.

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Monks in the Middle and Later Ages of the Church.

After these primitive monks, followed other monks of the middle age of the church. They increased both in multitude and in superstition, and began little by little to leave their desolate dens in the vast wilderness, and approach nearer to great towns. There they had solemn monasteries founded by kings and queens, and kings' daughters. I note that most of these monasteries were first erected after some great murder, either by war in the field, or privately committed at home. This will appear to those who read the books that I have mentioned. But to return to our monks again, they first began to creep from the cold field into warm towns and cloisters, then from towns into cities, and at length from their close cells and cities into cathedral churches. There they not only abounded in wealth and riches (especially these monks of our later time) but much more in superstition and Pharisaical hypocrisy. They were yoked and tied in all their doings, to certain prescribed rules and formal observances — in watching, sleeping, eating, rising, praying, walking, talking, looking, tasting, touching, handling — in their gestures and in their vestures. Every man was not apparelled as the proper condition of others would require, nor as the season of the year served, but as the rules and order of every sect enforced upon them. The number of these sects was infinite.

Some after Basil's rule, went in white; some after Benedict's rule in black; some were of Cluny; some after Jerome's rule were leather-girdled, and coped above their white coat; some Gregorians were copper-colored; some were grey monks; Grandimontenses wore a coat of mail on their bare bodies, with a black cloak on top; some were Cistercians, who had white rochets on a black coat; some were Celestines, all in blue, both cloak, cowl, and cap; some were charter monks, wearing haircloth next their bodies. Some were Flagellants, going barefoot in long white linen shirts, with an open place in the back where they beat themselves with scourges on the bare skin every day, right before the people's eyes, till the blood ran down. They said it was revealed to them by an angel, that in so scourging themselves, within thirty days and twelve hours, they would be made as pure from sin, as they were when they first received baptism. Some were starred monks; some Jesuits, with a white girdle and russet cowl.

But who can reckon the innumerable sects and disguised orders of their fraternities? Some holding of St. Benedict, some of St. Jerome, some of St. Basil, some of St. Bernard, some of St. Bridget, some of St. Bruno, some of St. Louis — as though it were not enough for Christians to hold to Christ alone. They were so subject to servile rules, that no part of Christian liberty remained among them. They were so drowned and sunk in superstition,

that they had not only lost Christ's religion, but almost the sense and nature of men. For men naturally are and ought to be ruled by the discreet government of reason in all outward doings, in which one rule can serve for all men. But the circumstance of time, place, person and business being so sundry and diverse, it was the contrary among these. No reason but the knock of a bell ruled all their doings — their rising, sleeping, praying, eating, coming in, going out, talking, and silence — altogether like insensible people, either not having reason to rule themselves, or else as persons ungrateful to God. They neither enjoyed the benefit of reason created in them, nor used the grace of Christ's liberty for which He redeemed them.

Thus the reader sees what the monks were in the primitive time of the church, and what they were in the middle age, and of these monks our later days of the church. Now join to this, that where the monks of elder times were mere laymen and not spiritual ministers, Boniface III afterwards made a decree (A.D. 606), that monks might be employed in the office of preaching, christening, hearing confessions, absolving people from their sins, etc. So then, monks who in the beginning were but laymen, and not spiritual ministers, who were forbidden by the general Council of Chalcedon to intermeddle with ecclesiastical matters, afterwards, in the process of time, they so encroached on the office of spiritual ministers, that at length the priests were discharged from of their cathedral churches, and monks were set in their places. That was because monks in those days, leading a stricter life and professing celibacy, had a greater countenance of holiness among the people than the priests did. And in the days of King Edgar, they had wives (at least as many who would) for no law forbade them, till the time of Hildebrand, who was called Gregory VII.

King Edgar's Character, and his Oration to the Clergy.

And thus much by the way, as to the order and profession of monks. Now to turn again to the matter of King Edgar. Those provinces and lordships which had not yet come under the king's subjection, he united to his dominion, and so he made one perfect monarchy of the whole realm of England, with all the islands and borders around it. Those who were wicked, he suppressed; those who were rebels he repressed; the godly he maintained. He was devout to God, and beloved by his subjects, whom he governed in much peace and quietness. And as he was a great seeker of peace, so God blessed him with much abundance of peace, and rest from all wars. He was a great maintainer of religion and learning, not forgetting in this the footsteps of King Alfred his predecessor.

It is reported about this Edgar, by diverse authors, that about the thirteenth year of his reign, he was at Chester. Eight kings, to wit, *petty* kings, came and did homage to him. All these kings, after they had given their fidelity to Edgar, the next day (for pomp or royalty), he entered with them into the river Dee. There, sitting in a boat, he took the helm, and caused these eight kings, every person taking an oar in his hand, to row him up and down the river, to and from the church of St. John to his palace again, in token that he was master and lord of so many provinces.

And thus you have heard, touching the commendation of King Edgar, such reports as the old monkish writers bestow upon him, as the great patron of their monkish religion, who had built as many monasteries for them as there were Sundays in the year.

Now on the other side, let us likewise consider what vices were in him, according to what the said authors described, who most wrote to his advancement. One vice is noted to be cruelty to others, as well as to a certain earl called Ethelwold. The story is this: Ordgar, Duke of Devonshire, had a certain daughter named Elfrida. Her beauty being highly commended to the king, he sent Ethelwold (whom he especially trusted) to the daughter, to see her and to

bring word back to him. And if her beauty was such as reported, he also desired Ethelwold to negotiate a marriage between them. Ethelwold finding the daughter, and seeing her beauty not at all inferior to her fame, and thinking to serve *himself*, he gave a false account of her to the king. Whereupon the king changed his mind, and in the end Ethelwold himself married the maiden.

Not long after the king heard how he was deceived, he set a fair face on the matter before Ethelwold, and merrily jesting with him, told him that he would come and see his wife, and indeed appointed the day when he would be there. Ethelwold perceiving this matter to go badly with him, made haste to his wife, declaring to her the coming of the king, and also revealing the whole order of what he had done. He desired her — upon her love for him, if she would save his life — to disfigure herself with such garments and attire that the king might not discover her beauty. But Elfrida upon hearing this, *contrary* to the request of her husband and the promise of a wife, in preparing for the king's coming, she trimmed herself at the mirror, and decked herself in her best array. When the king beheld her, he was not so much delighted with her, as with hatred for her husband who had so deceived him. Upon which the king shortly after, making as though he would go hunting in the forest of Harwood, sent for Ethelwold to join him, under the pretense of hunting. And there the king ran him through and slew him.

[101] A.D. 965—976.]

Besides the vices charged to King Edgar by our monkish writers, I also observe another, which was blind superstition and idolatrous monkery brought into the church of Christ, along with the wrongful expelling of lawfully married priests out of their houses. What inconveniences ensued after in this realm, especially in the House of the Lord, I leave to the consideration of those who have heard of the detestable enormities of those religious votaries (vow-makers). The occasion of this first and chiefly began in Edgar, through the instigation of Dunstan and his fellows. After they influenced the king, and brought him to their purpose, they caused him to call a council of the clergy, where it was enacted that the canons of various cathedral churches, parsons, vicars, priests, and deacons, with their wives and children, should either give up that kind of life, or else give their places to monks, etc.

And thus much concerning the history of King Edgar, and of those things which happened in his time in the church. When he had reigned for sixteen years, he died, and was buried at Glastonbury. He left behind two illegitimate children, Editha and Edward, and one lawful son, named Ethelred.

King Edgar is noted in all histories to have lived a riotous and debauched kind of life. In consequence of his having taken a nun named Elfled into his house, he was kept back from his coronation by Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, for seven years. And so the king began his reign when he was sixteen years old (A.D. 959), was crowned (A.D. 974). Concerning the coronation and the presumptuous behavior of Dunstan against the king, and his penance was enjoined by Dunstan, you will hear both Osbern, Malmesbury, and other historians speak in their own words as follow:

“After Dunstan understood the king's offense had been perpetrated with the professed nun, and that it was spread among the people, he came with great ire and passion of mind to the king. Seeing the archbishop coming, the king arose from his regal seat towards him, to take him by the hand, and to give him honor. But Dunstan refused to take him by the hand, and with stern countenance bending his brows, he spoke to this effect to the king. ‘You who have not feared to corrupt a virgin dedicated to Christ, presume to touch the consecrated hands

of a bishop? You have defiled the spouse of your Maker, and do you think by flattering service to pacify the friend of the bridegroom? No, Sir, I will not be his friend, who has Christ as his enemy,' etc. The king terrified with these thundering words of Dunstan, and touched with inward repentance of his sin, fell down weeping at the feet of Dunstan who, after he had raised him from the ground, began to utter the horribleness of his act. And finding the king ready to receive whatever satisfaction he would lay upon him, enjoined him this penance for the space of seven years, as follows: —

“That he should wear no crown all that time; that he should fast twice a week; he should liberally distribute his treasure, left to him by his ancestors, to the poor; he should build a monastery of nuns at Shaftsbury, so that, as he had robbed God of one devoted maiden through his transgression, so he should restore to him many more in times to come. Moreover, he should expel clerics from evil life (meaning those priests who had wives and children), out of the churches, and place a community of monks in their place,' etc.

It follows then in the story of Osbern, that when the seven years of the king's penance were expired, Dunstan called together all the peers (noblemen) of the realm, with the bishops, abbots, and other ecclesiastical degrees of the clergy, in the public sight of all the multitude, and set the crown upon the king's head at Bath. This was the thirty-first year of his age, and the thirteenth year of his reign — so that he reigned only three years crowned king. All the other years, Dunstan probably ruled the land as he pleased.

Among his other laws, this king ordained that the Sunday should be solemnized from nine o'clock on Saturday evening till Monday morning. He also made a certain oration ¹²⁷ to the clergy, not unworthy to be read, as follows:

The Oration of King Edgar to the Clergy.

“Because God has showed his great mercy to work with us, it is fitting (most reverend fathers), that we should answer his innumerable benefits with worthy works. For we do not possess the land by our own sword, and our own arm has not saved us — but his right hand and his holy arm, because he has delighted in us. Therefore it is fitting that we should submit both ourselves and our souls to Him who has subjected all these things under our government; and we should stoutly labor so that those whom he has made subject to us, might be subject to his laws. It belongs to me to rule the laypeople with the law of equity, to do just judgment between a man and his neighbor, to punish church-robbers, to suppress rebels, to deliver the helpless from the hand of the stronger, also the needy and the poor from those who rob them. It also belongs to my care to provide necessary things for the ministers of the churches, for the flocks of the monks, for the company of nuns, and to provide for their peace and quiet. The examining of all whose manners (way of life) belong to us — whether they live purely, if they behave themselves honestly toward outsiders, whether they are diligent at God's service, if they are earnest to teach the people, if they are sober in eating and drinking, if they keep measure in their apparel, and if they are discreet in judgment — if you had regarded these things with a trial of them (O reverend fathers, by your leaves I speak), then such horrible and abominable things of the clerics would not have come to our ears. I omit to speak of how their crown is not broad, nor their rounding convenient; for the wantonness of your life, the pride of your gesture, the filthiness of your words, declare the evil of the inward man.

¹²⁷ Foxe had placed this oration at the end of the present book with this observation — “A certain oration of King Edsar's which should have been placed before, chanced in the meantime to come into my hands, not unworthy to be read: I thought by the way, in the end of this book, to insert the same (although out of order), yet I judge it better out of order, than out of the book.” It is here inserted in its proper place. [Ed.]

“Furthermore, what negligence is there in God’s service, in scarcely being present at the holy Vigils? And when they come to mass, they seem to be gathered to play and laugh rather than to sing. I will tell what good men will be sorry for, and what the evil will laugh at. I will speak with sorrow (if I may so express it) how they are so riotous in banquetings, in chambering, drunkenness and riotings, that now clerics’ houses may be thought to be convents of players. There is dice, there is dancing and singing, there is watching till midnight, with crying and shouting. Thus the goods of kings, the alms of princes, yes (and what is more) the price of that precious blood is not esteemed. Have our fathers then spent their treasure for this purpose? Have the king’s coffers decayed by taking away many revenues for this cause? Has the king’s liberality given lands and possessions to Christ’s churches for this intent: that clerics’ dancers and singers should be decked with them? that riotous feasts might be dressed? that hounds and hawks and other such toys might be gotten? The soldiers cry out about these things; the people grudge, minstrels sing and dance, and yet you do not regard it — you spare it, you dissemble it. Where is the sword of Levi, and the zeal of Simeon, which killed the Sichemites and the circumcised because they abused Jacob’s daughter, and who bore the sign of those who defile Christ’s church with filthy deeds? Where is Moses’ spirit which did not spare his own kinsfolk who worshipped the head of the calf? Where is Phineas, the priest’s dagger, who pacified God’s anger with holy zeal when he killed the one who sinned with the Midianite? Where is Peter’s spirit, by whose power covetousness is destroyed, and simoniacal heresy is condemned? Be earnest you priests, be earnest to follow the ways of the Lord, and the righteousness of our God. It is time to act against those who have broken the law of God. I have Constantine’s sword, and you have Peter’s sword in your hands.

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“Let us join right hands, let us couple sword to sword, that the lepers may be cast out of the temples, that the holy place of the Lord may be purged, and the sons of Levi may minister in his temple, those who said to his father and mother, I do not know you; and to his brother, I do not know you. Go to diligently, I pray you, lest we regret having done what we did, and having given what we gave, if we see that it is not to be spent in God’s service, but on the riotousness of wicked men, through vile and corrupt liberty of life, and lack of chastisement. Let the relics of holy saints, which they despise, and the holy altars before which they play the madmen, move you. Let the great devotion of our ancestors move you, whose alms the madness of the clerics abuse. My great grandfather (as you know) gave a tenth of all his lands to churches and abbeys. My great-great grandfather, Alfred, of holy memory, thought it not fitting to spare his treasures, his goods, nor costs, nor rents, that he might enrich the church. Your fatherhood is not ignorant of how my grandfather the elder Edward gave great things to the churches. It becomes you to remember with what gifts my father and his brothers enriched Christ’s altars. O father of fathers, Dunstan! behold (I pray you) the eyes of my father looking upon you from that bright place of heaven. Harken to his complaining words sounding in your ears, thus pitifully lamenting, Father Dunstan! you, *you* (I say) gave me counsel to build abbeys and churches. You were my helper and fellow-worker in all things. I chose you as a shepherd and bishop of my soul, and a keeper of my ways. When did I not obey you? What treasures did I prefer above your counsels? What possessions did I not despise, if you bid me? If you thought it fitting to give anything to the poor, I was ready. If you thought it fitting to give anything to churches, I did not defer. If you complained that monks or clerics lacked anything, I supplied it. You said that alms lasted forever, and that there was none more fruitful than that which was given to abbeys or churches. For with that, God’s servants are sustained, and what remains is given to the poor. O, worthy alms! O, worthy price of the soul! O, wholesome remedy for our sins, which now stinks in the sweet furs of priestly robes,¹²⁸ and

¹²⁸ A priest’s long robe was belted, having full long sleeves, and often lined with fur.

that with which they adorn their ears, and deck their fingers, dressing their delicate bodies with silk and purple! O, father! Is this the fruit of my alms? Is this the effect of my desire, and of your promise? What will you answer to this complaint of my fathers? I know, I know: when you saw a thief, you did not run with him, nor have you put your portion with adulterers. You have rebuked, you have exhorted, you have blamed them. But your words have been despised; now we must come to stripes of correction. You have here with you the worshipful father, Edward bishop of Winchester. You have the reverend prelate, Oswald bishop of Worcester. I commit this business to you, so that both by bishoply correction, and the king's authority, those who live filthy lives may be cast out of the churches, and those who live orderly may be brought in," etc.

In this oration of King Edgar above, three things are chiefly to be noted and considered by those who have judgment to mark and understand: *first*, the religious zeal and devotion of kings, both in giving to the church, and also in correcting the manners of churchmen; *secondly*, the dissolute behavior of the clergy, who were then abusing the great donations and patrimonies of princes bestowed upon them; *thirdly*, the blind ignorance and superstition of that time in both states — ecclesiastical as well as temporal — in esteeming Christ's religion to consist chiefly in giving to churches, and in maintaining monkery. They were falsely persuaded that the remission of their sins and the remedy of their souls, lay in building monasteries, erecting churches and cloisters, placing monks in them, and in such other charitable deeds and works of devotion. In this it appears how ignorant those of that time were of the true doctrine of Christ's faith, and of *the free grace of the gospel*, which promises life, remedy, and justification, not by any devout merits of ours, nor by any works either of the law of God, or of the inventions of man, but *only and freely by our faith in Christ Jesus the Son of God*, in whom alone consist all the promises of God. Amen.

King Edward the Martyr.

After the death of King Edgar, no small trouble arose among the lords and bishops concerning the succession of the crown. The principal cause of this arose on this occasion: Immediately after the decease of the king, Alferus, duke of Mercia, and many other nobles sided with Ethelred, who was the only rightful heir and lawful son of Edgar. They disliked the placing and intruding of monks into the churches, and throwing out the secular priests, with their wives and children, from their ancient possessions. So they expelled the abbots and monks, and brought back the priests with their wives. Against them were certain others who offered resistance, such as Ethelwin duke of East Angles, Elfwold his brother, and the Earl Brithnoth. They said, on the contrary, that they would never permit the religious monks to be expelled and driven out of the realm, for they upheld all religion in the land. And thereupon, they levied an army to defend the monasteries by force.

In this hurly-burly among the lords, about the placing of monks, and putting out of priests, there also rose a contention about the crown, as to who should be their king. The bishops and those lords who favored the monks, sought to advance a king whom they knew would incline to their side. So that, the lords being thus divided, some of them would have Edward, the illegitimate son, and some would have Ethelred, the lawful son. Then Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, and Oswald, archbishop of York, with their fellow bishops, abbots, and other lords and dukes, assembled in a council together. In this council, Dunstan came in with his cross in his hand, and he brought Edward before the lords. He persuaded them in the end that Edward was elected, consecrated, and anointed as their king.

After Dunstan and his fellows had thus set up Edward as their king, they supposed all to be sure on their side, and that they had established the kingdom of monkery forever, through the help of the young king, and the duke of East Angles, and certain other nobles whom they

had drawn to their side. However, this matter did not pass so well with them as they hoped. For shortly after the coronation of the young king, Alfenis, duke of Mercia, stoutly standing on the other side, drove out the monks from the cathedral churches, and restored the priests with their wives. The words of the author are these,

“Alferus, duke of Mercia, with other great men more, drove out the monks from the great monasteries whom King Edgar had set in there before, and restored again the priests with their wives.” (*Hist. Jornal in vita Edgari.*)

Hereby it evidently appears that priests in those days were married, and had their lawful wives. The duke and nobles of England expelled the monks out of the monasteries after the death of King Edgar. Let us hear more of what the abbey of Crowland records.

“The monks being expelled out of certain monasteries, the clerics were again brought in, who distributed the manors or farms of the said monasteries to the dukes and lords of the land, so that, being obliged to them, they would defend them against the monks. And so the monks of Evesham were thrust out, and the secular clerics were placed, and the lands of the church were given to the lords, with whom the queen, the king’s stepmother, holding the same time, also took sides with the said clerics against the king. On the contrary side stood the king and the holy bishops, taking sides with the monks. However, the lords and peers of the realm, staying upon the favor and power of the queen, triumphed over the monks,” etc.

Thus, just as there was much ado through all quarters of the realm among the lords, no less contention arose between the priests and monks. The priests complained to the king and Dunstan, saying that it was inappropriate, uncharitable, and indeed unnatural, to put out an old known dweller for a new unknown one; and that God was not pleased that what was given to him by God, should be taken from the ancient possessor.

[103] A.D. 976-995.

On the other side, the monks said for themselves that Christ allowed neither the old dweller, nor the newcomer, nor did He look upon the person, but that whoever would take the cross of penance upon himself, and follow Christ in virtuous living should be His disciple. The monks made these and other such allegations. But whether a monk’s cowl, or a wifeless life, make a sufficient title to another men’s possessions or not, I refer to the judgment of the godly. The troublous cares in marriage, the necessary provision for house-keeping, the virtuous bringing up of children, the daily helping of poverty, and bearing public charges, with other manifest perturbations and encumbrances that are daily incident to matrimony, might appear to wise men to come nearer to the cross of penance, than the easy and loitering idleness of monkery. In the end, a council of bishops and other of the clergy was held upon this controversy, where the greater part of both the nobles and commons, judged the priests to have suffered great wrong, and sought by all means possible to bring them back to their old possession and dignities.

King Edward Murdered, Succeeded by King Ethelred.

Not long after, King Edward, whom the writers describe to be a virtuous and a meek prince, very pitying of and beneficial to the poor, about the fourth year of his reign, came from hunting in the forest alone, without the company of his servants, to the place in the west country where Alfrith his mother lived with her son, Ethelred. When the queen-mother was warned of his coming, she called a specially trusted servant, showing him how and what to do to accomplish her wicked purpose. This being done, she made towards the king, and received him with all courtesy. She desired him to tarry that night; but in like courtesy he excused himself. He desired only to see his brother, and to drink sitting upon his horse.

Now, while the cup was at his mouth, the servant of the queen struck him in the body with a long two-edged dagger. After which the king struck the horse with the spurs, and it galloped towards the place where he was supposed to meet with his company. But he bled so much that he fell from his horse with faintness, one foot being caught in the stirrup. He was dragged by his horse over fields and lands till he came to a place named Corf-gate, where he was found dead.

Succession of Popes

In the order and course of the Roman bishops, mention was made last of Agapetus II, after whom succeeded Pope John XII (A.D. 955-964).¹²⁹ This pope is noted to be very wicked and infamous, with abominable vices. He was an adulterer, gamester, extortioner, perjurer, fighter, murderer, and was cruel and tyrannous. He put out the eyes of some of his cardinals; some he cut off their tongues, some their fingers, some their noses, etc. In a general council before the Emperor Otto I, these objections were listed against him:

“That he never said his service; that in saying his mass he did not communicate (the Lord’s Supper); that he ordained deacons in a stable; that playing at dice he called for the devil to help; that for money he made boys bishops; that he committed adultery; that he put out the eyes of the Bishop Benedict; that he caused houses to be set on fire; that he broke open houses; that he drank to the devil; that he never crossed himself,” etc.

For these causes he was deposed by the consent of the emperor with the prelates, and Pope Leo VIII was substituted in his place (A.D. 963-964). But after his departure, Pope John was restored again to his place, and Leo was deposed. At length about the tenth year of the popedom of this John, being found outside the city with another man’s wife, he was so wounded by her husband, that eight days later he died.

After him the Romans elected Pope Benedict V (A.D. 964) without the consent of the emperor. Upon which Otto, the emperor, was not a little displeased for displacing Leo VIII, whom he had previously promoted, and also for choosing Benedict V. He came with his army, and laid siege to Rome, and so he set up Pope Leo VIII again (A.D. 964-965). To gratify his benefactor, Leo crowned Otto emperor, and entitled him to be called *Augustus*. Also, the power which Charlemagne had given before to the clergy and people of Rome, this Leo granted to the emperor and his successors; that is, touching the election of the bishop of Rome. The emperor again restored to the See of Rome all such donations and possessions which either Constantine (as they falsely pretend) or which Charlemagne took from the Lombards, and gave to them.

After Pope Leo, succeeded Pope John XIII. Peter, the head captain of the city, with two consuls, twelve aldermen, and various other nobles, gathered their power, and laid hands on the pope in the church of Lateran, and put him in prison for eleven months. The emperor hearing this, with all speed returned with his army to Rome. After executing the authors and chief perpetrators of that act, he committed Peter to the pope’s sentence. The pope caused him first to be stripped naked, his beard shaved, and to be hung by the hair a whole day. After that, he was set upon an ass (his face turned backward, and his hands bound under the

¹²⁹ The Reader must bear in mind that Foxe introduced Pope *Joan* as the 8th [see page 90], and therefore he arranges all the succeeding *Johns* under numbers successively higher in the numeric line of succession. Again, during the pontificate of Boniface VII, there was another *John*, whom Foxe reckons as the 15th (XV). He was elected after the election of Boniface VII and deposed before the death of Boniface. He is therefore generally omitted in the line of succession in the papal chair. These things occasion much difficulty for the general reader, by confusing the designations of the many popes of this name. Therefore, the designation of Pope John in the time of Boniface, as the 15th, is omitted in this edition; the others are styled in the usual way. [Ed.]

ass's tail), and so he was to be led through the city, so that all men might see him. That being done, he was scourged with rods, and banished from the city. Thus you see how the holy father follows the injunction of the gospel, "Love your enemies." ^{Mat 5.44} From this pope first proceeded the christening of bells (A.D. 971). ¹³⁰

After him followed Pope Benedict VI, who in like manner was apprehended by Cinthius, a captain of Rome, and cast into prison, where he was strangled, or as some say, starved to death.

Boniface VII, son of Ferrucius, then became antipope.¹³¹ He likewise saw the citizens of Rome conspire against him, and was constrained to hide himself. Seeing no place to tarry, he took the treasure of St. Peter's church, and secretly fled to Constantinople. In his stead, the Romans set up one Pope John. Not long after, Boniface returned from Constantinople. With his money and treasure, he procured a garrison or company to take his part. Pope John was taken, his eyes were put out, and he was thrown into prison. Some say he was starved to death there; others say he was slain by Ferrucius. Nor did Boniface reign many days afterward, but he suddenly died. His carcass was dragged by the feet through the streets of Rome in a most despicable manner, the people shrieking and crying out against him (A.D. 976).

The next pope after him was Benedict VII, by the consent of Emperor Otto II (the Red). He reigned nine years (A.D. 974-983). After Benedict, succeeded Pope John XIV; he died the eighth month of his papacy; next came John XV (A.D. 985-996), and after him Gregory V (A.D. 996). This Gregory was a German, and therefore he was more disliked by the clergy and people of Rome. And so Crescentius,¹³² with the people and clergy, conspired against Gregory, and set up John XVI (A.D. 997-998). Gregory went in all haste to the emperor, who with his army went to Italy, got the city, and there took both Crescentius the consul, and John the pope. John first had his eyes put out, and then was deprived of his life. Crescentius the consul was set upon a vile horse, having his nose and ears cut off, and so he was led through the city, his face being turned to the horse's tail. Afterward, having his members cut off, he was hanged upon a gibbet. Pope Gregory, thus being restored, reigned four years in his papacy (till A.D. 999).

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King Ethelred II, sometimes called Egelred and Elred.

King Edward being murdered, as said before, the crown next fell to Ethelred. This Ethelred had a long reign given to him by God, which endured thirty-eight years; but it was very unfortunate and full of great miseries. He seems to have been a prince lacking the courage to govern a commonwealth. Our English histories, in writing of his reign, report that it was ungracious in the beginning, wretched in the middle, and hateful in the end. About the eleventh year (some say the ninth year) of this king's reign, Archbishop Dunstan died. Not long after Dunstan's death, the Danes again entered England, in many different places of the land. The king scarcely knew which coast he should go to first to withstand his enemies. But in the end, he was compelled to appease the Danes with great sums of money. And when

¹³⁰ A small hand-held bell, or set of bells, is sounded during mass at the consecration. It signals that a supernatural event is taking place on the altar, as the bread and wine are "transformed" into the body and blood of Christ.

¹³¹ Foxe says here, "Then came Pope Donus II, after Boniface VII." His statement has been excised. Pope Donus II was a non-existent pope, mistakenly inserted in the *Annuario Pontificio* after Pope Benedict VI.

¹³² Crescensius was the son of Theodora and brother of John XIII. He stirred up the insurrection that had Benedict VI thrown into prison, and elevated his successor to the papacy, who was Boniface VII (above).

that money was spent, they fell to robbing the people, and assailing the land, not only around Northumberland, but at last they also besieged the city of London. Being repelled from there by the manhood of the Londoners, they strayed to other adjoining countries, burning and killing wherever they went. So that, for lack of a good head or governor, many things in the land perished. For the king gave himself to vice, and to taxing his subjects, and to disinheriting men of their possessions. He made them redeem these possessions with great sums of money, in order to pay great tributes to the Danes yearly. This was called *dane-gilt* (Danegeld). These tributes so increased, that from the first tribute of 10,000 pounds, it grew to 40,000 pounds in the course of five or six years.

To this sorrow was joined, moreover, hunger and penury among the commoners. It was so bad, that they were constrained to pluck and steal from others. From what was pillaged by the Danes, and by local thieves and bribers, this land was brought into great affliction.

The Danes prevailed more and more over the English. They grew in such pride and presumption, that they caused the farmers to reap and sow the land, and to do all other vile labor belonging to the house, while they sat at home at their pleasure. When the farmer came home, he could scarcely have as much of his own, as his servants had. So that the Dane had everything at his will, and fill, faring of the best, while the owner scarcely had his fill of the worst. Thus the common people, being so oppressed by them, were in such great fear and dread, that not only were they constrained to suffer the Danes in what they did, but they were also glad to please them.

And thus we have brought this history up to A.D. 1000. In this year, the twenty-first year of his reign, through the counsel of his companions about him, Ethelred began something that became the occasion of a new plague to the Saxons. For in this year the king married Emma, the daughter of Richard, duke of Normandy. Because of this marriage, King Ethelred was not a little enhanced in his own mind. He sent secret and strict commissions to the rulers of every town in England, that upon St. Brices' Day, at an appointed hour, the Danes should be suddenly slain.¹³³ And so it was performed.

Soon after, tidings came into Denmark of the murder of those Danes. King Swanus of Denmark landed in Cornwall with a great host and navy, and took Exeter, and beat down the walls. From there he proceeded further inland. They came to Wilton and Sherborne, where they cruelly pillaged the country, and slew the people. But Swanus, hearing that the king was coming to him, took to his ships. As soon as he heard of any host of Englishmen coming toward him, he took to his ships again. So that when the king's army sought to meet him on one coast, he would suddenly land in another. And thus they wearied the English, and in conclusion, brought them into extreme and unspeakable misery — to such an extent that king Ethelred was glad to make peace with them, and he gave King Swanus £30,000.

After this, Swanus heard of the increase of his people in England. He broke his covenants not to molest the English, and with a great army and navy, he landed in Northumberland and proclaimed himself king. There, when he had subdued the people after much vexation, and caused the earl with the rulers of the country to swear fealty to him, he crossed the river Trent, and subdued the people there. He forced them to give him pledges or hostages. These hostages, with his navy, he committed to his son Canute to keep, while he went further inland. And so, with a great host he came to Mercia, killing and slaying. Then by strength he

¹³³ The St. Brice's Day massacre is dated in Nov. 13, 1002. The Anglo-Saxon chronicle relates that the massacre was carried out in response to an accusation that the Danes would "beshrew [Aethelred] of his life, and afterwards all his council, and then have his kingdom without any resistance."

took Winchester and Oxford, and did what he liked there. That being done, he came toward London. Hearing the king was there, he passed by the river Thames, came into Kent, and there besieged Canterbury, where he was resisted for twenty days. At length, by the treason of a deacon named Almaric, he won it and took the goods of the people, set the city aflame, and decimated the monks of St. Augustine's abbey (that is, they slew nine out of every ten by cruel torment, and the tenth they kept alive as their slave). So they slew 900 monks; of other men, and over 8,000 women and children. And finally, after they had kept the bishop Elphegus in prison for seven months, because he would not give them £3000, and did many villainies to him, they brought him to Greenwich, and there stoned him to death.

King Ethelred in the meantime, fearing how this persecution would end, sent his wife Emma, with his two sons Alfred and Edward, to the Duke of Normandy, with whom he also sent the bishop of London. The Danes still proceeded in their fury and rage. And when they had won a great part of West Saxony, they returned again to London. The Londoners hearing of this, sent them certain great gifts and pledges. At last, about the thirty-fifth year of his reign, the king was chased to the Isle of Wight, and with a secret company he spent a great part of the winter there. Finally, without cattle or comfort, he sailed to Normandy to his wife. Shortly after, Swanus died suddenly.

When King Ethelred heard of the death of Swanus, he returned to England. Canute, lacking provision, fled to Sandwich, and there he cut off the noses and hands of the hostages whom his father left with him. He then sailed into Denmark. The next year he returned again with a great navy, and landed in the south country. The eldest son of King Ethelred, called Edmund Ironside, made provision to meet him. At this time King Ethelred, at London, was taken with great sickness, and there he died. He had reigned thirty-six years. He left his eldest son Edmund, and also Elfred and Edward. Although Ethelred was miserably assailed and vexed by his enemies, together with his council, he issued many wholesome laws.

*Edmund Ironside, a Saxon, and Canute a Dane,
Kings together in England.*

After the death of Ethelred a dispute arose between the Englishmen for the election of their king. The citizens of London, with certain other lords, named Edmund, the eldest son of Ethelred (a young man of lusty and valiant courage). In his martial adventures he was both hardy and wise, and could very well endure all pains. Therefore he was surnamed *Ironside*. But more of the lords favored Canute, the son of Swanus — especially the abbots, bishops, and other spiritual men, who before had sworn to his father. Because of this, many great battles were fought between these two martial princes, first in Dorsetshire, where Canute was compelled to flee the field. And after that, they fought another battle in Worcestershire. It was so hard-fought that none could tell who had the better. But either for weariness or for lack of day, they departed from one another. On the next morning they fought again; but then Canute was compelled to forsake the field.

[105] A.D. 995-1007.

After this they met in Mercia, and there they fought again; Edmund had the worse of it. Thus there were many great conflicts between these two princes. But one season, when the hosts were ready to engage, a certain time of truce was taken before the battle. A knight of Edmund's party stood on a high place, and said these words:

“We die daily and none has the victory: and when the knights are dead on either side, then the dukes, compelled by need, will either reach agreement, or else they must fight alone. And is this kingdom not sufficient for two men, which sometimes sufficed for seven? But if the

covetousness of lordship in these two men is so great, that neither can be content to take a part and live *with* the other, nor *under* the other, then let them fight alone who will be lords alone. If all men continue to fight, in the end all men will be slain, and none will be left to be under their lordship, nor able to defend the one who will be against foreign enemies and nations.”

These words were so well approved by both hosts and princes, that both were content to try the quarrel between the two princes alone. The place and time were appointed, where they would both meet in the sight of the two armies. When they had assailed each other with swords and sharp strokes, first by the motion of Canute (as some write), suddenly they both agreed and kissed each other, to the comfort of both hosts. Shortly after, they agreed upon the partition of the land. And after that, during their lives, they loved as brethren. Soon after, a son of the wicked duke Edric espied when King Edmund was unarmed, and with a spear (some say with a long knife) thrust him through. Edmund shortly died from this, after he had reigned for two years. He left behind him two sons, Edmund and Edward, whom the wicked duke Edric, after the death of their father, took from their mother (not yet knowing of the death of Edmund her husband) and presented them to king Canute. Thus Canute, after the death of Edmund Ironside, was king of the whole realm of England.

When Canute was established in the kingdom, he called a parliament at London, where this question was proposed to the bishops, barons, and lords of the parliament: whether in the covenant made between Edmund and Canute, any provision was made for the children of Edmund, for any partition of the land. The lords flattering the foreign king, and speaking against their own minds, and their native country, said there was not. They affirmed moreover with an oath (for the king's pleasure), that to the utmost of their powers, they would disregard the blood of Edmund in all that they might do. Because of this answer and promise, they thought to have purchased great favor with the king. But by the just retribution of God, it chanced far otherwise. For he distrusted many of them, and disdained them ever after; so that, some he exiled, and a great many he beheaded. Among them was wicked Edric the traitor. For as the king was in his palace, Edric coming to him, began to reckon up his benefits and labors — in forsaking and betraying Ethelred, then in slaying King Edmund his son, with many more such deeds — which he had done for the king's sake. “Well,” said the king, “You have here rightly judged yourself, and you shall die deservedly for slaying your natural prince, and my sworn brother.” And so he immediately commanded him to be bound hand and foot, and be thrown into the Thames.

Thus the Danes being settled in England, little by little became Christians. Canute went to Rome, and returning again to England, he governed that land for twenty years, leaving after him two sons, Harold and Hardicanute.

Harold (called Harefoot, for his swiftness), began his reign over England A.D. 1036. He reigned but four years.

Hardicanute, the last Danish King in England

Hardicanute was the next king of England (A.D. 1040). When he had reigned two years he was suddenly stricken dumb, and fell down to the ground. Within eight days he died without issue of his body. He was the last Danish king that reigned in England.

The earls and barons, after his death, assembled in council, and determined that no Dane should ever be king of England, for the contempt they had shown to Englishmen. Forever before, if Englishmen and Danes happened to meet on a bridge, the Englishmen were obliged to stand still till the Danes had passed. Moreover, if the Englishmen had not bowed their heads to do reverence to the Danes, they would have been beaten. For such insults and

villainies they were driven out of the land after the death of Hardicanute, and they never came back.

The earls and barons, by their common consent and council, sent to Normandy for these two brethren, Alfred and Edward; intending to crown Alfred the elder brother, and to make him king of England. The earls and barons made their oath to this. But the earl Godwin of West Sax, falsely and treacherously, thought to slay these two brethren as soon as they came into England, so that he might make his son Harold king. Godwin had this son by his wife, who was Hardicanute's daughter.

When Alfred heard these messengers, and perceived their tidings, he thanked God, and in all haste came to England, arriving at Southampton. There Godwin, the false traitor (having knowledge of his coming), welcomed and received him with joy, pretending to lead him to London where the barons waited to make him king. And so they passed on together toward London. But when they came to Guilddown, the traitor commanded his men to slay all who were in Alfred's company, who had come with him from Normandy. After that, they were to take Alfred, and lead him to the Isle of Ely, where they would put out both his eyes. So they slew the whole company that was there, numbering twelve gentlemen who came with Alfred from Normandy. After that, they took Alfred, and in the Isle of Ely, they cruelly murdered him. And so this innocent Alfred, being the rightful heir of the crown, died through the treason of wicked Godwin. When the lords of England heard of it, and how Alfred, who should have been their king, was put to death through the false traitor Godwin, they were very angry, and swore between God and them, that Godwin would die a worse death. They would have put him to death immediately, except that the traitor fled from there into Denmark, and there he continued more than four years, and lost all his lands in England.

Legends of Canute

It is reported of king Canute, that following the superstition of Achelnot, archbishop of Canterbury, he went on a pilgrimage to Rome, and there he founded a hospital for English pilgrims. He gave the pope precious gifts, and burdened the land with a yearly tribute, called the "Rome-shot." He enshrined the body of Berinus, and gave great lands and ornaments to the cathedral church of Winchester. He built St. Benedict's in Norfolk, which before was a hermitage. Also St. Edmundsbury, which King Athlestan had previously ordained for a college of priests, he turned into an abbey for the monks of St. Benedict's order.

Henry, archdeacon of Huntington, mentions this Canute, as does Polydore. He says that after coming from Rome, Canute was walking one time by the port of Southampton (but Polydore says, and Fabian affirms, it was on the Thames side of London). His flatterers coming around him, began to exalt him with high words, calling him a king of all kings (most mighty) who had under his subjection both the people, the land, and also the sea. Canute turning this matter over in his mind (either out of the pride of his exalted heart, or to test and refute their flattering words) commanded that his chair of state be brought to the seaside at the time the tide should begin to rise. (Polydore says that no seat was brought, but that he sat upon his garments, folded under him). There he charged and commanded the tides rising and coming towards his feet, that they should touch neither him nor his clothes. But the water kept its ordinary course, coming nearer and nearer, first to his feet, and then rising higher, it began to wash over him. The king, abashed with this, and also partly afraid, started back. Looking to his lords, he said,

"Look, you call me such a mighty king, and yet I cannot command this little water to stay at my word, but it is ready to drown me. By this all earthly kings may know that all their powers

are vain, and that none is worthy to have the name of a king, but Him alone who has all things subject to the power and authority of his word, which is the Lord of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things, the Father of Christ our Lord, who with him forever is to be glorified. Let us worship Him and extol our King forever.”

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After this (as historians witness) he never allowed the crown to be placed on his head, without going to Winchester or (as some say) to Canterbury. Both those may be true; for his going to Canterbury was to acknowledge that there was a Lord much higher and of more power than he himself, and with that, to render up his crown forever.

Here it is also to be noted of Canute, that although in the beginning of his reign he acted upon King Edgar’s laws, yet in the process of time, he issued specific laws of his own. Among these are several that concern ecclesiastical causes. By this it may appear that the government of spiritual matters did not then depend on the bishop of Rome, but pertained to the lawful authority of the temporal prince, no less than temporal matters and causes.

And here being an end of the Danish kings, we return to the English kings, whose right line comes in again as follows.

King Edward, called the Confessor.

The next election and right of the crown pertained to Edward, the younger son of King Ethelred and Emma, a true Englishman. He had been long banished in Normandy. He was a man of gentle and soft spirit, more pliable to other men’s counsel, than able to trust his own. He was so averse to all war and bloodshed, that being in his banishment, he wished to continue all his life in that private estate, rather than by war or bloodshed to aspire to any kingdom. This Edward came over, accompanied with a few Normans, and was crowned king (A.D. 1043). After he had thus taken upon himself the government of the realm, he guided it with much wisdom and justice for nearly twenty-four years. From him issued (as out of a fountain) much godliness, mercy, pity, and liberty toward the poor, gentleness and justice toward all men, and in all honest life he gave a virtuous example to his people.

In Edward’s time, his mother Emma was accused of being familiar with Alwin, the bishop of Winchester. Upon this accusation, Edward took many of her jewels from her, and caused her to be kept more strictly in the abbey of Warwel. He committed the bishop to the clergy to be examined by them. Polydore says they were both in prison at Winchester, where sorrowing over the defame of both herself and the bishop, and trusting upon her conscience, she desired justice. She offered herself as ready to abide any lawful trial, yes, even if it were the sharpest. Then many of the bishops petitioned the king for them both, and they would have obtained their wish, had not Robert, who was then archbishop of Canterbury, stopped the suit. Not well-pleased with their labors, he said to them,

“My brethren, how dare you defend this woman? She has defamed her own son the king, and degraded herself with the bishop. If so, the woman will purge the priest, who will then purge the woman who is accused of consenting to the death of her son Alfred, and who procured venom to poison her son Edward. But let her be tried in this way, to see if she is guilty or guiltless: if she will go barefoot for four steps, and the bishop for five, on nine red-hot plough-shares, then if she escapes harmless, he will be acquitted by this challenge, and she also.”

She consented to this, and the day was appointed. The king and a great part of his nobles were present, except Robert, the archbishop. Robert had been a monk of a house in Normandy, and a helper of the king in his exile. So he came over and was made first bishop of London, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. Then she was led blindfolded to the

place between two men, where the irons lay burning hot, and passed the nine shares unhurt. "At last," she says: "Good Lord, when shall I come to the place of my purgation?" When they then opened her eyes, and she saw that she was past the pain, she knelt down giving God thanks. Then the king relented (says the history), and restored to her what he had taken from her, and asked her forgiveness.

About this time, William duke of Normandy came with a goodly company into England to see King Edward, and was honorably received. And the king, at his return, enriched him with many great gifts. And there (some write) Edward promised him that if he died without issue, William should succeed him in the kingdom of England.

This virtuous and blessed King Edward, after he had reigned twenty-three years and seven months, died, and was buried in the monastery of Westminster, which he had greatly augmented and repaired.

King Harold and William of Normandy.

Harold, the son of Earl Godwin, and the last king of the Saxons, succeeded Edward, but many of the nobles went with Edgar Adding, the next heir after Edmund Ironside. Despising the young age of Edgar, and also forgetting the promise he had made to Duke William, that he would marry his daughter and keep the kingdom for him, Harold took it upon himself to be king of England (A.D. 1066).

William duke of Normandy, Immediately sent an ambassage to Harold, king of England, reminding him of the covenants that were agreed between them — which was to keep the land for his use after the death of Edward. But because the daughter of Duke William (who was promised to Harold) was dead, Harold thought himself discharged of his promise.

Hearing Harold's answer, Duke William, now that the messengers had gone and come back, gathered his knights, and prepared his navy. He obtained the consent of the lords of his land to aid and assist him in his journey. He sent to Rome to Pope Alexander, concerning his title and voyage into England. The pope confirmed him, and sent him a banner, desiring him to bear it in the ship in which himself should sail. Thus Duke William took shipping at the haven of St. Valery. There he tarried a long time for a convenient wind. At last the wind came about, and they took ships with a great company, and landed at Hastings in Sussex.

There were three causes which induced Duke William to enter this land to subdue Harold. One was, that it was given to him by King Edward his nephew. The second was to avenge the cruel murder of his nephew Alfred and of the Normans, which he ascribed chiefly to Harold. The third was to revenge the wrong done to Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, who was exiled because of Harold.

Thus, while Harold was in the north, Duke William made such great speed, that he came to London before the king, who was kept out till William made good surety that he and his people would pass through the city without tarrying. Well observing this promise, he passed the bridge and went over to Sussex. From there he sent a monk to Harold, and proffered him three ways to go. First, to render to William the possession of the land, and so to take it back from him under tribute, reigning under him; secondly, to abide and stand to the pope's arbitration; or thirdly, to defend this quarrel in his own person against the duke, and they two alone would try the matter by dint of sword, without any other blood-shedding.

But Harold refused all these offers, saying, "It should be tried by dint of swords, and not by one sword." And so he gathered his people and joined battle with the Normans, in the place where afterwards the Battle Abbey was built in Sussex. In the beginning of this fight, the

Englishmen kept themselves in good array and were likely to vanquish the Normans. Therefore Duke William caused his men to give way, as though they were fleeing, whereby the Englishmen followed fast, and broke their array. Then the Normans, fiercely giving a charge upon them, and in conclusion obtained the victory through the just providence of God. Where King Harold had murdered Alfred before, the true heir of the crown, with his company of Normans so cruelly, he was now wounded by the Normans in his left eye with an arrow, and he died from it.

[106] A.D. 1066.

Gerard says, however, that Harold fled away to Chester, and after that lived as a monk in the monastery of St. James. This Duke William and King Edward were cousins on their father's side. For Richard I, who was the third duke of Normandy after Rollo, was father to Duke Richard II, and brother to Emma, who was mother to King Edward. Duke Richard II was father to duke Robert, who was William's father.

The church of Christ and the state of religion, first founded and grounded by Christ and his apostles, did not continually remain in the primitive perfection in which it was first instituted. In the process of time, it began to go from better to worse, to decrease and decline into much superstition and inconvenience. This was partly through the coming of Mahomet, partly through the increase of wealth and riches, and partly through the decrease of knowledge and diligence in those who should be the guides of Christ's flock. Yet the infection and corruption of that time (even though it was great) did not abound in such excessive measure as it did afterwards in the later times now following — that is, about a thousand years after Christ, which we must treat.

Succession of Popes c. 1000-1073

About this time and year came pope Sylvester II, who succeeded Gregory V, and occupied the See of Rome about A.D. 1000. After Sylvester, succeeded John XVII, by whom the Feast of All Souls was brought in (A.D. 1004)¹³⁴ — through the means and instigation of Odilo, abbot of Cluny, celebrated next after the feast of All Saints. This monk Odilo, thinking that purgatory should be in Mount Etna in the country of Sicily, dreamed that by his masses he had delivered various souls from there. He said moreover, “that he heard the voices and lamentations of devils, crying out because the souls were taken from them by the masses and dirges!” Not long after came John XVIII. and Sergius IV. After them succeeded Benedict VIII, then John XIX, who brought in the fast of the eve of John Baptist and St. Lawrence. After him followed Pope Benedict IX, who was glad to sell his seat to his successor, Gregory VI, for £1500.

At this time there were three popes in Rome, reigning and raging against one another — Benedict IX, Sylvester III, and Gregory VI. For this cause the emperor came to Rome to displace the three monsters, placing Clement II in the papal chair. Thereupon he enacted that no bishop of Rome should henceforth be chosen without the consent and confirmation of the emperor. This constitution, though it was both agreeable and necessary for the public tranquility of that city, the Cardinals would not allow it to stand for long. They impugned it afterward by subtle practice and open violence. In the time of Clement II, the Romans made an oath to the emperors concerning the ejection of the bishops, to intermeddle no further in this unless the emperor consented. However, the emperor departed into Germany; by and by they forgot their oath; and nine months later they poisoned the bishop. Some impute this

¹³⁴ The Feast of All Souls, celebrated on Nov. 2nd, is a day dedicated to praying for the faithful departed, believed to be in purgatory, cleansing their souls to prepare them for heaven.

act to Stephen, his successor, called Damasus II. Some impute it to Brazutus. Within thirteen years (historians record), he poisoned six popes: that is, Clement II, Damasus II, Leo IX, Victor II, Stephen IX, and Nicholas II.

Clement being poisoned, after him succeeded Damasus II, neither by consent of the people, nor elected by the emperor, but by force and invasion. He too was poisoned within twenty-three days (A.D. 1049). Much contention and striving began in Rome about the papal seat. The Romans, through the counsel of the Cardinals, sent their concerns to the emperor, desiring him to give them a bishop. And so he did. His name was Bruno, afterward called Leo IX. Bruno was a simple man, easily led by evil counsel. He came from the emperor towards Rome in his pontifical apparel like a pope. He was met along the way by the abbot of Cluny, and Hildebrand, then a monk, who seeing him in his pontifical robes, began to berate him, charging that he would take his authority from the emperor, rather than the clergy of Rome and its people, as was the habit of his predecessors.

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And so they counselled him to lay down that apparel, and to enter in with his own habit, till he had been elected by them. Bruno following their counsel, and confessing his fault before the clergy of Rome, obtained their favor. And so he was called Leo IX, by whom Hildebrand was made a cardinal. Under this Pope Leo, two councils were held. One was at Versailles, where the doctrine of Berengarius against the real presence in the sacrament was first condemned (though Berengarius had not yet recanted; nevertheless, this was later done in the Council of Lateran, under Nicholas II, A.D. 1060). The other was held at Moguntia, where (among many other decrees) it was enacted that priests should be excluded and utterly debarred from marriage.

After the death of Leo, whom Brazutus poisoned in the first year of his popedom, Theophylactus strove to be pope. But to defeat him, Hildebrand went to the emperor, who assigned another bishop, called Victor II. This Victor, holding a council at Florence, deposed various bishops and priests for simony and fornication — for simony, in that they took their dignities from secular men for money; for fornication, in that contrary to their canon, they were married, etc. Just past the second year of his papacy, this pope too followed his predecessors, being poisoned by Brazutus, procured by Hildebrand and his master.

Here now the church and clergy of Rome began to wrest out of the emperor's hand the election of the pope. They elected Stephen IX as pope (A.D. 1057), contrary to their oath, and to the emperor's assignment. This Stephen was not ashamed to accuse Emperor Henry of heresy, for diminishing the authority of the Roman see. So this was their definition of *heresy* at that time, not to maintain the ambitious proceedings of the Romish prelate. And they defined *simony* as taking and enjoying any spiritual living at a secular man's hand.

In the meantime, Stephen the pope, tasting of Brazutus' cup, fell sick. Hildebrand, hearing that, returned home with all speed. So coming to Rome, he assembles all the companies and orders of the clergy together, making them swear that they would admit none to be bishop but the one who is appointed by the public consent of them all, together. This being done, Hildebrand, takes his journey into Florence, to fetch the bishop of Florence to install him as bishop. The clergy swore to him that no bishop would be ordained before his return. But the *people* of Rome, not suffering the election to be delayed so long, after the death of Stephen, elected one from their own city, called Benedict X. Hearing of this, Hildebrand was not a little offended. Therefore, returning to Rome with Garhard, bishop of Florence, he caused the clergy to proceed to a new election, saying that Benedict was not lawfully called, but

came in by force and bribing. But the clergy, not daring to attempt any new election at Rome, went to Sienna (in Tuscany), and there elected Garhard, whom Hildebrand brought with him. So there were then two popes in Rome. But Garhard, named Nicholas II, holding a council at Sutrium — through the help of Duke Godfrid and Guibert, and other bishops around Italy — caused the other pope to be deposed. Benedict understanding them to be set against him through the machinations of Hildebrand, unpoped himself, and went to Velitras. He lived there more quietly than he would have at Rome.

Council of Lateran – 1060

Nicholas was thus set up without the mind either of the emperor or of the people of Rome. After his fellow pope was driven away, he broke up the Synod of Sutrium, and came to Rome. There he assembled another council, called the Council of Lateran. In this council, the terrible sentence of **excommunication** was first promulgated, mentioned in its decrees. The effect of it was this: *First*, that using a subtle practice, Nicholas undermines the emperor's jurisdiction, transferring to a few cardinals and certain catholic persons the full authority of choosing the pope. *Secondly*, against all those who creep into the seat of Peter by money or favor, without the full consent of the cardinals, he thunders the terrible blasts of excommunication, cursing them and their children with devils, as wicked persons, to the anger of Almighty God; and also giving authority and power to cardinals, with the clergy and laity, to depose all such persons, and call a General Council wherever they will against them.

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In this Council of Lateran, Berengarius, an arch-deacon, was driven to recant his doctrine, in which he *denied* that the real substance of Christ's holy body and blood is in the sacrament, otherwise than sacramentally and in mystery. Thus, in the same council, this new-found device and term *transubstantiation* was also hatched and invented.

It would take too long here to declare the confederation between this Nicholas and Robert Guiscard, whom this pope (contrary to all right and good law, and displacing the rightful heir) made duke of Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily, and captain-general of St. Peter's lands. Thus, through force of arms and violence, Guiscard might better subdue all those who might rebel against Nicholas. Now, let all men who are godly and wise, judge and understand how this stands with the doctrine of Christ, the example of Peter, or the spirit of a Christian bishop — by outward arms and violence to conquer Christian men and countries, under the obedience of a bishop's see. Thus Pope Nicholas II, by might and force, continued three and a half years. But at length, he met with Brazutus' cup, and so he died.

At the beginning of this, or somewhat before (about A.D. 1057), after the decease of Henry III, Henry IV was made emperor. He was but a child, and reigned fifty years; but not without great molestation and much disquietude. And all of this was through the ungracious wickedness of Hildebrand, as it will be declared later (the Lord permitting).

Here, by the way, is an example to be noted, by which all princes may learn and understand how the pope is to be handled, whoever looks to have any goodness at his hand. If a man stands in fear of the pope's curse, he will be made his slave; but if the pope is despised by you, then you will have him as you like. For the pope's curse may well be likened to Domitian's thunder. If a man gives ear to the noise and crack, it seems a terrible thing; but if you consider the causes and effect of it, it is most vain and ridiculous.

In the reign of this Nicholas (A.D. 1060), Aldred bishop of Worcester was appointed archbishop of York. Coming to Rome for his pall with Tostius, Earl of Northumberland, he could not obtain it, but was deprived of all dignity. Whereupon, returning again to Rome

with Tostius, he made his complaint there, but would not be heard till Tostius, a man of stout courage, taking the matter in hand, told the pope to his face, that “his curse was not to be feared in far countries when the pope’s own neighbors, and indeed, the vilest vagabonds derided and despised it at home.” Therefore he required the pope, either to restore Aldred again to his goods, or else it would be known that they were lost through Nicholas’ means and subtlety. Tostius said that the king of England, upon hearing this, would debar him of St. Peter’s tribute, thinking it a shameful treatment of him and his realm if Aldred should come from Rome both deprived of his dignity, and spoiled of his goods. The pope being thus persuaded by the argument of his *purse*, was content to send Aldred home with his pall, according to his request.

After the death of Nicholas, the Lombards having been oppressed by Pope Nicholas, and brought under fear, were more desirous, and thought it good, to have a bishop of their own company. And so they elected the bishop of Parmen, called Cadolus, to be pope. They sent to the emperor, desiring his favor and support in this. For the election of the pope (they said) most properly pertained to him. The emperor, well-pleased and content, gave them his voice and support. But Hildebrand, a stout maintainer of popish liberties against good emperors, hearing this, set up by a contrary faction another bishop, *Anselm*, later called Alexander II (1061-1073). Cadolus, thus elected by the emperor and the cardinals, set out to Rome with a sufficient army and strength of men.

Alexander, no less prepared, met him there with another army. They had a great conflict, and many were slain on both sides. But Cadolus, though he had the better cause, had the worse fortune. The emperor seeing this hurly-burley, sent his ambassador Otto, archbishop of Cullen, to take up the matter. Coming to Rome, he sharply chides the pope for taking this upon himself without the leave or knowledge of the emperor. He declared how the election of that see, should chiefly pertain to the right of the emperor, as it had done for the most part in the time of his predecessors. But Hildebrand, all set on wickedness and ambition, and also not a little puffed up with his recent victories, did not allow the ambassador to speak to the end, interrupting him in the middle of his tale. He affirmed that if they were to stand to law and custom, then the liberty of that election would belong to the *clergy* rather than to the *emperor*. In short, Otto the ambassador, agreeing more with the clergy than with the emperor, was content to be persuaded. He only required *this* in the emperor’s name: that a council should be held to decide the matter, at which the emperor himself would be present. This was agreed.

Council of Mantua – 1064.

In that council, held at Mantua, Alexander was declared pope, and the other had his pardon granted. In this same council, among many other considerations, it was concluded concerning priests, that they should have no wives; that priests’ children were not to be secluded from holy orders; that no benefices (priestly offices) were to be bought for money; that the use of “halleluia” outside of the church was to be suspended during Lent, etc.¹³⁵ This also was decreed (which most furthered Hildebrand’s purpose): that no spiritual man (clergy), whatever his office, should be appointed to any church by a secular person,¹³⁶ and that the pope should be elected only by the cardinals, etc.

¹³⁵ During Lent, the Catholic Church suspends the use of "Alleluia" or "Hallelujah" in the liturgy to emphasize the penitential nature of the season.

¹³⁶ Originally, “that no spiritual man, whatsoever he be, should enter into any church, by a secular person...” This refers to the **Investiture Controversy**, a conflict between Church and State, as to which will choose and install (invest) bishops, abbots, and even the pope himself.

Cardinal Benno ¹³⁷ writes of Alexander, that after he perceived the frauds of Hildebrand, and of the emperor's enemies, and understanding that he was set up and enthroned only for a purpose; being at his mass, as he was preaching to the people, told them he would not sit in the place, unless he had the license of the emperor. When Hildebrand heard this, he was stricken with such fury, that he could scarcely keep his hands off him, while mass was ongoing. After the mass was finished, by force of soldiers and strength of men, he had him taken into a chamber, and there he struck Pope Alexander with his fists, berating and rebuking him because he would seek for favor of the emperor.

— Thus Alexander being kept in custody, and being stinted to a certain allowance (about five groats, or twenty pennies a-day), Hildebrand appropriated the whole revenue of the church to himself. Alexander, under the miserable endurance of Hildebrand, died after eleven and a-half years of his popedom. And thus much of Romish matters.

Succession of the Archbishops of Canterbury.

Now returning again to the history of our own country, we enter upon the reign of William the Conqueror, the next king following in England. But first, as at the end of the former book, we will give the order of the archbishops of Canterbury; beginning with Ethelred, who succeeded Celnoth, the last mentioned above (Book II, p. [88]).

*The names and order of the archbishops of Canterbury,
from the time of King Egbert to William Conqueror.*

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| 18. Ethelred. | 27. Siric. |
| 19. Pleimund. | 28. Elphege. |
| 20. Athelm. | 29. Livinge. |
| 21. Ulfelm. | 30. Egenold. |
| 22. Odo. | 31. Edsius. |
| 2A. Elfius, or Elfinus. | 32. Robert. |
| 24. Dunstan. | 33. Stigand. |
| 25. Ethelgar. | 34. Lanfranc. |
| 26. Elfric. | |

THE END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

¹³⁷ Cardinal Benno, or Beno (fl. 1082-1098), was involved in the *Investiture Controversy*. He wrote the *Gesta Romanæ ecclesie contra Hildebrandum*, an account of the alleged misdeeds of Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand).

ACTS AND MONUMENTS

BOOK IV.

CONTAINING

The 300 years from Wm. the Conqueror to Wycliffe A.D. 1066-1364.

In which is described the proud and mis-ordered reign of antichrist,
beginning to stir in the church of Christ.

William, duke of Normandy, surnamed *the Conqueror*, was the illegitimate son of Robert, the sixth duke of Normandy, and nephew to King Edward. After his victory against Harold, he was received as king over the realm of England, not so much by assent, as for fear and necessity; for the Londoners had promised their assistance to Edgar Etheling. But being weakened and wasted so greatly in former battles, the duke coming so fast upon them, and fearing that they could not make their party good, they submitted themselves. William was crowned on Christmas day (A.D. 1066), by the hands of Aldred, archbishop of York. For at that time Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, was absent, or else he dared not or would not come into the presence of the king.

This king reigned over England twenty-one years and ten months, with great severity towards the English, burdening them with tributes and exactions. He required for every hide of ground containing twenty acres, six shillings.¹³⁸ Some parts of the land rebelled, and especially the city of Exeter. But at last William overcame them, and punished them. On account of that and other severities of William, several of the Lords departed into Scotland. Therefore he kept the other lords who tarried even stricter, and exalted the Normans, giving them the chief possessions of the land. Having obtained the kingdom by the sword, he changed the whole state of the government, and ordained new laws at his own pleasure, profitable to himself, but grievous and hurtful to the people. He abolished the laws of King Edward, even though he was sworn to observe and maintain them.

William endeavored to establish a form of government both in the church and commonwealth, answerable his own mind. However he allowed the clergy a kind of jurisdiction of bringing persons before them and of exercising such ecclesiastical discipline as that age and time used.

Besides this, William, as he was a warrior delighting in forts and bulwarks, built four strong castles; two at York, one at Nottingham, and another at Lincoln, whose garrisons he filled with Normans.

About the third year of his reign, Harold and Canute, sons of Swanus, king of Denmark, entered into the north country. The Normans within York, fearing that the Englishmen would aid the Danes, set fire to the suburbs of the town. The flame was so great and the wind so strong that it took to the city, and burned a great part of it, including the minster of St. Peter. No doubt many worthy works and monuments of books were consumed there. The Danes, by the favor of some of the citizens, entered the city and slew more than 3000 of the Normans. But not long after, King William chased them out, and drove them to their ships. He was so displeased with the inhabitants of that country, that he destroyed the land from York to Durham. The province still lay waste nine years later; and the inhabitants were kept

¹³⁸ *Hide of ground: a unit of land and tax assessment, sufficient to support one household with dependents.*

in such penury by the war of the king, that (as our English history relates) they ate rats, cats, and dogs, with other vermin.

In the fourth year of the reign of this king, Malcolm king of Scots entered Northumberland, destroyed the country, and slew many of the people there — men, women, and children — in a lamentable way; and they took some prisoners. But within two years, King William made such war upon the Scots, that he forced Malcolm their king to do him homage.

And thus much concerning the outward calamities of this realm under this foreign conqueror, which is now the fifth time that the land has been scourged by the hand of God. First, by the Romans, then by the Scots and Picts, afterwards by the Saxons; and then by the Danes. And yet the indignation of God did not cease, but stirred up the Normans against them, who conquered and altered the whole realm. So that, besides the introduction of new laws, coins, and possessions, there was scarcely an English bishop in any church of England, but only Normans and foreigners placed through all their dioceses. This land was then brought to such a misery, that of all the English nobility, not one house was standing, and it was also thought reproachful to be called an Englishman.

Also in the fourth year of this king, a solemn council of the clergy of England was held at Winchester. At this council two cardinals sent from Pope Alexander II were present. In this council, the king being present, several bishops, abbots, and priors were deposed (by means of the king) without any cause. It was so that his Normans might be promoted to the rule of the church, just as he had promoted his knights to the rule of the temporality.

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Among those deposed was Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury. He was deprived of his dignity, and kept in Winchester as a prisoner during his life. Stigand was noted as a man so covetous and stingy, he would take nothing from his own stores. He swore that he did not have a penny. Yet, using the key fastened around his neck, a great treasure of his was found hidden underground.

The Primacy between York and Canterbury.

At the same time, Thomas, a *Norman*, was preferred to the archbishopric of York, and Lanfranc, an *Italian*, was made archbishop of Canterbury.

After this, Lanfranc and Thomas came to Rome, with Remigius, bishop of Dorchester, to receive their palls, as was the manner. Without this pall, no archbishop or bishop could be confirmed, however lawful their election was. And this pall must be asked for nowhere but from the pope or his assigns. And that request must be made within three months, which was no small gain to the Romish see. For although at the beginning the pall was given without money, according to the decree (Dist. 100), or for a small sum, over the years it grew to great excess. Where the bishopric of Mentz was accustomed to giving Rome only 10,000 florins, afterwards it could not be obtained for less than 20,000. And from there it grew to 25,000, and then 27,000 florins. James, archbishop of Mentz, was obliged to pay these sums a little before the Council of Basel, so that at his death (which was four years after), he said that his death did not grieve him so much as to recall how his poor subjects would be constrained to pay so terrible a fine for the pope's pall. Now, by this may be easily calculated the enormous sum which comes to the pope in the whole of Germany, which contains over fifty bishoprics. [1,350,000 florins]

Lanfranc, coming to Rome with the other two bishops, obtained two palls from Alexander, for the fame of his learning — one of honor, the other of love. He also obtained for the other

two bishops their confirmation. While they were there, the controversy was first moved (or rather renewed) for the primacy between the two metropolitans — that is, between the archbishop of Canterbury, and the archbishop of York. Which would have pre-eminence? Canterbury claimed for himself the prerogative and primacy over all Britain and Ireland. This contention continued a long time between these two churches, and it was often renewed in the days of several later kings; as in the reign of Henry I, between Thurstan of York, and Radulph of Canterbury. Again, in the twenty-seventh year of the same king, at his second coronation. For Radulph would not allow the first coronation to stand, because it was done by the bishop of York, without his consent. Also, in the reign of Henry II, where pope Alexander made a decretal letter between these two Metropolitans, for bearing the cross (A.D. 1159). And at another time, in the reign of that king, between Richard of Canterbury, and Roger of York. Again, about A.D. 1170, Thomas Becket heard that the king was crowned by Roger bishop of York; he complained grievously to Pope Alexander III.¹³⁹ Also A.D. 1176, between Richard and Roger, as to which would sit at the right hand of Cardinal Hugo in his council in London. Moreover, at the beginning of the reign of King Richard I (A.D. 1190), between Baldwin of Canterbury, and Godfrid of York, etc.

Now to proceed in the history of this controversy. After this question was brought to the pope's presence, not being disposed to decide the matter, he sent them home to England, to have their cause determined there. Upon which (A.D. 1070), they brought the matter before the king and the clergy at Windsor. Lanfranc first alleged for himself, how from the time of Austin to the time of Bede (about a 140 years) the bishop of Canterbury ever had the primacy over the whole land of Britain and Ireland; how he kept his councils several times within the precincts of York; how he called and cited the bishops of York to these. Some of these he constituted, some he excommunicated, and some he removed. He also alleged various privileges granted by princes and prelates to the primacy of that see.

Thomas, archbishop of York, replied to this, beginning with the origin of the Britons' church. He declared in order of time how the Britons, the first possessors of this kingdom of Britain, had endured for 2076 years, from Brutus and Cadwallader, under a 102 kings, until at length they received the Christian faith in the year 162. This was in the time of Lucius their king, and Eleutherius, bishop of Rome. He had sent the preachers Fagan and Damian to them.¹⁴⁰ At this time, after their conversion, they assigned and ordained twenty-eight bishops in the realm, with two archbishops — Theonus, the archbishop of London, and Theodosius, archbishop of York. The church of Britain was governed under those bishops and archbishops for almost 300 years after their conversion. At length the Saxons, being then infidels, with Hengist their king, subdued the Britons, and by fraudulent murder invaded their land. This was about A.D. 449. After this, the Britons were driven into Cambria (which we now call Wales), as the Saxons over-ran the land. They divided themselves into seven kingdoms. And so they continued being infidels and pagans, till the time that Gregory, bishop of Rome sent Austin to preach to them. Coming first to Dover, then head-city of Kent (called Dorobernia in Latin), and planting himself there, Austin first converted the king of Kent, called Ethelbert, who had then subdued certain other kings up to the Humber.¹⁴¹ Because of this, Austin was made archbishop of Dover, by the appointment of Gregory I, who sent him certain palls with his letter from Rome, as

¹³⁹ [Thomas à Becket was archbishop of Canterbury from 1162 to 1170; murdered following his opposition to Henry II's attempts to control the clergy \(1118-1170\).](#)

¹⁴⁰ Some allege 162 instead of 180, for the introduction of the Christian faith. It appears this Thomas alleged the former date. [Ed.]

¹⁴¹ [Humber: an estuary in central northeastern England formed by the Ouse River and the Trent River.](#)

mentioned in Book II. ¹⁴² This letter being recited, Thomas then declares how Gregory's meaning in this letter was to reduce the new church of the Saxons to the order that was among the Britons. That is, to be under *two* metropolitans, one of London, the other of York. Notwithstanding, he gives Austin this prerogative *during his lifetime* — to have authority and jurisdiction, not only over his twelve bishops, but over all other bishops and priests in England. And *after his decease*, these two metropolitans, London and York, were to oversee the whole clergy, as in times past among the Britons. He enjoins both these two, after the death of Austin, to constitute bishops, and to oversee the church. And by that, he meant London was to be *equal* with York. This appears by four arguments:

First, he ordains that London is not to be consecrated by a bishop, but by his own synod.

Secondly, he ordains no distinction of honor between London and York, but only according to which one of them is elder in time (longer-ruling).

Thirdly, he places these two equally together in common council, and with one agreement to consent together in doing such things as they consult about in the zeal of Christ Jesus; and that in this way, one should not dissent from the other. What does this mean, if not that they should govern together?

Fourthly, where he writes that the bishop of York should not be subject to the bishop of London, what does this mean, if not that the bishop of London should be equivalent with the metropolitan of York, rather than superior to him?

And thus he expounded the meaning of Gregory in the letter. Lanfranc answers that, he was not the bishop of London, and that the question did not pertain to London. Thomas replies,

“This privilege was granted by Gregory to Austin alone, to have all other bishops subject to him; but after his decease there should be equality of honor between London and York, without distinction of priority; except by priority of time. And although Austin transferred the see from London to Kent, yet if Gregory's mind had been to give the same prerogative to the successors of Austin (which he gave to him) then he would have expressly uttered it in the words of his epistle.

[111] A.D. 1070-1073.

“He wrote thus to Austin: ‘That which I give to you, Austin, I also give and grant to all your successors after you.’ But as he makes no here mention of his successors, it appears thereby, that it was not his mind so to do.”

To this Lanfranc argued again:

“If this authority had been given to Austin alone, and not to his successors, it would have been but a small gift, proceeding from the apostolic see, to his special and familiar friend, especially seeing also that Austin, all his life, constituted no bishop of York, nor was there any such bishop to be subject to him. Again, we have privileges from the apostolic see, which confirm this dignity in the successors of Austin, in the same see of Dover. Moreover, all Englishmen think it both right and reasonable to fetch the direction of right-living, from that place where they first took the sparkle of right-believing. Further, whereas you say that Gregory might have confirmed with plain words the same thing to the successors of Austin, which he gave to him — I grant all that. Yet, this is not prejudicial to the see of Canterbury. For if you know your logic, what is true in the whole is also true in the part, and what is true in the greater, is also true in the lesser. Now, the church of Rome is like the whole, to whom all other churches are

¹⁴² See page [78].

its parts. The church of Rome is greater than all churches; and what is worked there ought to work in the lesser churches also. So that the authority of every chief head of the church ought to stand in those who succeed him, unless a precise exception is named. Therefore, just as the Lord said to all the bishops of Rome the same thing which he said to Peter, so what Gregory said to Austin, in like manner, he said to all the successors of Austin. So I conclude this: just as the bishop of Canterbury is subject to Rome, because he had his faith from there; so York ought to be in subjection to Canterbury, which sent the first preachers there.

“Now, whereas you allege that Gregory desired Austin to be resident at London, that is utterly uncertain. For how is it to be thought that such a disciple would do something contrary to the mind of such a master? But granting (as you say) that Austin moved to London, what is that to me, who am not bishop of London? Notwithstanding all this controversy unceasing between us, if it pleases you to come to some peaceable composition with me (all contention set aside) you will find me not out of the way, so far as reason and equity extend.”

Lanfranc, bishop of Canterbury, obtains the Primacy.

With these reasons of Lanfranc, Thomas gave up, conceding that his province should begin at the Humber. Upon this, it was then decreed that from that time, York would be subject to Canterbury in all matters pertaining to the rites and government of the catholic church. So that, wherever within England the archbishop of Canterbury would hold his council, the archbishop of York should resort there with his bishops, and be obedient to his canonical decrees. Provided that when the archbishop of Canterbury decease, York should repair to Dover, there to consecrate with others the bishops who should be elect. And if York should decease, his successor should resort to Canterbury, or else where the bishop of Canterbury appoints, to receive his consecration there, making profession there, with an oath of canonical obedience. Thomas being content with this, Lanfranc, the Italian, triumphed with no small joy, and immediately put the matter in writing, so that the memory of it might remain to his successors.

Yet that decree did not stand long. For shortly after, the same scar, so superficially cured, burst out again. So that in the reign of king Henry I, A.D. 1121, Thurstan, archbishop of York, could not be compelled to swear to the archbishop of Canterbury. And yet, by letters of Calixtus II, he was consecrated without any profession made to that bishop. There was much more matter for contention, but to recite all of it were take too long. But I thought to commit this to history, that men might see the lamentable decay of true Christianity among the Christian bishops who, inflamed with glorious ambition, so contended for honor, that without the force of law, no modesty could take place.

About A.D. 1016, the bishopric of Lindaffarne, otherwise named Holyland, was transferred to Durham. So likewise in the days of Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury (A.D. 1076), several bishops' sees were altered and removed from townships to larger cities. Thus the bishopric of Selese was moved to Chichester, that of Cornwall to Exeter; from Wells to Bath; from Sherborne to Salisbury; from Dorchester to Lincoln; and from Litchfield to Chester. This bishopric of Chester, Robert being then bishop, was moved from Chester to Coventry. Likewise, after that, in the reign of William Rufus (A.D. 1095), Herbert, bishop of Thetford, moved the see from there to Norwich, etc.

I do not find it expressly defined in histories concerning Dover and Canterbury, whether the see was likewise transferred from the town of Dover to the city of Canterbury in the time of Theodore; or whether Canterbury in the old time had the name of Dorobernia (as pretended in the letter of Lanfranc to Pope Alexander mentioned above). Except that I read by the words of William, while he was still the duke of Normandy, charging Harold to make a well

of water for the king's use in the castle of Dorobernia. That Dorobernia was then taken for what we now call Dover. But whether Dorobernia and the city of Canterbury are one, or different, is not important. Notwithstanding, I read that the names of Dorobernia and Canterbury are indifferently taken as the same. I read this in the epistle of Pope Boniface to King Ethelbert; also to Justin, archbishop: also in the epistle of Pope Honorius to Bishop Honorius: also of Pope Vitalian to Theodore: of Pope Sergius to King Ethelred, Alfred, and Adulphus, and to the bishops of England. Likewise of Pope Gregory III to the bishops of England: Also of Pope Leo to Athelard, archbishop of Canterbury: of Formosus to the bishops of England, and of Pope John to Dunstan.

In this time (and by the management of Lanfranc), in the ninth year of William I, a council was held at London, where these were the principal things concluded:

1. For the order of sitting, that the archbishop of York should sit on the right hand, and the bishop of London on the left hand, or in the absence of York, London would have the right, and Winchester the left hand of the archbishop of Canterbury sitting in council.
2. That bishops should transfer their sees from villages into cities, whereupon those sees above named were transferred.
3. That monks should have nothing as private possessions; and if any did, then upon dying unconfessed, he would not be buried in the churchyard.
4. That no cleric or monk of any other diocese should be admitted to orders, or retained without letters of commendation or testimony.
5. That none should speak in the council, except bishops and abbots, without leave of the arch-metropolitans.
6. That none should marry within the seventh degree, with anyone either of his own kindred, or of his wife's.
7. That none should either buy or sell any office within the church.
8. That no sorcery or any divination should be used or permitted in holy church.
9. That no bishop or abbot, or any of the clergy, should be at the judgment of any man's death or dismembering, nor should he favor any of those judged.

Moreover in the days of this Lanfranc, many good bishops of the realm began to take sides with the priests against the monks in displacing them out of their churches, and to restore the married priests again. So that Walkelm, bishop of Winchester, had replaced over forty monks in his diocese with canons; but this godly enterprise was stopped by Lanfranc.

Pope Gregory VII, called Hildebrand.

After the death of Pope Alexander mentioned above, next followed Hildebrand, surnamed Gregory VII. This Hildebrand, just as he was a sorcerer, so he was the first and principal cause of all this trouble that is now and has been since his time in the church.

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Through his example, all this ambition, boldness, and pride entered into the church of Rome, and has continued ever since. For before Hildebrand came to Rome, working his feats there — setting up and displacing whatever bishops he chose; corrupting them with pernicious counsel; setting them against emperors; destroying matrimony under the pretense of chastity; and under the title of liberty breaking peace and resisting authority. Before this, I say, the church of Rome was in some order, and the bishops were quietly

governed under Christian emperors, and were also defended by them. For example, Marcellus, Miltiades, and Sylvester, were under obedience to Constantine (A.D. 340); Siricius to Theodosius (A.D. 388); Gregory to Maurice (A.D. 600); Adrian and Leo to Charlemagne (A.D. 801); Paschal and Valentius to Louis the Pious (A.D. 830); Sergius II. to Lothaire (A.D. 840); Benedict III and John VIII to Louis, son of Lothaire (A.D. 856). But Hildebrand first began to spurn this obedience and subjection; and by his example, he taught all other bishops to do the same.

At length they brought to pass that it would be lawful for a few cardinals (contrary to ancient ordinances and decretal statutes) to choose whatever pope they liked, without any consent of the emperor at all. Before, it stood in the emperor's gift to give and to grant bishoprics, archbishoprics, benefices, and other ecclesiastical preferments within their own jurisdictions, to whomever they chose. Now the popes, through much wrestling, war, and contention, have extorted all that into their own hands. Indeed, they have plucked all the riches and power of the whole world. And not content with that, they have usurped and prevailed so much above emperors, that whereas before, no *pope* might be chosen without the confirmation of the *emperor*, so now no *emperor* may be elected without the confirmation of the *pope*. They have taken upon themselves more than princes, to place or displace emperors at their pleasure for every light cause; to put down or set up when and whom they pleased. For example, Frederic I, for holding the left stirrup of the pope's saddle, was persecuted almost to excommunication. This moves me to use more diligence here, in setting out the history, acts, and doings of Hildebrand, from whom — as their first patron and founder — sprang all this ambition and contention about the liberties and dominion of the Roman church.

First, I have partly declared how this Hildebrand behaved himself before he was pope. For even though he was not yet pope in name, yet he was then pope indeed, and he ruled the popes and all their doings as he liked. I have also expressed by what devices he had attempted to magnify and maintain false liberty against true authority, ever since his first coming to the court of Rome; what practices he wrought by councils; what factions and conspiracies he made in stirring up popes against emperors, striving for superiority; and what wars followed. Now let us see further the worthy virtues of this princely prelate, after he came to be pope, as they are described in the histories of several writers.

The Tragic History of Gregory VII, named Hildebrand.

Previously, the bishops of Rome had been elected by the voices and suffrages of all sorts and degrees of priests and clergy, as well as the nobility, people, and senate, all assembling together. And I find this election in force, if ratified by the Roman emperors, who had authority to call and assemble all these in councils, including bishops, as the case required. Under the authority and jurisdiction of these emperors in Germany, France, Italy, and through the whole dominion of Rome, all patriarchs, bishops, masters of churches and monasteries, were subject by the decree of councils, according to the old custom of our ancestors. The holy and ancient fathers, (as Christ with his disciples and apostles both taught and did) honored and esteemed their emperors as the supreme potentate next under God on earth. They were set up, ordained, elected, and crowned by God, above all other mortal men, and so they counted them, and called them their lords. They yielded tribute to them, and paid their subsidies, and also prayed every day for their life. Those who rebelled against them they regarded as rebels, and resisters against God's ordinance and Christian piety. The name of the emperor was of great majesty, and was accepted as given from God. Then these fathers of the church never intermeddled or entangled themselves with political

affairs of the commonwealth, much less occupy themselves in martial arms, and feats of chivalry. All their contention with other Christians was only in poverty and modesty, as to who would be the poorest and most modest among them. And the more humility that appeared in anyone, the higher opinion they had of him. They took this sharp two-edged sword given to the church of Christ, to save and not to kill; to quicken and not destroy; and they called it the *Sword of the Spirit*, which is the word of God, the life and the light of men, who revokes from death to life, making gods of men; immortal of mortal. They were far from throwing out any prince or king from his kingdom (however far out of the way he was, even an Arian) — or to curse him, or release his subjects from their oath and allegiance, to change and transfer kingdoms, to subvert empires, to pollute themselves with Christian blood, or to war with their Christian brethren for rule and principality. This was not their spirit and manner then, but rather they loved and obeyed their princes. And in return, princes also loved them like fathers and fellow-princes with them of the souls of men.

Marriage of Priests Forbidden by Hildebrand.

Now this Gregory VII, otherwise named Hildebrand, was the first of all others who, contemning the authority of the emperor, invaded the See of Rome, vaunting himself as having both the ecclesiastical and temporal sword committed to him by Christ, and that fulness of power was in his hand to bind and loose at his will. Thus he presumed to grasp both governments, to challenge the whole dominion, of both the eastern and western churches, yes, and all power to himself alone, admitting none as equal, much less superior, to him. He derogated from others, and arrogated to himself their due right and honor; he set at nought Caesars, kings, and emperors. He kept bishops and prelates in awe, like his underlings, suspending, and cursing, and cutting off their heads, stirring up strife and wars, sowing discord, making factions, releasing oaths, and defeating fidelity and due allegiance of subjects to their princes. Indeed, if he had offended or injured the emperor himself, yet notwithstanding, *he* ought to be feared, as he himself glories in an epistle, as one who could not err, and had received from Christ our Savior, and from Peter, the authority to bind and unbind at his will and pleasure. Priests in those days had wives openly and lawfully (no law forbade it) as it appears by the deed and writings of their chapter-seals and donations, which were given to temples and monasteries, in which their wives are also cited with them as a witness, and were called *presbyterissae* (priestesses). As for bishops, prelates, parsons of churches, governors of the clergy, masters of monasteries, and religious houses — all these were in those times in the emperor's appointment, to assign to whomever he would.

Now Gregory could not endure these two things, and for these two causes only came all his striving from his first beginning to abolish the marriage of priests, and to transfer imperial authority to the clergy. To this scope alone tended all his labor, as appeared before in the Council of Lateran, under Pope Nicholas; and also in the Council of Mantua, under Alexander, making priestly marriage to be heresy, and imperial authority to be simony. And what he previously went about doing by others, he now he practiced by himself, condemning ministers who were married, as Nicholaitans, and receiving any spiritual charge by secular persons as simony. He directed his letters to Henry the emperor, to dukes, princes, potentates, and tetrarchs — namely, to Berchtold, to Rudolph of Swabia (in Germany), to Whelpo, Adalberon, and to their wives; and also to bishops, archbishops, priests, and to all the people.

[113] A.D. 1074.

In these letters he denounces those who were married, as no priests, forbidding men to greet them, to talk, eat, or company with them, to pay them tithes, or to obey them if they

would not be obedient to him. Among others, he directed special letters to Otto, bishop of Constance, concerning this matter. But Otto perceiving the ungodly and unreasonable pretense of Hildebrand, would never separate from their wives those who were married, nor forbid those to marry who were unmarried. The following is the letter of Hildebrand sent to the bishop of Constance against priests' marriages: —

“Gregory, bishop, servant of servants of God, to the clergy and laity, both more and less, within the diocese of Constance, salvation and benediction. We have directed to our brother Otto, your bishop, our exhortatory letters in which we enjoined him, according to the necessity of our duty, by the apostolical authority, that he should utterly abolish out of his church the heresy of simony, and should also cause to be preached with all diligence, the chastity of priests. But neither moved with reverence for St. Peter's precept, nor with regard for his duty, he neglected to do these things to which we have so fatherly exhorted him. Thereby he incurs a double offense, not only of disobedience, but also of rebellion, in that he has gone and done clean contrary to our commandment (indeed, rather the commandment of blessed St. Peter). So that he has permitted his clergy not only those who had wives, not to put them away, but also those who had none, to take them. Whereupon, being truly informed and grieved with this, we have directed another letter to him, declaring the motion of our displeasure and indignation. In these letters we have also cited him to our council at Rome, to appear there and give account of his disobedience in the audience of the whole synod. And now, therefore, we thought it best to signify this to you (our dear children) by which in this behalf we might better provide for your health and salvation. For if your bishop continues so obstinately to repugn and resist our commandment, he is not fit to sit over you. Therefore, these shall be to command you, and all those who are obedient to God, and to blessed St. Peter, by our apostolical authority, that if your bishop persists in his obstinacy, you who are his subjects, hereafter give to him no service or obedience. For which we here discharge you before God and your souls. For if your bishop will act contrary to the decrees and apostolical injunctions, we — through the apostolical authority of St. Peter — discharge and absolve you from the band of your allegiance to him. So that if you are sworn to him, so long as he is a rebel against God and the apostolic seat, we loose you from the peril of your oath, so that you need not fear any danger in it,” etc.

In the council held at Rome, Hildebrand, with other bishops of Rome, then enacted, among many other things, these three especially. *First*, that no priest hereafter should marry. *Secondly*, that all those who were married should be divorced. *Thirdly*, that none hereafter should be admitted to the order of priesthood, except those who would swear perpetual celibacy, etc. This Council of Rome being ended, the act of Hildebrand concerning the single life of priests was proclaimed immediately, and published in all places, and strict commandment was given to bishops to execute the same. The following is the copy of his bull sent into Italy and Germany: —

“Gregory the pope, otherwise Hildebrand, the servant of the servants of God, sends the apostle's blessing to all within the kingdoms of Italy and Germany, who show true obedience to St. Peter. If there are any priests, deacons, and subdeacons, who will still remain in the sin of marriage, we forbid them the church's entrance, by the omnipotent power of God, and by the authority of St. Peter, till in time they amend and repent. But if they persevere in their sin, we charge that none of you presume to hear their service; for their blessing is turned into cursing, and their prayer into sin, as the Lord testifies to us by his prophets, ‘I will turn your blessing,’” etc.

The bishops of France being called upon daily by the pope's letters, were compelled to obey the decree of the council. But the rest of the clergy manfully and stoutly withstood the pope's decree and their bishops, and would not agree, and said that the council manifestly

opposed the word of God. And they said that the pope took from priests that which both God and nature had given them. And therefore, he was a heretic and the author of a wicked doctrine. He did not rule by the Spirit of God, but by Satan. They said the decree and act set forth was directly against the word of God and the saying of Christ, "Not all men can receive this saying." ^{Mat 19.11} It was against the sound doctrine of St. Paul, writing these words, "Concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord," etc. 1Cor 7. 25. Again, "Let them marry," 1Cor 7.9. And it was against the canons both of the apostles, and of the Nicene council. Moreover, it was against the course of nature, that men being separated from their wives, should be compelled to live as angels. And therefore, the bishop opened a pernicious window to immorality and vice. In short, they concluded that they would rather give up their benefices than forsake their lawful wives. And finally, if married priests could not please them, they ought to call down angels from heaven to serve the churches. But Hildebrand, unmoved either by honest reason, or the authority of holy Scripture, or the determination of the Nicene council, or an thing else, follows up on this matter and still calls upon the bishops, accusing them of negligence and threatening them with excommunication unless they cause the priests to obey his decree. Upon this threat a great number of bishops, for fear of the pope's tyranny, labored the matter with their priests by all means possible, to bereave them of their accustomed matrimony.

Among others, the archbishop of Mentz, perceiving this might produce no little trouble, talks with his clergy gently, admonishes them about the pope's mind and decree, and gives them half a year's respite to deliberate upon the matter; exhorting them diligently to show themselves obedient to the pope and to him. The time of deliberation expired, the archbishop assembles his clergy at Erpsford, and there requires them either to abjure all matrimony or to renounce their benefices. The clergy defend themselves against the decree with Scripture, with reason, with the acts of general councils, with examples of ancestors, and by strong arguments, declaring that the pope's decree is inconsistent with all of them, and that it should not take effect. But the archbishop said he was compelled by the pope, and could but execute what he was enjoined to do.

The clergy seeing that no reason, no prayer, no disputation would serve, consulted among themselves what was best to be done. Some counselled not to return to the synod. Some thought it good to return and throw out the archbishop from his see, and to punish him with death, so that by his example others might be warned never to attempt it again to the prejudice of the church and the rightful liberty of ministers. After this was signified to the archbishop by certain spies, to prevent the matter, he sent certain messengers to the priests as they were coming out, bidding them be of good hope, and they should have what would content their minds. So being thus persuaded, they came again to the council. The bishop promised he would do what he could to change the mind of the bishop of Rome, desiring them in the meantime to continue as they had done in their ministry. The next year Hildebrand, the soldier of Satan, sent his legate to the archbishop of Mentz, and assembled a council. There the archbishop again proposed the matter, commanding all the clergy, under pain of the pope's curse, either to renounce their wives or their livings. The clergy defended their cause again with great constancy. But when no defense would avail, but all went by tyranny, at last it burst into an uproar and tumult, where the legate and the archbishop barely escaped with their lives, and so the council broke up.

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By this schism and tumult the churches afterwards, in choosing their priests, would not send them to the bishops (the enemies and suppressors of matrimony) to be confirmed and

inducted, but elected them within themselves. And so they put them in their office without leave or knowledge of the bishops, who then agreed and were determined to admit no priests except those who would take an oath never to marry. And thus the oath and profession of single priesthood first came up. Notwithstanding, if other nations had followed in like manner the constancy and concord of those German ministers, then the devilish decree of this Hildebrand (or rather hell-brand), would have been frustrated. But the greediness of livings in weak priests made them yield their liberty to wicked tyranny. And thus much for the prohibition of matrimony.

Emperor Henry IV Excommunicated by Hildebrand.

Now let us proceed to the contention between Hildebrand and the emperor. But it will not be amiss first to say a little of the character of this pope, as we find it described in the epistles of Benno a cardinal, written to other cardinals of Rome. This Cardinal Benno lived at the same time as Hildebrand, who was thus described in one epistle of Benno to his brother cardinals as follows: —

“We have mentioned before of some colleges of the church of Rome which refused to hold communion with him, such as Leo, Benno, Ugobald, and John (all cardinals), and Peter, chancellor and cardinal. All were instituted before the time of Hildebrand. These three also — Natro, Innocent, and Leo — though consecrated by him, forsook him, cursing the detestable errors which he held. Also Theodine, whom he constituted arch-deacon, and other cardinals — John, surnamed Primicerius, and Peter Oblationarius — with all that belonged to them, except for one man. And when Hildebrand saw that also the bishops would forsake him, he called the laymen to himself, and made them his privy councillors. He thought thereby to separate the bishops, so that they would have no conference with the cardinals. Then he called the bishops together, and being guarded with bands of laymen, he forced the bishops — partly through fear, and partly through his menacing words — to swear that they would never oppose what he wished to have done, and that they would never defend the king’s quarrel, and that they would never favor nor obey any pope who might be instituted in his stead.

“As soon as Pope Alexander was dead, who died just before night the same day, contrary to the canons, Hildebrand was chosen pope by the laymen. But the cardinals did not subscribe to his election. For the canons prescribed (under an anathema or curse) that none should be chosen pope before the third day after the burial of his predecessor. But Hildebrand removed the cardinals from being members of the council. And then, contrary to the minds of the cardinals, and to the regular order of pronouncing judgment by the canons, he rashly excommunicated the emperor, although he had not been solemnly accused in any synod before. None of the cardinals would subscribe the sentence of excommunication.

”The emperor was often in the habit of going to St. Mary’s church to pray. Hildebrand, when he knew all the doings of the emperor, caused the place where the emperor was accustomed to pray, either standing or prostrate on his face, to be marked. And he hired an assassin to gather and lay together a heap of great stones directly over the place in the vault of the church, where the emperor would stand, so that in throwing them down upon his head, he might slay the emperor. As the assassin hastened, and was busy removing to the place a stone of great weight, it broke the plank on which it lay. And because the assassin was also standing on it, they fell together from the roof to the pavement of the church, by which he was killed. After the Romans learned of the matter, they fastened a rope to one of the feet of the assassin, and had him drawn through the streets of the city for three days, as an example to others.

“During Easter week, when the clergy and the people were assembled at St. Peter’s church to hear mass, after the gospel Hildebrand went into the pulpit as he was in his pontifical attire, and in the presence of the bishops, cardinals, senate, and people of Rome he openly preached

that the emperor should die before the feast of St. Peter next ensuing. Or at least that he would be so hurled from his kingdom, that he would not be able to gather more than six knights. He preached this to the bishops and cardinals, and to all who were present, crying out of the pulpit in these words, 'Never accept me for pope any more, but pluck me from the altar if this prophesy is not fulfilled by the appointed day.' About the same time he sought to kill the emperor by murderers; but God preserved the emperor.

"When the time had expired that Hildebrand named, and when the king was not dead, nor the power of the empire impaired, Hildebrand subtlety turned his words, saying that, 'he did not mean the body of the king, but his soul.'"

It would be too long and tedious here to recite all the detestable doings and diabolical practices of Hildebrand. There is a long narration in the epistles of cardinal Benno to the other cardinals. The reader may refer to these, who has either leisure to read or the mind to understand more of the abominable parts and devilish acts of this pope.

Now let us proceed to set forth the vexation which the virtuous and godly emperor sustained by that ungodly pontiff.

When Henry IV was encumbered with civil dissension in Germany, the time seemed very opportune to Hildebrand to work out his objects. His focus from the beginning was to advance the Romish seat above all other bishops, and also to press down the authority of the temporal princes, under the spiritual men of the church. The emperor, busied in his wars, had no leisure to attend to councils. But the pope proceeded to assemble his council. He even threatened to excommunicate the emperor, and depose him from his royal kingdom, unless he would renounce the right to award benefices and do penance. The council being ended, Guibert, archbishop of Ravenna, persuaded Centius to take the emperor's side against the pope. Biding his time in the temple of St. Mary, on Christmas day in the morning, he took the pope and locked him up in a strong tower. The next day the people of Rome hearing this, proceeded to help the pope, whom they loosed from prison, and then they besieged the house of Centius, and pulled it down to the ground. His family had their noses cut off, and were cast out of the city. Centius escaped, and fled to the emperor. The emperor being moved with the arrogant presumption of the proud prelate (Hildebrand), called a council at Worms. In this council, all the bishops not only of Saxony, but of the whole empire of Germany, agreed and concluded to depose Hildebrand, and that no obedience should hereafter be given to him. This being determined in the council, Roland was sent to Rome with the sentence. In the name of the council, he commanded the pope to resign his seat, and charged the cardinals to resort to the emperor for a new election of another pope. The following was the sentence of the **Council of Worms** against Pope Hildebrand:

"Because your first ingress and coming in has been spotted with so many perjuries, and also the church of God brought into no little danger through your abuse and newfangledness — moreover, because you have defamed your own life and conduct with so much and such great dishonesty, we see no little peril or slander to arise from it. Therefore the obedience which yet we never promised you, hereafter we utterly renounce, and never intend to give it to you. And as you have never accepted us as bishops (as you have openly reported of us) so neither will we hereafter accept you as apostolic."

The pope being outraged by this sentence, *First* he condemns it in his Council of Lateran with an excommunication. *Secondly*, he deprives Sigifrid, archbishop of Mentz, of his dignities and ecclesiastical livings, with all other bishops, abbots, and priests, as many as took the emperor's side. *Thirdly*, Hildebrand accuses Henry the emperor himself, depriving

him of his kingdom, and releasing all his subjects from their oath of allegiance in the following excommunicatory sentence against Henry the emperor.

[115] A.D. 1076-1080.

“O blessed St. Peter, prince of the apostles, bow down your ears I beseech you, and hear me your servant, whom you have brought up even from my infancy, and have delivered me until this day from the hands of the wicked, who hate and persecute me because of my faith in you. You are my witness, and also the blessed mother of Jesus Christ, and your brother St. Paul, fellow partner of your martyrdom, how I did not enter this function willingly, but enforced against my will — not that I take it as though a robbery, to lawfully ascend into this seat, but because that I would rather pass over my life like a pilgrim or private person, than to climb up to it for any fame or glory. I acknowledge (and worthily) ;that all this comes of your grace, and not of my merits, that this charge over Christian people, and this power of binding and loosing is committed to me. Therefore, trusting upon this assurance for the dignity and tuition of holy church in the name of God omnipotent, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I hereby depose Henry, the son of Henry, once the emperor, from his imperial seat and princely government, who has so boldly and presumptuously laid hands upon the church. And furthermore, all those who up to now have sworn to be his subjects, I release from their oath by which all subjects are bound to the allegiance of their princes. For it is fit and convenient that he should be void of dignity, who seeks to diminish the majesty of your church. Moreover, because he has contemned my admonitions tending to his health and the wealth of his people; and has separated himself from the fellowship of the church (which he studies to destroy through his seditions), I therefore bind him by virtue of excommunication, trusting and knowing most certainly, that you are Peter (in the rock of whom as in the true foundation) Christ our king has built his church.”

The emperor, thus assaulted with the pope’s censure, sends his letters through all nations to clear himself, declaring how wrongfully he was condemned. The princes of Germany partly fearing the pope, and partly rejoicing that an excuse was given to rebel against the emperor, assembled and consulted together. And so they concluded to elect another emperor, unless he would submit to and obtain pardon from the pope.

Here we may see the lamentable affections of the Germans in those days, to thus forsake such a valiant emperor, and to regard so much a vile bishop. But this was the ignorance and rudeness of the world then, for lack of better knowledge. The emperor, seeing the chief princes ready to forsake him, promised them with an oath, that if the pope would repair to Germany, Henry would ask forgiveness.

Upon this, the bishop of Treves was sent to Rome, to entreat the pope to come to Germany. The pope was content and entered into Germany, thinking to come to Augsburg; but in fear he retired to Canusium.

The Emperor’s Servile Submission to the Pope – 1077.

Henry (immediately coming out of Spires with his empress and his young son) resorted to Canusium. All his peers and nobles had left him for fear of the Pope’s curse, nor did any accompany him. Therefore the emperor, being not a little troubled (laying apart his regal ornaments) came barefoot with his empress and child to the gate of the city, where from morning to night (fasting all day) he most humbly desired absolution. Thus he continued for three days. At length an answer came, that the pope’s majesty had no leisure yet to speak with him. The emperor patiently and humbly waited outside the walls, with no little grievance and pain; for it was a sharp winter, and freezing with cold. At length it was granted, through the entreaty of Matilda the pope’s favorite, and of Arelaus earl of Sebaudia,

and the abbot of Cluny, that Henry should be admitted to the pope's presence. On the fourth day, now being admitted, he yields his crown to the pope, with all other imperial ornaments, and confessed himself unworthy of the empire if he should ever do hereafter against the pope, what he had done before, desiring to be absolved and forgiven for that time. The pope answered that he would neither forgive him, nor release the bond of his excommunication, except upon certain conditions.

First, to promise that he would be content to stand to the pope's arbitration, and to accept such penance as the pope enjoins him;

Also that he will be ready to appear in whatever place or time the pope appoints him.

Moreover, that being content to accept the pope as judge of his cause, he will answer to all objections and accusations laid against him, and that he will never seek any revenge in return.

Also that he will submit to the pope's mind and pleasure, whether he will have his kingdom restored or not.

Finally, that before his trial, he will neither use his kingly ornaments, scepters, or crown, nor usurp authority to govern, nor to exact any oath of allegiance from his subjects, etc.

These things being promised to the pope by an oath, and put in writing, the emperor was released from his excommunication. The pope with his cardinals vaunted and triumphed with no little pride, that they had so quailed the emperor, and brought him on his knees to ask forgiveness. Yet mistrusting themselves and what might befall them if fortune should turn, and God were to give the emperor a quieter kingdom; they study and consult secretly how to displace Henry from his kingdom. They determined to offer the empire to Rudolph of Swabia, a man of great nobility among the chief states of Germany. To better bring this purpose to pass, legates were sent from the pope, who would persuade all France, that Henry was rightfully excommunicated, and that they should give to the bishop of Rome their consent in choosing Rudolph to be emperor.

While this conspiracy was in hand, Henry was absent. In the meantime, Rudolph was elected emperor. Upon this, the bishop of Strasburg came to the emperor, certifying to him what was done. He mustered his men with expedition, marched forward to defend his right, and attempted battle against Rudolph. A great slaughter took place on both sides, but the victory was certain on neither part; so that both captains still claimed the empire. Their armies being refreshed, they soon had another conflict; but victory was again doubtful. Thus both captains being wearied in wars, that Romish beast, the pope, who was the cause of it all, sent his legates to call together a council in Germany, where it would be determined to whom the empire should belong.

But emperor Henry would not permit the legates to hold any council within Germany unless they first depose Rudolph. The pope hearing this, and seeing his purpose was so thwarted by the emperor, drew out another excommunication against him (A.D. 1080), and again deprived him of his kingdom.

Second Excommunication of Henry by Hildebrand – 1080.

“Blessed St. Peter, prince of the apostles, and you St. Paul also, the teacher of the Gentiles, give ear to me, I beseech you a little, and gently hear me, for you are the disciples and lovers of truth. The things that I will say are true. This matter I take in hand for truth's sake, that my brethren (whose salvation I seek) may more submissively obey me, and better understand how — trusting your defense (next to Christ, and his mother the immaculate Virgin) — I resist the wicked, and am ready to help the faithful. I did not enter this seat of my own accord, but much

against my will and with tears, for I accounted myself unworthy to occupy so high a throne. And this I say, not that I have chosen you, but you have chosen me, and have laid this great burden upon our shoulders. And now, whereas by your assignment, I have ascended up this hill, crying to the people and showing them their faults, and to the children of the church their iniquities; the members of Satan have risen up against me, and have laid hands together to seek my blood. For the kings of the earth have risen up against me, and the princes of this world, with whom certain of the clergy also have conspired against the Lord and against us his anointed, saying, "Let us break their bonds apart, and cast their cords away from us."

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"This they have done against me, to bring me either to death or to banishment. In their number is Henry, whom they call king, the son of Henry the emperor, who has lifted up so proudly his horns against the church of God, conspiring with various other bishops, Italians, French, and Germans. Your authority has prevailed up to now against his pride. Being broken rather than amended, he came to me in Cisalpina, made humble suit to me for pardon and absolution. Thinking there was true repentance in him, I received him again to favor, and restored him only to the communion from which he was excommunicated, but I did not restore him to his kingdom (from which he was worthily expelled in the synod of Rome), nor did I grant to him the rents and fruits of it (so that he might return to the faith again). And I did that for this purpose: that if he should defer to agree with certain of his neighbors whom he has always vexed, and to restore again the goods both of the church and otherwise, then he might be compelled to it by the censures of the church, and force of arms. Whereby diverse and sundry bishops and princes of Germany (whom he had long troubled) being helped by this opportunity, elected Rudolph their duke to be king in place of Henry, whom they had removed for his transgressions and dispatched from his empire. But Rudolph, first in this matter using a princely modesty and integrity, sent his messengers to me, declaring how he was constrained to take that regal government upon himself, even though he was not so desirous of it. But he would rather show himself obedient to us, than to the other who offered him the kingdom. Whatever our arbitration should be in this, he would be under obedience both to God and to us. And for more assurance of his obedience he has sent his own children here as pledges.

"Upon this Henry began to be angry, and first entreated us to restrain and inhibit Rudolph through the pain of our curse, from the usurpation of his kingdom. I answered I would see which of them had the best right and title to it, and so I sent our legates there to know the whole state of the matter. Thereupon I would decide between them, which had the true right. But Henry would not allow our legates to come to take up the matter, and slew many, both secular men and clergy, spoiling and profaning churches. And so by this means he has endangered himself in the bonds of excommunication. Therefore, trusting in the judgment and mercy of God, and in the support of the blessed virgin, and also upon your authority, I lay the sentence of curse upon the said Henry and all his adherents. And here again I take his regal government from him, charging and forbidding all Christian men who have been sworn to him, whom I discharge here of their oath, so that hereafter they will obey him in nothing, but take Rudolph as their king, who is elected by many princes of the province. For it is right and convenient that, just as Henry is deprived of his dignity and possession for his pride and stubbornness, so Rudolph being acceptable to all men for his virtue and devotion, is exalted to the imperial throne and dominion.

"Therefore, O you blessed princes of the apostles, grant this, and confirm with your authority what I have said, so that all men may understand, that if you have power to bind and loose in heaven, then you also have power on earth to give and take away empires, kingdoms, principalities, and whatever here on earth belongs to mortal men. For if you have power to judge in those matters which pertain to God, then what should we think you have of these

inferior and profane things? And if it is in your power to judge the angels, ruling over proud princes, then what will it suit you to do with their servants? Therefore let the kings understand by this example, and all other princes of the world, what you are able to do in heaven, and what you are with God — so that thereby they may fear to contemn the commandment of holy church. And now exercise this judgment quickly upon Henry, by which all men may see this son of iniquity fall from his kingdom, not by any chance, but by your provision and only work. Notwithstanding this, I would crave of you, that being brought to repentance through your intercession, he may yet in the day of judgment find favor and grace with the Lord.”

After this, Henry and Rudolph, to try the matter by the sword, contended together in battle. Henry, by the favor of God, and contrary to the judgment of Hildebrand, had the victory. Rudolph being severely wounded in the conflict, was taken out of the army, and carried to Hyperbolis, where he commanded the bishops and chief movers of his conspiracy to be brought before him. When they came, he lifted up his right hand in which he had received his deadly wound, and said, “This is the hand which gave the oath and sacrament of fidelity to Henry my prince, and which through your instigation so often has fought against him and fought in vain. Now go and perform your first oath and allegiance to your king; for I must go to my fathers.” And so he died. Thus the pope gave battle, but God gave the victory.

Council at Brixia condemns Hildebrand – 1083.

Henry, after his enemy was thus subdued, did not forget the injuries received from Hildebrand, by whom he was twice excommunicated and expelled from his kingdom. Therefore he called a council of the bishops of Italy, Lombardy, and Germany, at Brixia (A.D. 1083). There he cleared himself, and then accused Hildebrand of various crimes, such as usurper, perjured, necromancer, and sower of discord. He complained, moreover, of wrongs and injuries done by the bishop and church of Rome. His father, who was emperor before him, had installed many bishops by his assignment, without the election of any other. And now this pope, contrary to his oath and promise, thrust himself in without the will and knowledge of the one who was the emperor and chief magistrate. For in the time of his father, Henry III, this Hildebrand and others, bound themselves with an oath, that so long as the emperor and his son should live, they would neither themselves presume, nor allow any other to aspire to the papal seat, without the assent and approval of the emperors — which this Hildebrand, contrary to his oath, had now done. Therefore the council, with one agreement, condemned this Hildebrand, decreed that he should be deposed, and passed the following sentence against him.

“Because it is known that this bishop was not elected by God, but has intruded himself by fraud and money — who has subverted all ecclesiastical order — who has disturbed the government of the Christian empire — menacing death of body and soul against our catholic and peaceable king — who has set up and maintained a perjured king — sowing discord where there was concord— causing debate among friends — slanders and offenses among brethren — divorce and separation among the married (for he took away the marriage of priests) — and finally disquieting the peaceable state of ail quiet life:

“Therefore we here, in the name and by the authority of God, congregated together with the legates and nineteen bishops on this day of Pentecost, at Mentz, proceed in canonical judgment against Hildebrand — a most wicked man, preaching sacrilege and burning, maintaining perjury and murders, calling into question the catholic faith of the body and blood of the Lord, a follower of divination and dreams, a manifest necromancer, a sorcerer, and infected with an evil and heathen spirit, and therefore departed from the true faith — we judge him to be deposed and expelled. And unless, upon hearing this, he yields and departs the seat, he is to be perpetually condemned.”

This being enacted and sent to Rome, they elected Guibert, archbishop of Ravenna in place of Hildebrand, to govern the church of Rome, under the title of Clement III. But when Hildebrand would neither give up his hold, nor give way to Clement, the emperor gathered an army and came to Rome to depose him, and to place Clement. But Hildebrand sending to Matilda of Tuscany, who possessed great power and authority in Italy, required her, in remission of all her sins, to withstand Henry, and so she did. But Henry prevailed, and came to Rome. There he besieged the city all Lent long, and after Easter he got it. The Romans were compelled to open the gates to him. And so, coming to the temple of St. Peter, he places Clement in his papacy there. Hildebrand flees straight into Adrian's tower with his adherents. There, being beset all around, he sent for Robert Guiscard his friend, a Norman.

[117] A.D. 1033-1087.

In the meantime, while Robert collects his power, the abbot of Cluny, conferring with Gregory, exhorts him to crown Henry as emperor in Lateran. If he would do this, the other promises to induce Henry to depart with his army into Germany. The people of Rome likewise moved him to this. Gregory answered that he was content to do so, but on the condition that the emperor would submit himself to ask pardon to amend his fault and to promise obedience. The emperor did not agree to those conditions, and went to Senas, taking Clement the new pope with him.

Death of Hildebrand and William the Conqueror – 1087.

After the return of the emperor, Robert Guiscard, approaching with his soldiers, burst in at one of the gates, and pillaged the city. And not long after, he delivered Hildebrand out of his enemy's hands, and carried him away to Campania, where not long after he died in exile.

Antony writes that Hildebrand, as he lay dying, called one of his chief cardinals to him, bewailing to him his fault, and the disorder of his spiritual ministry in stirring up discord, war, and dissension. He thereupon desired the cardinal to go to the emperor, and ask his forgiveness, absolving him from the danger of excommunication — both him and all his partakers both quick and dead.

Thus the reader has the full history of Pope Gregory VII, called Hildebrand, which I have laid out more at large because from this pope sprang all the occasions of mischief, pomp, pride, presumption, and tyranny, which since that time have reigned in the cathedral church of the Romish clergy. Here is where the subjection of the temporal authority under spiritual jurisdiction first came; emperors who before were the clergy's masters, were now made their underlings. Here entered the suppression of priests' marriage. Moreover, here entered the authority of both the spiritual and secular swords into spiritual men's hands. So that Christian magistrates could do nothing in election, in giving bishoprics or benefices, in calling councils, in hearing and correcting the excesses of the clergy, but the pope alone must do it all. And finally, here entered the first example of persecuting emperors and kings with rebellion and excommunication.

Now we may return to the history of England. About the death of Pope Hildebrand, or not long after, followed the death of King William the Conqueror, in the year 1087, after he had reigned in England for twenty-one years and ten mouths.

By the life and acts of this king, what histories report of him may appear true — that he was wise but guileful; rich but covetous; a fair speaker but a great dissembler; glorious in victory and strong in arms, but rigorous in oppressing those whom he overcame; and he surpassed all others in imposing taxation. Insomuch, that he enrolled and numbered in his treasury

every hide of land and its owner; whatever fruit and revenues were derived by every lordship, every township, castle, village, field, river, and wood within the realm of England; how many parish churches, how many living cattle there were, what and how much every baron in the realm could spend; what fees were belonging to them; what wages were taken, etc. The tenor and contents of all of this still remains in rolls.

The king took such pleasure in hunting and in parks, that in the county of Southampton, for the space of thirty miles, he tore down churches and townships, and there he made the new forest. He loved his deer so dearly, it was as though he had been a father to them, making sharp laws for increasing them, under pain of losing both eyes. He was so hard to Englishmen, and so favorable to his own countrymen, that there was no English bishop remaining except Wolstan of Winchester. Being commanded by the king and Lanfranc to resign his staff — partly for inability, and partly for lack of the French tongue — he refused to resign it to anyone but the one who gave it. And he so went to the tomb of King Edward where he thought to resign it, but he was permitted to enjoy it still.

Among William's other conditions, this is noted, that he was so given to peace and quiet. So that any maiden laden with gold or silver, might pass through the whole realm without harm or resistance. In his time, William built two monasteries, one in England at Battle in Sussex, where he won the field against Harold — called the Abbey of Battle; and another besides, named Barmondsey, in his own country of Normandy.

A little earlier (page 111), mention was made of the bishop's see of Sherborne, transferred from there to Salisbury. The first bishop of Salisbury was Hirman, a Norman, who first began the new church and minster of Salisbury. After him succeeded Osmund, who finished the work, and endowed the house with great revenues and much good singing. Osmund first began the ordinary (hymn) which was called "*Secundum usum Sarum*" (A.D. 1076). I found the occasion for it in an old storybook entitled "*Eulogium*," as follows:

In the days of William the Conqueror a great contention chanced at Glastonbury, between Thurstan the abbot, and his convent. The cause of this contention was that Thurstan scorned their choir service, then called *the use of St. Gregory*, compelled his monks to use one of William, a monk of Fiscam in Normandy. Whereupon strife and contentions arose among them, first in words, then from words to blows, and after blows, then to armor. The abbot, with his armed guard, fell upon the monks, and drove them to the steps of the high altar, where two were slain, and eight wounded with arrows, swords, and pikes. The monks then driven to such a straight and narrow shift, were compelled to defend themselves with images and candlesticks, with which they wounded some of the soldiers. One monk (an aged man), instead of his shield, took an image of the crucifix in his arms for his defense. This image was wounded in the breast by one of the bowmen, whereby the monk was saved.

My story adds that the striker immediately fell mad, which seems to be some monkish addition. This matter being brought before the king, the abbot was sent back to Cadonum, and the monks, by the command of the king, were scattered in far countries. Thus Osmund, bishop of Salisbury, devised that ordinary which is called "*the use of Sarum*," and it was afterward received in a manner throughout England, Ireland, and Wales.

William Rufus – son of William the Conqueror.

William Rufus, the second son of William the Conqueror, began his reign (A.D. 1087), and reigned thirteen years. He was crowned at Westminster by Lanfranc. After his coronation, he released out of prison (at his father's request), several English lords who had been in custody. It happened that at the death of William the Conqueror, Robert, his eldest son, was

absent in Germany. Hearing of the death of his father, and how his younger brother William had taken the kingdom upon himself, he was greatly incensed. He laid his dukedom in pledge to his brother Henry,¹⁴³ and gathered an army, and landed at Hampton. But William Rufus sent fair and gentle words to him, promising subjection to him as the more worthy and elder brother. He only required that, as he was already in possession, he might enjoy it during his life. He would pay Robert 3000 marks yearly, with the condition that whichever of them outlived the other should enjoy the kingdom. The occasion of this variance between these brothers brought great dissension between the Norman lords and bishops, both in England and in Normandy. But Duke Robert, by the advice of his council, was content to consent to all that was desired, and returned shortly after to Normandy.

Rufus was so disliked by the Normans, that there was frequently dissension between him and his lords. All the Normans took sides against him, so that he was forced of necessity to draw the Englishmen to himself. Again, he was so covetous and so immeasurable in his taxes and takings, in selling benefices, abbeys, and bishoprics, that he was hated by all the Englishmen as well.

King William was an exceeding plunderer of church goods. After he had given the bishopric of Lincoln to his chancellor, Robert Blevet, he then began to cavil, avowing that the see of Lincoln belonged to the see of York, until the bishop of Lincoln pleased him with a great sum of money, viz., 5000 marks.

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And as nothing could come in those days without money, so Herbert Loginga, by paying the king a sum of money, was made Bishop of Thetford, just as he had paid a little before to be made abbot of Ramsay. He removed his see from Thetford to the city of Norwich, and there erected the cathedral church with the cloister, where he furnished the monks with sufficient living and rents from his own charges, besides the bishop's lands. Afterwards, repenting of his open and manifest simony, he went to Rome, where he resigned his bishopric into the pope's hands, but he immediately received it back again.

We heard a little before of the death of Pope Hildebrand, after whose time the emperors began to lose their authority in the pope's election, and in giving benefices. Next after Hildebrand came Pope Victor III, through the influence of Matilda of Tuscany and the Duke of Normandy (A.D. 1087), with the faction and retinue of Hildebrand. He likewise showed himself stout against the emperor. But God restrained his power. Victor being poisoned in his chalice (as some say) sat but one and a half years. However, the example of Hildebrand continued in those who followed him. And just as the kings of Israel followed in the steps of Jeroboam for the most part, till the time of their desolation, so the popes followed in the steps and proceedings of Hildebrand, their spiritual Jeroboam, in maintaining false worship and chiefly in upholding the dignity of that see against all rightful authority, and the lawful kingdom of Sion.

Next after Victor sat Urban II, by whom the acts of Hildebrand were confirmed, and also new decrees were enacted against Henry the emperor. At this time there were two popes at Rome, Urban II and Clement III, whom the emperor set up. Under Pope Urban II, the white monks of the Cistercian order came in. In this order, the monks lived by the labor of their hands; they paid no tithes nor offerings; they wore no furs nor lining; they wore red shoes,

¹⁴³ Henry was the youngest of three surviving sons, later to become Henry I of England. Matilda of Scotland would be his Queen Consort, by whom he had a daughter also named Matilda; she in turn would marry emperor Henry V.

white cowls, and black coats, all shorn, save a little circle round their heads; they only ate flesh in their journeys.

Urban held several councils. One was at Rome, where he excommunicated all those lay persons who gave investiture of any ecclesiastical benefice; and also all those of the clergy who degraded themselves so as to be the underlings or servants of lay persons in return for ecclesiastical benefices.

First Crusade under Urban II.

Urban held another council at Cleremont in France, where among other things, the bishop made an oration to the lords who were present there, concerning recovering the Holy Land from the Turks and Saracens. This cause first sprang from Peter, a monk or hermit, who having been in Jerusalem, and seeing the great misery of the Christians under the pagans, declared it to Pope Urban II. He was a great advocate for the crusade to all Christian princes. After the oration of Pope Urban II, 30,000 men (taking on them the sign of the cross), made preparation for that voyage. Their chiefs were Godfrey, duke of Loraine, with his two brothers, Eustace and Baldwin; the bishop of Pody; Bohemond, duke of Puell, and his nephew Tancred; Raymond, earl of St. Egidius; Robert, earl of Flanders, and Hugh le Grand, brother of Philip the French king. Joining them also was Robert Curthoise, duke of Normandy, with other noblemen, together with **Peter the hermit**, who was the chief cause of the undertaking.

At that time many of the noblemen laid their lands and lordships to mortgage, to assist in this crusade. For example, Godfrey, duke of Loraine, sold the dukedom of Bologna to the bishop of Eburone for a great sum of money. Also Robert Curthoise, duke of Normandy, pledged his dukedom to his brother William, king of England, for 10,000 pounds.

Thus the Christians who first passed over the Bosphorus,¹⁴⁴ under the guidance of Peter the hermit (a man more devout than expert in guiding an army), being trapped by their enemies, were slain and murdered in great numbers.

When the nobles and the whole army met together at Constantinople (where Alexius was emperor), passing over by the Hellespont on their way to Jerusalem, they took the cities of Nice, Eraclea, Tarsis, and subdued the country of Cicilia.

Antioch was besieged. In the ninth month of the siege, it was yielded to the Christians by Pyrrhus. About this time many strong battles were fought, to the great slaughter and desolation of the Saracens, and not without the loss of many Christian men. The government of this city was committed to Bohemond, duke of Puell, whose martial knighthood was frequently proved in the time of the siege. And not long after, Corbona, master of the Persian chivalry, was vanquished and slain, with a 100,000 infidels. In this defeat 15,000 camels were taken.

On the thirty-ninth day of the siege, Jerusalem was conquered by the Christians, and Robert, duke of Normandy, was elected its king. However, he refused it, hearing of the death of William Rufus, king of England, which is why he never succeeded well in all his affairs afterwards. Then Godfrey, captain of the Christian army, was proclaimed the first king of Jerusalem. At the taking of the city, such was the murder of men, that blood was congealed in the streets a foot thick. Then after Godfrey, Baldwin his brother reigned; and after him Baldwin II, his nephew. Then Gaufride, duke of Gaunt, and after him his son Gaufride, by whom many great battles were fought against the Saracens, and all the country thereabout

¹⁴⁴ [The Bosphorus strait connects the Mediterranean and Black Seas at Constantinople.](#)

was subdued, save Ascalon, etc. And thus much touching the voyage to the Holy Land. Now to our own land again.

About this time (as Matthew Paris writes ¹⁴⁵) the king of England did not much favor the See of Rome, because of the impudent and insatiable exactions which they required; nor would he allow any of his subjects to go to Rome.

By Pope Urban II. it was decreed,

- That no bishop should be made, but under the name and title of some certain place.
- That matins and hours of the day should be said every day.
- Also that every Saturday there should be said the mass of our lady, and all the Jews' sabbath should be turned to the service of our lady.
- That all those of the clergy who had wives should be deprived of their order.
- That it would be lawful for subjects to break their oath of allegiance with all those who were excommunicated by the pope.

Anselm of Canterbury.

In the year 1093, the king gave the archbishopric of Canterbury to Anselm, abbot of Beck in Normandy. Anselm was an Italian, born and brought up in the abbey of Beck in Normandy, where he was so strict a follower of virtue, that (as the story records) he wished to be without sin in hell, rather than with sin in heaven. This saying and wish (if it really was his) seems to proceed from a mind neither in accord with the words and understanding of the Scripture, nor sufficiently acquainted with the justification of a Christian man.

It is reported of Anselm, that he was so unwilling to take the archbishopric, that king William had much ado to thrust it upon him. And the king was so desirous to have Anselm take it, that the city of Canterbury, which was previously held by Lanfranc only at the king's good will and pleasure, he now gave absolutely to Anselm (A.D. 1093). But as desirous as the king then was to place Anselm there, he as much repented of it afterwards, seeking all possible means to defeat Anselm if he could. Such strife and contention arose between them for certain matters, but the first ground and occasion of it was this:

After Anselm had thus been elected to the see of Canterbury, and before he was fully consecrated, the king communicated to him that those lands and possessions of the church of Canterbury which the king had given and granted to his friends since the death of Lanfranc, they might still enjoy as their own lawful possessions. But Anselm would not agree to this. The king, being greatly displeased with Anselm, stopped his consecration till in the process of time, the king was forced by the daily complaints and desires of his people, and for lack of an archbishop to moderate the church, was constrained to admit him. Thus Anselm, taking his consecration, and doing his homage to the king, went to his see of Canterbury. Not long after, the king sailed over to Normandy. ¹⁴⁶

[119] A.D. 1087-1098.

Dispute between King Henry and Anselm.

¹⁴⁵ Matthew Paris was an English Benedictine monk and chronicler (c. 1200-1259). His extensive and detailed historical writings are significant sources for events in Europe between 1235 and 1259.

¹⁴⁶ William Rufus invaded Normandy in 1091 to reclaim territories from his brother Robert Curthose.

About this time there were two striving in Rome for the popedom, as mentioned before, Urban and Guibert. Some realms consented to the one, some to the other. England, taking part with the king, rather inclined to Guibert, called Clement III. But Anselm went with Urban II. After the king returned from Normandy, the archbishop came to him and asked leave to go to Rome to obtain his pall from Urban. When he could not at first obtain that leave, he appealed from the king to the pope. The king being justly displeased, charged the archbishop with breach of his fealty, contrary to his promise made that without his license he should not appeal either to Urban, or to any other pope. Anselm answered it was to be referred to some greater council, where it would be disputed whether this was breach of a man's allegiance to an earthly prince, if he appeals to the vicar of St. Peter. And here there was much arguing and contending on both sides. The king's reason proceeds thus:

"The custom," he says, "from my father's time, has been in England, that no person should appeal to the pope without the king's license. Whoever breaks the customs of the realm, violates the power and crown of the kingdom; and whoever violates and takes away my crown is a traitor and enemy against me," etc.

To this Anselm replied,

"The Lord, he says, easily discusses this question, briefly teaching what fidelity and allegiance we should give to the vicar of St. Peter, where he says, 'You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and to you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven,' etc. Again, he says generally to them all, 'Whoever hears you, hears Me; and whoever despises you, despises Me.' And in another place, 'Whoever touches you, touches the apple of My eye.' On the other side, he also shows what duty we owe to the king. 'Give to the emperor, what belongs to the emperor, and to God, what belongs to God.' Therefore, in those things which belong to God, I will yield, and must yield by good right and duty, my obedience to the vicar of St. Peter. And in those things which belong to the earthly dignities of my prince, I will not deny my faithful help and counsel so far as they can extend."

Thus you have the arguments of this prelate against his prince, to which perhaps was joined also some piece of a stubborn heart. But in this conclusion, none of his fellow bishops dared take Anselm's part, but were all against him— namely, William, bishop of Durham, to whom Anselm thus protests, saying, "Whoever would presume to prove it any breach of allegiance or fealty to his sovereign, if he appealed to the vicar of St. Peter, he was ready to answer at all times to the contrary." The bishop of Durham answered back, — "Whoever would not be ruled by reason, must be constrained with force." etc. The king, having on his side the agreement of the bishops, thought to deprive the archbishop of his pastoral see, and to expel him from the realm. But he could not perform this. For Anselm, as he was ready to depart the realm, said that whenever he went, he would take his office and authority with him, even if he took nothing else. Whereupon the matter was deferred till a future time. In the meanwhile, the king had privately sent two messengers to Pope Urban, to entreat him to send his pall to the king, for him to give it to whomever he chose. By this time, these messengers had returned, bringing with them from Rome, Galtar, bishop of Alban, the pope's legate, with the pall that was to be given to Anselm. This legate, first landing at Dover, came privately to the king (unknown to Anselm), declaring and promising that if Urban was received as pope in England, then whatever the king required to be obtained, the pope would ratify and confirm by his privilege from the apostolical see. The only exception was that when the king required of the legate that Anselm be removed, the legate would not agree to this, saying, "That was impossible for such a man as he, being lawfully called, to be expelled without manifest cause." In conclusion, although the king could not obtain his

request of the legate, yet the legate so managed with the king, that Urban was proclaimed lawful pope throughout the realm.

Then certain bishops were sent to Anselm, to influence his mind, declaring what charges and pains the king had taken in his behalf, to procure the pall for him from Rome, which otherwise would have stood him in great expense; and the king had done all this for his sake. Therefore it was but good reason and proper that, to gratify the king, he should yield something in return to his request. But even with all this Anselm, the stout archbishop, would not be moved. Therefore the king, seeing no other remedy, was compelled to grant to him the full right of his archbishopric. And so on the appointed day, when the pall was to be brought to Canterbury (being carried with all solemnity in a silver box), the archbishop, with a great concourse of people, came forth barefoot with his priestly vestments, to meet it. And so being brought in, the pall was laid upon the altar, while Anselm, spreading over his shoulders his popish vestments, proceeded to his popish mass. Thus agreement was made between the king and the bishop, so long as it would hold.

It happened the following year, that the king entered into Wales with his army, to subdue those who rebelled against him there. After his victory, the king returned home in triumph. He found Anselm coming to congratulate him on his success. But the king prevented him by messengers, laying to the bishop's charge both the small number and the evil service of the soldiers that were sent to him in his time of need. At hearing this, all the hopes of Anselm were dashed to the ground, for he thought to obtain and accomplish many great matters with the king, touching the state of the church. But here all turned contrary to his expectation; so that he was charged against the next court of parliament, to give his answer. But he avoided that by appealing to Rome. So he made his suit and interest with the king for license to go to the pope. The king answered,

“He should not go, nor was there any cause for him to do so; for he both knew him to be of so sound a life, and had done no such offense, for which he needed to crave absolution at Rome. Nor was there any such lack of science and knowledge, that he needed to borrow any counsel there. Insomuch,” says the king, “that I dare say Pope Urban has to give way to the wisdom of Anselm, rather than Anselm have any need of Urban. Therefore, as he has no cause to go, so I charge him to tarry. And if he continues in his stubbornness, I will assuredly seize his possessions, and convert his archbishopric into my coffers, because he transgresses and breaks fidelity and obedience, promising before to observe all the customs of my kingdom. Nor is it the fashion in this realm, that any of my nobles should go to Rome without my sending them. And therefore let him swear to me, that he will never for any grievance appeal hereafter to the See of Rome, or else let him leave my realm.”

Anselm thinking it best not to reply by any message, except by word of mouth, comes personally to the king, and places himself on the right hand of the prince, where he made his reply to the message sent to him by the king.

“Whereas you say I should not to go to Rome, either in regard to any trespass, or for an abundance of counsel and knowledge in me (although I grant neither of them to be true), yet whatever truth is in this, I refer it to the judgment of God. And whereas you say that I promised to keep and observe your customs, that I grant. But with a condition: to so far keep them, and to observe those of them which were consonant to the laws of God, and ruled with right and equity. Moreover, whereas you charge me with breach of my fidelity and allegiance, for that, contrary to your customs I appeal to the apostolic see (my reverence and duty to your sovereignty reserved). If another person would say it, it would be untrue.

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“For the fidelity and obedience that I owe to you, O king! I have it by the faith and fidelity of God, whose vicar St. Peter is, to whose seat I appeal. Further, whereas you require me to swear that for no cause shall I hereafter at any time appeal to Rome, I pronounce openly that a Christian prince has no right to require such an oath of his archbishop. For if I were to forswear St. Peter, I would deny Christ. And when at any time I deny Christ, then I will be content and ready to stand to the satisfaction of my transgression to you, for asking license to go to Rome. And perhaps when I am gone, the goods of the church will not so serve your temporal desires and commodities as you think.”

The king and his nobles were not a little incensed at these words of the bishop. He declared again, that “in his promise to observe the king’s customs, there was neither condition, nor any clause put in, either of God or right,” etc. At length the king, after many threatening words, told Anselm that he should carry nothing out of the realm with him. “Well,” said the bishop; “if I may neither have my horse nor any garments with me, then I will walk on foot.” And so he prepared to set out on his journey. All the other bishops forsook him; none would take his part. But they said if he came to them for counsel, he was wise enough, and did not need their counsel, being one who for his prudence knew best what was to be done; and also for his holiness, he was willing and able to follow what he knew. As for them, they neither dared nor would stand against the king their lord, whose favor they could not be without, for the peril that might happen both to themselves and their kindred.

Anselm coming to Rome, made his complaint to Pope Urban about the king. Having written to the king on behalf of Anselm, the pope’s letters and commands were despised. In the meantime, while the pope’s letters were sent to the king, Anselm was bid to wait around the pope for an answer back. Perceiving at length how little the king regarded the pope’s letters, he began to be weary of waiting. He desired of the pope that he might be discharged from his archepiscopal office. The pope would not consent to this, but added, “Touching these matters, we will sufficiently provide at the next council to be held at Bayonne, where I require you to be present.”

Articles in which the Greek Church differs from the Latin.

When the time for the council had come, Anselm among others was called for. First sitting outside the bishops, he was afterwards placed at the right foot of the pope. The same place was appointed by the decree of Pope Urban to the successors of the see of Canterbury in every general council. In this council there was great stir and much reasoning against the Grecians, concerning the matter and order of the proceeding of the Holy Spirit. Here it is to be noted that the Greek church had for a long time dissented from the Latin church in many points, numbering from twenty to twenty-nine Articles. I have collected twenty-five of them from the register of the church of Hereford, as follows:

1. They are not under the obedience of the church of Rome, because the church of Constantinople is not subject to, but equal to that church.
2. They hold that the bishop of the apostolic See of Rome does not have greater power than the four patriarchs. And whatever the pope does apart from their knowledge, or without their approval, is of no value.
3. They say whatever has been done or concluded since the Second General Council (held at Constantinople in 381) is of no authority, because from that time they account the Latins to be in error, and excluded from the holy church.

Bk. IV. Wm. the Conqueror to Wycliffe (1066-1364)

4. They hold that the eucharist consecrated by the church of Rome is not the very body of Christ. Also where the Romish church consecrates with unleavened bread, they consecrate with leavened bread.
5. They say that the Romish church errs in the words of baptism, by saying, "I baptize you;" when they should say, "Let this creature of God be baptized," etc.
6. They hold moreover that there is no purgatory, and that the suffrages of the church do not avail the dead, either to lessen the pain of those who be destined to hell, or to increase the glory of those who are ordained to salvation.
7. They hold that the souls departed out of the bodies (whether they have done good or evil) do not have their perfect pain or glory, but are reserved in a certain place till the day of judgment.
8. They condemn the church of Rome for mixing cold water in their sacrifice.
9. They condemn the church of Rome, for allowing women as well as priests to anoint children (when they baptize them) on both shoulders.
10. They call our bread *panagia*.
11. They blame the church of Rome for celebrating their mass on other days besides Sundays, and certain other appointed feasts.
12. Also the Greek church varies from the Latin in this: for they have neither cream nor oil, nor a sacrament of confirmation.
13. Nor do they use extreme unction or anointing in the manner of the Roman church, expounding the passage in St. James to be about *spiritual* infirmity, not *corporal* (bodily).
14. They enjoin no satisfaction for penance, but only that they show themselves to the priests, anointing them with simple oil as a token of the remission of sins.
15. They consecrate for the sick only on Maundy Thursday (the Thursday before Easter), keeping it for the whole year after, thinking it to be holier on that consecrated day than any other. Nor do they fast on any Saturday throughout the year, but only on Easter-eve.
16. They have only five orders — clerics, subdeacons, deacons, priests, and bishops; whereas the Roman church has nine orders following the alleged nine orders of angels.
17. Moreover. the Grecians in their orders make no vow of celibacy, alleging for them the fifth canon of Nice, requiring that priest or deacon will not forsake his wife for honesty' sake.
18. Every year the Grecians, on certain days, used to excommunicate the church of Rome, and all the Latins as heretics.
19. Among the Grecians, those are excommunicated who beat or strike a priest. Nor do their religious men live in such priestly celibacy as the Roman priests do.
20. Their emperor among them ordains patriarchs, bishops, and others of the clergy, and deposes the same at his pleasure; he also gives benefices to whom he chooses, and retains the fruits of those benefices as pleases him.
21. They blame the Latin church because they eat no flesh, eggs, and cheese on Fridays, and do eat flesh on Saturdays.
22. They hold it against the Latin men for celebrating outside the consecrated church, either in the house or in the field; and fasting on the Sabbath day; also for allowing dogs and other beasts to enter the church.

23. The Grecians used not to kneel in all their devotions, and not to the body of Christ, but one day in the whole year; saying and affirming that the Latins are goats and beasts, for they always prostrate themselves on the ground in their prayers.

24. The Grecians moreover do not permit the Latins to celebrate on their altars. And if it happens that any Latin priest celebrates on their altar, they wash the altar as a token of that abomination and false sacrifice. And they diligently observe that whenever they do celebrate, they do only one liturgy or mass on one altar or table that day.

25. They dissent from the church of Rome concerning the order and manner of the proceeding of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁷

These articles declare the difference between the eastern and western churches, between the Grecians and the Romans. Because I found them articulated and collected in an ancient and authentic register of the church of Hereford, I thought to insert them here, and leave them to the consideration of the reader.

[121] A.D. 1098-1100.

There are four other articles in the same register that expressed more concerning simony and usury, which are not forbidden by them. They also touch their emperor; and how they teach their children to hurt or damnify the Latin priests in all manner of ways. Because these articles do not seem truly collected out of their teachings, or are not greatly pertinent to the doctrine of religion, I pass them over, and return to our history again.

When some of these questions were moved in the council to be discussed — namely, concerning the proceeding of the Holy Spirit, and the use of leavened bread in the ministration of the Lord's supper — Anselm was called for. In handling and treating the articles in the council, he well pleased the pope and others about himself.

Then it follows in the history, after long debating and discussing these matters in the council, when they had published their judgment on them, and the pope had blasted out his thundering excommunications against the Grecians, and all who took their part — at length the complaints and accusation against the king of England were brought in. Pope Urban with his adherents was ready to proceed on this in excommunication against the king. But Anselm kneeling before the pope, after he had first accused his king, afterwards obtained for him that a longer time be given for further trial.

The Vacillating Conduct of the Pope.

Thus the council broke up, the pope returned again to Rome. He directed his letters to the king, commanding him that Anselm should be reinvested in his archbishopric, and all other possessions there pertaining. The king sent his answer to this by messengers. Coming to the pope, they declared in the king's behalf, that the king their master did not a little marvel about what induced the pope to command Anselm to be reinvested in his archbishopric, seeing the king plainly told him before, that if he departed England without his leave, the king would deprive him of it. "Well," said the pope, "have you no other matter against Anselm but this?" "No," they said.

"And have you taken all this travel," said the pope "to come here so far, to tell me this: that the primate of your country is dispossessed, because he has appealed to the apostolical see and judgment? Therefore, if you love your lord, speed home and tell him, if he would not be

¹⁴⁷ *The Filioque Controversy*. The Catholic Church teaches that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father "and the Son" (Filioque). The Eastern Orthodox Church teaches that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone.

excommunicated, that he quickly reinvest Anselm again to all that he had before. And lest I have you hanged for your labor, look to your time, and see that you bring me an answer back from him to this city, by the next council, the third week after Easter.”

The messenger or speaker being somewhat astonished at hearing of this tragic answer, and thinking yet to work out something for his king and master, he came secretly to the pope, saying that he would confer a certain mystery from this king privately with his holiness. What that was mystery, or what passed there from the king to the pope and the court of Rome, my author does not show. But that mystery was handled so cunningly, that with a full consent both of the pope and all the court of Rome, a longer delay was given, from Easter to Michaelmas (Sept. 29th), and the pope's choleric heat was so assuaged, that when the council came (which was held at St. Peter's church at Rome) even though great complaints were denounced against the king, yet such favor was found that he suffered no harm. The sentence of excommunication was pronounced only against those laypersons who gave investiture of churches, and those who were so invested. Also against those who consecrated them, or subjection themselves to laymen for ecclesiastical livings, as mentioned before.

The council being finished, the archbishop seeing the unsteadfastness of the pope (which pleased him but little) took his journey to Lyons, where he continued his abode a long time, till the death first of pope Urban, and then afterwards of the king.

Many things are differently recorded about King William, some to his commendation, and some to his blame. One of these, which some will ascribe to his hardiness, I rather ascribe to his rashness. Once, as the king was engaged in his sport of hunting, word suddenly came to him that Cenourona (a city in Normandy) was besieged. Without tarrying or advice, the king took the straight way toward the sea-side, sending to his lords that they should follow after. They advised him to stay till his people were assembled, but he would not be stayed, saying that those who loved him (he knew) would follow him shortly; and so he went and took ship. The shipmaster seeing the weather so dark and cloudy was afraid, and counselled the king to tarry till the wind would change, and the weather be more favorable. But the king persisted, and commanded him to make all the speed he could for his life, saying, “That he never heard that any king was ever drowned.” And so he passed the sea in safety, and came to Normandy.

In the thirteenth year of his reign, King William had in hand three bishoprics — Canterbury, Winchester, and Sarum — and also twelve abbeys in farm (paying rent). He was wounded to death as he was hunting in the New Forest, by a glancing arrow shot by a knight named Walter Tyrrel. He was carried speechless to Westminster, and there he was buried. His life was such that it is hard for a history that would tell the truth, to say whether William was more to be commended or reproved. Among other vices, there is especially to be rebuked in him immeasurable and unreasonable covetousness; so that he coveted to be every man's heir. I find in him this one example of a liberal and princely nature:

One time when a certain abbot of a place was dead, two monks of the same house came to his court. They had gathered much money, and tried to influence the king. They severally made large offers to be promoted to that dignity. There was also a third monk of the same place, who out of meekness and humility followed the other two, in order that whomever the king admitted for abbot, this third monk might attend him, and return with him as his chaplain. The king called before him the two monks severally, of whom the one outbid the other. As the king cast his eye aside, he espied that third monk standing by, supposing that his coming had also been for the same matter. Then the king called him, and asked what he would do, whether he would give more than his brethren had offered, to be appointed abbot. He answered that he

neither had nor would (if he could) offer money for it, by any such unlawful means. When the king had well-pondered this third Monk's answer, he said that he was best worthy to be the abbot, and to have the rule of so holy a charge. And so he gave him that benefice without taking any money.

Urban II, bishop of Rome, who (as said earlier) succeeded Victor, ruled the church of Rome for about twelve years. Among his other acts, he excommunicated Henry IV, the Holy Roman Emperor, as a man not very devoted to the See of Rome. Yet Henry was a worthy and victorious prince, in whom some vice might also perhaps be noted, yet none for which any prelate or minster of Christ ought to excite his subjects to rebel against public authority appointed by God. This Emperor Henry IV was excommunicated by four popes severally; by Hildebrand (1076), by Victor III (1080), by Urban II (1088), and by Paschal II (1101). His excommunication so worked in the ignorant and blind hearts of the people, that many nobles as well as the multitude, contrary to their sworn allegiance, rebelliously conspired against their king and emperor.

King Henry I of England.

Henry, the first of that name, the third son of William the Conqueror, succeeding his brother Rufus, began his reign in England (A.D. 1100). For his knowledge and science in the seven liberal arts, he was surnamed Clerk or Beauclerk. In him it may well appear how knowledge and learning greatly conduce to the government and administration of any realm or country. At the beginning, he reformed the state and condition of the clergy, released the grievous payments introduced against King Edward's laws, with amendments of them. He reformed the old and untrue measures, and made a measure according to the length of his arm. He greatly abhorred excesses of food and drinks; he reformed many abuses; and used to convince by counsel rather than by sword.

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Dispute between the King and Anselm.

In the second year of his reign, Robert his elder brother, duke of Normandy, was occupied in the Christian wars against the Turks. Being elected king of Jerusalem, but hearing of the death of William Rufus, he refused the kingdom of Jerusalem. Thus returning to Normandy, he made his preparation there, and came over to England with a great army to challenge the crown. But by mediation of the lords, it was agreed that Robert would have 3000 marks yearly during his lifetime, as it was promised him before by King Rufus his brother. And whichever of them outlived the other, would be the other's heir. In process of time, there was again a dispute between King Henry and Robert. At length, Robert was taken prisoner in the wars and brought over to England. He was put into the castle of Cardiff in Wales, where he continued a prisoner as long as he lived.

It has been already stated how Anselm went to the pope, and remained in Rome. After the death of King William, he was sent for again by King Henry, and he returned to England. He was at the council of the king at Westminster, where the king, in the presence of the lords, temporal as well as spiritual, ordained and invested two bishops, Roger bishop of Salisbury, and Roger bishop of Hereford.

After this council, Herbert bishop of Norwich had much ado with the priests of his diocese. For they would neither leave their wives, nor give up their benefices as had been decreed in the council. Whereupon he wrote to Anselm the archbishop for advice. Anselm required him to persuade the people of Norfolk and Suffolk, that as they professed Christianity, they

would subdue them as rebels against the church, and utterly drive both them and their wives out of the country, placing monks in their places.

Gerard, the archbishop of York also had much trouble in depriving the priests of his province of their wives, which he could hardly bring about with all his excommunications and thunderings.

About the end of the third year of the reign of King Henry, which was A.D. 1103, a variance arose between King Henry and Anselm. The occasion was this: you heard a little before how Henry had, by his own authority invested two bishops, one Roger, who was chancellor, bishop of Salisbury; and another was bishop of Hereford. Besides these he also invested others. And he took several other things upon himself in the ecclesiastical state, which he might lawfully do, God's word allowing it. But because he was restrained by the bishop of Rome, and forbidden to do so, Anselm was so enraged that he would neither consent to it, nor confirm them, nor communicate or be friendly with those whom the king had instituted and invested. But Anselm contemptuously called them abortives, or children of destruction, disdainfully rebuking the gentle king as a defiler of religion, and polluter of their holy ceremonies. The king was much displeased with this unseemly outrage, and so he required Gerard, the archbishop of York, to consecrate them. He did so without delay, except that William Gifford, to whom the king had given the bishopric of Winchester, refused to take his consecration by the hands of the bishop of York. For this cause the king deprived Gifford of both bishopric and goods, and banished him from the realm.

Moreover, the king required of Anselm, to do homage in the manner of his ancestors. It was also asked whether he would join with the king in giving investitures, as Lanfranc his predecessor had done. Anselm answered that he would not do homage to the king, alleging the pope's excommunication. In his Council of Rome a little before, the pope had given an open sentence of excommunication upon all those lay persons (whoever they might be) who would henceforth confer or give any spiritual promotions; also upon those who received such promotions at their hands, and those who consecrated any such receivers. Moreover, he pronounced all those accursed, who for benefices or other ecclesiastical promotions, would subject themselves under the homage or service of any great man, king, prince, duke, or earl, of the laity. For (the pope said) it was unseemly and a very execrable thing, that the hands which were converted into so high a working as was granted to no angel (that is, to create Jesus Christ in the mass, even Him who created all, and to offer Him up in the sight of the Father for the salvation of the whole world) should be brought to such slavery, as to be subject to those filthy hands which are polluted with robberies and bloodshed, etc. Anselm alleging this decree of Pope Urban, refused to do homage, fearing (as he said) the pope's excommunication.

In the meantime, while there was long disputation on both sides about investiture, the nobles of the realm contended that investings belonged to the king's dignity. Therefore the king called for Anselm again, requiring him either to do homage to him or else to leave his kingdom. Anselm replying back, required the pope's letters to be brought forth, and the matter to be decided according to the tenor of them. For now the messengers had returned from Rome with the pope's answer, altogether agreeing with Anselm. Then the king said, "What have I to do with pope's letters? I will not forego the liberties of my kingdom for any pope." Thus the contention continued between them. Then other ambassadors were sent again to the pope, so that he might somewhat qualify and moderate (or rather abolish) the sternness of the Roman decree mentioned before. Two monks, Baldwin and Alexander, were

sent on behalf of Anselm. On the king's behalf two bishops were sent, Robert bishop of Lichfield, and Herbert bishop of Norwich.

After the ambassadors (thus sent on both sides to Rome) had pleaded their causes, the pope was glad to gratify the king. Yet he was loath to grant his request, being against his own profit, and therefore he was more inclined to Anselm's side. He sent his letters to Anselm, signifying that he would not repeal the statutes of his holy fathers for one man's pleasure. Moreover, he charged him not only to *not* yield in the cause of investiture, but to constantly adhere to the decree of Pope Urban, etc. Besides this letter to Anselm, he directed another to the king himself. This letter the king suppressed and did not show, only declaring by word of mouth what the ambassadors had said to him from the pope. Which was this: that he permitted him the license of investing, on the condition that in other things he would execute the office of a good prince, etc. The contention still continuing, it was agreed by the king and his nobles, that Anselm should go to Rome himself. And much entreaty was made that he would take that journey in hand, in his own person, to present himself to the pope, for the peace of the church and of his country. And so at length, being persuaded, he went to Rome and spoke with the pope. He was also followed by the king's ambassador, William Warlwast, newly elected bishop of Exeter. There it was decreed that the bishops who were invested by the king, should be excommunicated. The absolution and satisfaction of them was left to Anselm, only the king being excepted, who had invested them.

Thus Anselm, leaving Rome, took his journey toward England. But the ambassador, pretending to go to St, Nicholas, remained behind, to see whether he could win the pope's mind to the king's purpose. When he saw he could not do this, he overtook Anselm by the way, at Placentia, and told him the king's pleasure.

"The king," he said, "gives to you in charge and commandment, that if you will come to England, and there behave yourself toward him, as your predecessor did toward his father, you will be received and retained in the realm accordingly. If not — you are wise enough to know what I mean, and what will follow."

And so with these words, parting from him, he returned again to the king. Anselm remained at Lyons a year and a half, and wrote to the king as follows:

"To his Reverend Lord Henry, King of England — Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, faithful Service, with Prayers.

"Although you understand by William Warlwast what we have done at Rome; yet I will shortly show you what belongs to me. When I came to Rome, I declared the cause for which I came to the lord pope.

[123] A.D. 1100-1106.

"He answered that he would not swerve from the statutes of his predecessors. Furthermore, he commanded me that I should have no fellowship with those who received investings of churches at your hands, after the knowledge of this prohibition, unless they would do penance, and forsake what they had received, without hope of recovery; also that I should not communicate with the other bishops who had consecrated such men, unless they would present themselves to the judgment of the apostolic see. The aforesaid William can be a witness of all these things if he will. This William, when we departed asunder (reckoning up in your behalf, the love and liberality which you always had towards me) warned me as your archbishop, that I should show myself such a one, that if I would come into England, I might be with you as my predecessor was with your father, and you might treat me with the same honor and liberty that your father treated my predecessor. By this I understand that unless I

show myself to be such a one, you would not have me come into England. For your love and liberality I thank you. But that I should be with you as my predecessor was with your father, I cannot do it. For I dare not do homage to you, nor communicate with those who take investings of churches at your hands, because of this inhibition made, I myself hearing it. Therefore I desire you to send me your pleasure in this if it pleases you, whether I may return into England (as I said) with your peace and the power of my office.”

In the meanwhile there was great debate, and many messengers were sent to and fro between the king, the archbishop, and the pope, but nothing was done. For the pope would not agree to the king, nor would the king condescend to the archbishop. At last the archbishop, seeing that he could by no means prevail against the king, thought to revenge himself by excommunication, and so he went about the same. The king, hearing of this by the Countess Adela his sister, desires her to come to him into Normandy, and bring Anselm with her. Up which (through the means of the countess) the king and Anselm were reconciled, and the archbishop was restored to his former possessions again. Only his return was deferred, because he would not communicate with those whom the king had invested. So the king took his passage over into England, and Anselm abided at the abbey of Becke.

In the meantime complaints were daily brought from England to Anselm, against the priests and canons who, in his absence, and contrary to the recent council held at London, received their wives into their houses again, and were permitted to do so by the king, with them paying him certain money for it. Anselm, the sore enemy of lawful marriage, grieved with this, addressed his letters to the king, requiring him to refrain from taking any more of such exactions, declaring and affirming moreover, that the offenses of all such ecclesiastical ministers must be corrected by the bishops, and not by laymen.

It was not long after that the king, as he had promised, went again to Normandy, and meeting with Anselm at the abbey of Becke, agreed with him in all those points which the archbishop required. As first, that all his churches, which before were made tributary to King William, should now remain free from all tribute; that he would require nothing of those churches or provinces while the seat was vacant. Moreover, concerning those priests and ministers who had given money to the king for the liberty to keep their wives, it was agreed that they should cease from all ecclesiastical functions for three years.

Thus Anselm, the stout champion of popery and superstition, after he had gained this victory over the king, for which he had fought so long, sailed into England with joy and triumph, having obtained all his popish requests. First he pounces like a lion on the married priests, contrary to the word of God, and divorces and punishes by man's authority, those whom the Eternal and Almighty God had coupled. Next, he looks to those who held any church by farm (leased) under the king. Likewise, he proceeds with his full pontifical authority against simony and against those who married within the seventh degree.

Shortly after, as King Henry had finished his war in Normandy, he returned again with victory into England, about the sixth year of his reign. Anselm, now archbishop of Canterbury (by the permission of the king), assembled a great council of the clergy and prelates of England at Westminster in London. In this (by the bishop of Rome's authority) he so worked with the king, that at length (though not without great difficulty) it was newly confirmed and enacted that no temporal man after that day would make investiture with cross or with ring, or with pastoral hook. In this council various injunctions were given to priests and deacons. Because we are mentioning here the synodal acts concluded in the time of Anselm, I place them all together here, taking them from Malmesbury and other authors.

Bk. IV. Wm. the Conqueror to Wycliffe (1066-1364)

The first thing decreed by Anselm in his synodal councils, touched the fault of simony, by which many bishops and abbots (as mentioned before) were deposed at the time. And laymen were forbidden to confer any ecclesiastical promotion.

Also it was decreed that no bishop would bear any office in secular men's business or meetings: and that those should not go apparelled as laymen did, but should have their vestures decent and appropriate for religious persons. And that they should never go in any places without someone to bear witness of their conduct.

That no archdeacons should be let out to farm.

That no archdeacon should be under the degree of a deacon.

That no archdeacon, priest, deacon, sub-deacon, collegian, or canon, should from that time marry, nor keep his wife if he was already married.

That every sub-deacon, being under the degree of a canon, marrying a wife after a profession of celibacy, should be subject to the same rule.

That any priest who did not put away his wife would be reputed to be unlawful, and may not say mass, and if he said mass, he should not be heard.

That none should be admitted to orders from that time forward, from the degree of a sub-deacon, unless he professed celibacy.

That priests' sons should not claim the benefices of their fathers by heritage, as the custom had always been before.

That no spiritual person should sit in any secular office, so as to be procurators or judges of blood.

That priests should not resort to taverns or banquets, nor sit drinking by the fireside.

That the garments of priests should be of one color, and that their shoes should be decent.

Besides all these synodal acts published by Anselm, with others which we omit, he also directed other new injunctions to the *priests*.

That they and their wives should never meet in one house, nor dwell in their territories.

That the priests, deacons, and sub-deacons, should keep no female in their house unless they were their next kin.

That those who had separated themselves from the society of their wives, and yet for some cause had to communicate with them, might do so if it were out of doors, and before two or three witnesses.

That if any of them should be accused by two or three witnesses, and could not clear himself again by six able men of his own order if he is a priest; or if he be a deacon, by four; or, if he is a sub-deacon, by two; then he should be judged a transgressor of the statutes, deprived of his benefice, made infamous, or be put to open reproach by all men.

That any who rebelled, and still held his wife in contempt of this new statute, and presumed to say mass, upon the eighth day after (if he did not make due satisfaction) should be solemnly excommunicated.

That all archdeacons and deacons should be straitly sworn not to wink or dissemble at their meetings, nor to carry money with them. And if they would not be sworn to this, then they were to lose their offices without recovery.

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That those priests who forsook their wives, and were still willing to serve and remain in their holy order, must first cease forty days from their ministration, setting vicars to serve for them in the meantime, and taking such penance upon themselves, as might be enjoined by their bishop.

LETTERS OF POPE PASCHAL AND ARCHBISHOP ANSELM.

Thus you have heard of the life and doings of Anselm, how superstitious he was in his religion, how stubborn against his prince, what occasions for war and discord he ministered by his complaints (if they had been taken) — what zeal without right knowledge, what fervency without cause he pretended, and what pains without profit he took. If he had bestowed that time and labor in preaching Christ at home to his flock, which he took in going to Rome to complain about his country, in my mind he would have been better occupied. Moreover, you have heard what violent and tyrannical injunctions he set forth concerning investiture and other things; but especially against the lawful and godly marriage of priests. It may appear what a vehement adversary he was in this matter, by these extracts from his letters, which we annex here as follows: —

A Letter of Anselm.

*Anselm, Archbishop; to his Brethren and Dearest Sons
the Lord Prior and others at Canterbury.*

“As concerning priests, of whom the king commanded that they should have both their churches and their wives as they had in the time of his father, and of Lanfranc archbishop — both because the king has revested and reseized the whole archbishopric, and because so cursed a marriage was forbidden in a council in the time of his father and of the said archbishop — I boldly command by the authority which I have by my archbishopric, not only within my archbishopric but also throughout England, that all priests who keep wives, shall be deprived of their churches and ecclesiastical benefices.”

A Letter of Pope Paschal to Anselm.

*Paschal, Bishop, Servant of God's Servants; to his Reverend Brother Anselm,
Archbishop of Canterbury, greeting and apostolical blessing.*

“We believe your brotherhood is not ignorant of what is decreed in the Romish church concerning priests' children. But because there is so great a multitude of such within the realm of England, that almost the greater and better part of the clerics are reckoned to be on this side, we therefore commit this dispensation to your care. For we grant these to be promoted to holy offices because of the need at this time, and for the profit of the church (such as learning and life commends among you) so that notwithstanding, the prejudice of the ecclesiastical decree hereafter be heeded,” etc.

Another Letter of Anselm.

*Anselm, Archbishop; to the Rev. Gudulph, Bishop; and to Arnulph Prior;
and to William, Archdeacon of Canterbury; and to all in his Diocese, greeting.*

“William, our archdeacon, has written to me, that some priests who are under his custody (taking back their wives who were forbidden) have fallen into the error from which they were drawn by wholesome counsel and commandment. When the archdeacon would amend this thing, they utterly despised with wicked pride his warning and worthy commandment to be received. Then he, calling together many religious men and obedient priests, worthily

excommunicated the proud and disobedient, who despised the curse, and were not afraid to defile the holy ministry, as much as it lay in them to do so," etc.

And thus much concerning Anselm archbishop of Canterbury; whose stout example gave no little courage to Thurstan ¹⁴⁸ and Becket, his successors, and others who followed after, to do the same against their kings and princes, as it will appear hereafter by the grace of Christ.

About the same time and year when King Henry began to reign, Pope Paschal II entered his papacy, succeeding Urban II (about A.D. 1100). He did not swerve at all from the steps of Hildebrand his superior. About the same time (A.D. 1101), the bishop of Florence began to teach and preach of antichrist, who was then to be born and be manifest, as the historian Sabellicus testifies. Whereupon Paschal, assembling a council, put to silence that bishop, and condemned his books. In this council at Trecas, priests who were married were condemned as Nicolaitans.

It was sufficiently declared before concerning the excommunication and other troubles that Hildebrand wrought against Emperor Henry IV. Paschal renewed this excommunication against Henry. And not only that, he also convened the princes of Germany in a general assembly, and set up the emperor's own son against him. This caused the bishops of Mentz, Cologne, and Worms to deprive him of his imperial crown, and to place his son, Henry V, in his father's kingdom. So coming to the place at Hilgeshem, they first required from him his diadem, his purple, his ring, and other ornaments pertaining to the crown. The emperor demanded the cause, being then excommunicate and void of friends. They pretended it was for selling bishoprics, abbacies, and other ecclesiastical dignities for money. They also alleged the pope's pleasure and that of other princes. Then he inquired first of the bishop of Mentz (and likewise of the other two, whom he had preferred to their bishoprics before) asking them in order, if he had received one penny from them for promoting them to their dignities. This they could not deny to be so. "Well," (he says) "and do you repay me with this treatment?" And with many other words of exhortation he admonished them to remember their oath and allegiance to their prince. But the perjured prelates, neither reverencing his majesty, nor moved with his benefits, nor regarding their fidelity, did not cease for all this. But first they plucked from him (sitting in his throne) his imperial crown, then disvestured him, taking from him his purple and his scepter. The good emperor, being left desolate and in confusion, said to them: "Let God see and judge." Thus leaving him, they went to his son to confirm him in his kingdom, and made him drive his father out. In the end, being utterly dispossessed of his kingdom, the king was brought to such distress, that coming to Spire, he begged of the bishop there, whom he had done much for before, to have a prebend (stipend) in the church. And as he had some skill in his book, he desired to serve in our lady's choir. Yet he could not obtain so much at the bishop's hand, who swore by our lady that he would have nothing there. Thus the woeful emperor came to Leodium, and there he died for sorrow, after he had reigned fifty years.

After the decease of this emperor, his son Henry V. reigned for twenty years. Coming to Rome to receive his crown from the pope, he could not obtain it before he would fully assent to have this ratified: that no emperor should have any thing to do with the election of the Roman bishops or with other bishoprics. Soon after, however, the emperor prevailed against the pope, and compelled him to agree to restore to him his right in the election of the pope and other bishops. But as soon as the emperor had returned again to Germany, the pope

¹⁴⁸ Thurstan or Turstin of Bayeux (c. 1070-1140) was Archbishop of York. He served kings William II and Henry I of England before his election to the see of York in 1114.

immediately called a synod, and not only revoked all that he had agreed to before, but he also excommunicated Henry, as he had done to his father before him.

The emperor seeing no end of these conflicts (unless he would yield to the pope) was obliged to give over, and forego his privilege, agreeing not to meddle with matters pertaining to the pope's election, nor with investing, nor other such things belonging to the church and churchmen. And thus the peace between them was concluded, and proclaimed to no small rejoicing both the armies then lying by Worms, near the river Rhine.

[125] A.D. 1109-1126.

After the death of Paschal (A.D. 1118), Pope Gelasius succeeded him, chosen by the cardinals, but without the consent of the emperor, whereupon there rose no little variance in Rome. At length another pope was set up by the emperor, called Gregory. Gelasius was driven away into France, and there he died. After him came Calixtus II, chosen likewise by a few cardinals, without the voice of the emperor, who, coming up to Rome to enjoy his seat, first sent his legate into Germany to excommunicate the Emperor Henry; who then, having diverse conflicts with his fellow Pope Gregory, at length drove him out of Rome.

In conclusion, the emperor being overcome, and fearing the dangerous thunderbolt of his curse, was obliged to condescend to the unreasonable conditions of the pope. First, to ratify his election, although the other pope was yet alive. Secondly, that he should resign up his right and title in matters pertaining to the election of the pope, and investiture of bishops.

This being done and granted, and the writings set up in the church of Lateran, as a triumph over the emperor, the pope went after Gregory his rival pope, who was then in a town called Sutrium; which being besieged and taken, Gregory also was taken. Calixtus the pope setting him upon a camel (his face to the camel's tail), brought him so through the streets of Rome, holding the tail in his hand instead of a bridle; and afterwards being shorn, he was thrust into a monastery.

The same Calixtus, holding a general council at Rheims, decreed that priests, deacons, and sub-deacons should put away their wives; and whoever was found to keep his wife should be deprived of his benefice, and all other ecclesiastical livings.

The Two Metropolitans Contend About The Primacy.

After the death of Anselm (A.D. 1109), the church of Canterbury stood empty for five years; and the goods of the church went to the king's use. When he was asked to appoint a pastor, the king's answer was that as his father and brother had been accustomed to set the best tried and approved men in that see, he might do the same; so he took more time. And he delayed the time, while he filled his coffers with the riches of that benefice.

After this (A.D. 1115), Rudolph, bishop of Rochester (an Englishman), was promoted to be archbishop of Canterbury; and Thurstan, the king's chaplain, was elected archbishop of York. Being content to receive his benediction or consecration from the see of Canterbury, and yet, because he refused to make his profession of obedience to that see, Thurstan was deprived of his dignity (office) by the king.

Then (by the instigation of certain of his clerics at York) Thurstan journeyed to Rome to make his complaint to pope Paschal. He brought back with him a letter from the pope to the king, in which among other words, it contained the following:

“We hear and understand, that the archbishop elect of the church of York (a discreet and industrious man) is sequestered from the church of York, which stands against both divine

justice and the institution of holy fathers. Our purpose is that neither the church of Canterbury should be impaired, nor again that the church of York should suffer any prejudice, but that the same constitution which was by blessed Gregory (the apostle of the English nation) set and decreed between those two churches, should still remain inviolate in force and effect.

Therefore, as touching the foresaid elect archbishop, let him be received back by all means, as is right and proper to his church. And if there is any question between the foresaid churches, let it be handled and decided in your presence, both parties there being present.”

On the occasion of this letter, a solemn assembly was appointed at Salisbury, to hear this controversy. The variance between these two prelates increased more and more. Rudolph, archbishop of Canterbury, in no case would yield or condescend to lay on hands for Thurstan unless he made his profession of obedience. Thurstan said again that he would willingly receive and embrace Rudolph’s benediction; but he would not agree to the profession of his subjection. Then the king signified to Thurstan, that without his subjection and professed obedience to the archbishop of Canterbury, he would not enjoy the archbishopric of York. Upon this, Thurstan renounced his archbishopric, promising moreover to make no more claim to it, nor to molest those who should enjoy it.

Shortly after this, it happened that pope Paschal died (A.D. 1118). After him, as related above, succeeded pope Gelasius, who did not live more than a year, and died in France. The cardinals (who then followed Pope Gelasius to Cluny) created another pope of their own choosing, whom they called Calixtus II. The other cardinals who were at Rome chose another pope called Gregory. There was much stir in the Christian world about these two rival popes. Calixtus remained in France, and called a general council at Rheims. Thurstan the archbishop of York desired permission from the king to go to the council, purposing to open the cause of his church there. He first promised the king that he would attempt nothing that would be prejudicial to the church of Canterbury. In the meantime, the king had sent secret word to the pope, by Rudolph and other proctors, that he would in no case consecrate Thurstan. Yet, notwithstanding the faithful promise of the pope made to the king, the pope was inclined to consecrate him, and gave him the pall. He required of the king that he would license Thurstan to return with favor into his realm. But the king utterly refused, unless he would profess subjection to the church of Canterbury, as his predecessors had done before him. Thurstan excused himself from his oath which he had made to the king before. To this the pope replied that, by his apostolical authority, he would easily dispense with that promise or oath. Then the king said that he would consult his council, and send an answer. His answer was this, “That for the love and request of the pope, he was content that Thurstan should re-enter his realm, and quietly enjoy his prelateship on this condition: that he would profess his subjection to the church of Canterbury.”

The following year (A.D. 1120), Pope Calixtus directed his letters for Thurstan to the king, and to Rudolph archbishop of Canterbury. In this epistle, by his full apostolical power, he interdicts ¹⁴⁹ both the church of Canterbury and the church of York, with all the parish churches within those cities, from the burial of the dead, also from all divine service, except for the baptizing of children, and absolution of those who are dying, *unless* within a month after the receipt of the letter, Thurstan (without any exaction of subjection) was received and admitted to the see of York; and he also said that the king would be excommunicated unless he consented to this. Whereupon, for fear of the pope’s curse, Thurstan was immediately sent for and reconciled to the king, and was placed quietly in his archepiscopal see of York.

¹⁴⁹ *Interdiction*: a papal decree prohibiting the administration of the sacraments within a political region.

It followed not long after (within two years) that Rudolph archbishop of Canterbury died. William de Turbine succeeded him in his see. About this time (the twenty-seventh year of the king's reign, or a little before), king Henry called a council at London, where the spiritual leaders of England consented to the punishment of married priests. By reason of this, the priests, paying a certain fine to the king, were allowed to retain their wives, by which the king gathered no small sum of money (Rog. Hoved. Guliel. Gisburnesis).

Matilda (or Maud),¹⁵⁰ daughter of king Henry I, was married to emperor Henry V. After the emperor's decease (A.D. 1125) she returned with the imperial crown, to her father in Normandy, bringing with her a relic, the hand of St. James. For the joy of obtaining this relic, the king built the abbey of Reading, where the hand was deposited. Matilda was received by the council as next heir to the king, her father, for lack of male issue. Soon after, she married Geoffrey Plantagenet, Earl of Anjou, from whom Henry II would be born, king of England after Stephen (as explained below).

After Calixtus, succeeded Pope Honorius II, notwithstanding that the cardinals had elected another. Yet by means of certain citizens, he obtained the papacy (A.D. 1125).

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About the second year of his induction, a certain legate of his called John Cremensis was sent to England. This legate came with the pope's letters. After he had refreshed himself in the bishops' houses and among the abbots, at length he resorted to London, where he assembled the whole clergy together. He inquired concerning priests' wives, and thereupon he made a statute in the synod of London in this tenor:

“To priests, deacons, subdeacons, and canons, we utterly inhibit by apostolical authority, all manner of society and conversation with all kinds of women, except their mother, sister, or aunt, or those from whom no suspicion can arise. And whoever is found to violate this decree, being convicted of it, shall thereby sustain the loss of all that he has by his order.”

But see how God works against such ungodly proceedings. It happened that the same cardinal was found to be guilty of gross vice, even though he had so strictly given out his precepts the day before. As Matthew Paris writes, this was to no little slander and shame of the whole clergy.

After Honorius succeeded Pope Innocent II (A.D. 1130). But it was with him, as it had been with his predecessors before him. That at every change of popes new troubles came. And very commonly when a pope was elected, someone else was set up as a rival against him (sometimes two or even three popes together). For after he was chosen, the Romans elected another pope, named Anacletus. There was much trouble and great conflicts between these two popes.

About this time (A.D. 1135), King Henry I was in Normandy. By a fall from his horse, as some say, or a by a surfeit in eating lampreys (eels), as others say, he fell sick and died. He had reigned for over thirty-five years. For his heirs, he left his daughter, the empress Matilda, with her young son Henry, to succeed after him. All the prelates and nobility of the realm were sworn to her. But contrary to their oath made to her, in the presence of her church father William archbishop of Canterbury, and the nobles of the realm, they crowned

¹⁵⁰ [Empress Matilda's mother was Matilda of Scotland \(christened Edith\). She took the name Matilda upon marrying Henry, to placate the Normans; for she had then become the Duchess of Normandy. She died in 1118.](#)

Stephen, earl of Boulogne, on St. Stephen's day in Christmas week. Stephen was the nephew of Henry I, by his sister Adela.

King Stephen.

Thus, when king Stephen, contrary to his oath, had taken the crown upon himself, he swore before the lords at Oxford, that he would not hold the benefices that were vacant, and that he would remit the *dane-gilt*, with many other things, which afterwards he little fulfilled. As he dreaded the coming of the empress, he gave license to each of his lords, to build strong castles or fortresses upon their own ground. All his reign he was torn with wars, especially with David king of the Scots, with whom at length he made peace, however. Yet the Scottish king would not pay him homage, even though Henry, David's son, paid homage to king Stephen. But repenting of this, David entered into Northumberland with a great army, and burnt and slew the people in a most cruel manner, neither sparing man, woman, or child. The children they tossed on spear points, and laying the priests upon the altars, they mangled and cut them all to pieces, in a most terrible manner.¹⁵¹ But by the valor of the English lords and soldiers, and through means of Thurstan, archbishop of York, they were met and defeated, and a great number of them were slain. David their king was constrained to give his son Henry as hostage, for surety of peace. In the meantime, king Stephen was occupied in the South countries, besieging various castles of bishops and other lords. He took them by force, and fortified them with his knights and servants, to withstand the empress Matilda, of whose coming he was ever afraid.

About the sixth year of his reign, the empress came into England from Normandy, and with the aid of Robert, Earl of Gloucester, and Ranulph of Chester, she made war upon king Stephen. In the end, the king's party was chased, and he himself was taken prisoner and sent to Bristol, there to be kept in close confinement.

After this battle the queen. King Stephen's wife, made great entreaty to the empress and her council, to have the king released and put in to some monastery; but she could not obtain it. Also, the Londoners made great suit to the empress to have Saint Edward's laws back, and not the laws of her father, which were stricter and stranger to them than the other. When they could not obtain this request from her and her council, the citizens of London, being discontented, would have taken the empress. But she fled privately from London to Oxford. Then the Kentish-men and Londoners, taking the king's side, joined battle against the empress. Robert, earl of Gloucester and illegitimate brother to the empress, was taken. And so by exchange, both the King and Robert the Earl were released from prison. Then Stephen without delay gathered a strong army, pursued Matilda (or Maud) with her partisans, besieging them in the castle of Oxford. During the siege a great snow fell, and the frost was so hard that a man heavily-burdened might pass over the water. Upon this, the empress arranged with her friends and retinue to clothe themselves in white sheets, and issue out by a posterngate.¹⁵² They went upon the ice over the Thames, and so escaped to Wallingford. After this, the king gained the castle, but when he did not find the empress, he was much displeased. He pursued the empress and her company so hard, that at last he caused them to flee the realm, which was the sixth year of his reign.

¹⁵¹ The Battle of the Standard (or of Northallerton), took place Aug. 22, 1138 on Cowton Moor near Yorkshire. English forces under William of Aumale repelled a Scottish army led by King David I of Scotland.

¹⁵² A postern gate is a secondary door or gate, often located in a concealed or less exposed area of a fortification such as a city wall or a castle curtain wall.

The second year after this, which was the eighth of his reign, there was a parliament at London, to which all the bishops of the realm resorted. There they denounced the king as accursed, and all those with him who did any hurt to the church, or to any minister of it. Upon this the king began somewhat to amend his proceedings for a time. But afterwards he was as bad as before. The empress having fled the realm, returned to Normandy and to her husband, Geoffrey Plantagenet. After he had valiantly won and defended the duchy of Normandy against King Stephen, he ended his life, leaving his son Henry to succeed in that dukedom. Meanwhile, Robert earl of Gloucester, and the earl of Chester, had several conflicts with king Stephen. At a battle at Wilton the king was nearly taken, but escaped.

Stephen King of England, Succeeded by Henry II.

Soon after this (A.D. 1153), Henry duke of Normandy, with a great army, entered England and won the castle of Malmesbury, the tower of London, and afterward the town of Nottingham, the castles of Wallingford, with other holds and castles. Many battles were fought between him and king Stephen. During this time, Eustace the king's son died. On this occasion, the king caused Theobald archbishop of Canterbury to mediate with the Duke for peace. This was concluded on this condition, that Stephen, during his lifetime, would hold the kingdom, and Henry in the meantime would be proclaimed heir-apparent in the chief cities throughout the realm. These things being concluded, duke Henry returned to Normandy, and king Stephen, some say for sorrow, ended his life, after he had reigned nineteen years.

As Theobald succeeded William, archbishop of Canterbury (A.D. 1138), so in York, William Maclagan succeeded Thurstan (A.D. 1140/41). He was called St. William of York, but he was poisoned in his chalice by his Cistercian chaplains (A.D. 1154).

Matthew Paris writes how Stephen, king of England, reserved to himself the right and authority to bestow spiritual livings, and investing prelates. Emperor Lotharius (Lothar III) would have done the same in recovering the right and privilege taken from his predecessor Henry V, had Bernard of Clairvaux not given him contrary counsel.

At this time, the manner of cursing (excommunicating) with **bell, book, and candle**, came into the church. It was devised in the Council of London held by William, bishop of Winchester under pope Celestine II, who succeeded Innocent II (A.D. 1145).

King Henry II of England.

Henry II was the son of Geoffrey Plantagenet and Empress Maud, daughter of Henry I. He began his reign after King Stephen (A.D. 1154), and continued for thirty-five years. The first year of his reign he subdued Ireland. Not long after, Thomas Becket was made Lord Chancellor of England. Henry went into the north, where he subdued William king of Scotland (who at that time held a great part of Northumberland), and then joined Scotland to his own kingdom, from the South Ocean to the North Isles of Orcades.

[127] A.D. 1130-1155.

Henry also put under his dominion the kingdom of Wales. So that by his great manhood and policy, the dominion of England was increased with the addition of Scotland, Ireland, the Orcades, Brittany, Poitou, and Guienne. Also he had in his rule Normandy, Gascoyn, Anjou, and Chinon; also Auvergne and the city of Toulouse. Besides these (by the title of his wife Eleanor, daughter to the Earl of Poitou) he obtained Mount Pyrame in Spain. So that we read of none of his progenitors, who had so many countries under his dominion.

Emperor Frederick I – Barbarossa.

Now the time requires us to proceed to the history of Frederick I (called Barbarossa), successor to Conrad in the empire (A.D. 1155).¹⁵³ He marched into Italy to subdue certain rebels there. The Pope hearing this, came with his clergy to meet Frederick in hopes of obtaining his assistance against his enemies. The emperor, on seeing the bishop, alighted from his horse to receive him, holding the stirrup to the prelate on the left side, when he should have held it on the right, at which the pope showed himself somewhat annoyed. The emperor smiling, excused himself, that he was not accustomed to holding stirrups; and as it was done only of good will, and not of duty, it was little matter which side of the horse he held. The next day, to make amends to the bishop, the emperor sent for him, and received him holding the right stirrup, and so the matter was settled.

After this, as they came in and sat together, Adrian IV, the pope, began to declare to Frederick how his ancestors before him, those who sought the See of Rome for the crown, were in the habit of always leaving behind them some special token or monument of their benevolence for obtaining it. Therefore he required some benefit to proceed likewise from the emperor to the church of Rome — say, restoring the country of Apulia to the church of Rome. If he would do this, then for the pope's part, he would do what pertained to him to perform — meaning giving Frederick the crown. For at that time the popes had brought the emperors to seek their crown from the pope's hand.

Frederick with his princes perceived that unless he would of his own proper costs and charges recover Apulia out of Duke William's hands, he could not secure the crown. He promised all that the pope required; and so the next day he was crowned. This being done, the emperor returned to Germany, while Adrian, not liking to be idle, issued his excommunication against William, duke of Apulia. Not content with this, he also sent to Emmanuel, Emperor of Constantinople, inciting him to wage war against William. Duke William perceiving these intrigues, sent to the pope asking for peace, promising to restore to him whatever he wished.

But the pope, through the malignant counsel of his cardinals, would grant no peace, thinking to get more by war. The duke, seeing nothing but war ahead, expeditiously prepared himself. He arrived at Apulia, and there put Emperor Emmanuel to flight. Then he proceeded to the city of Bonaventure where the pope and his cardinals were looking for victory. He so besieged and pressed the city, that the pope and his cardinals were glad to treat for peace, which they had refused to do before. The duke granted peace on certain conditions, viz. that he would not invade those possessions which belonged to Rome, and that the pope would make him king of both Sicilies.¹⁵⁴

Correspondence Between the Pope and the Emperor.

The emperor Frederick Barbarossa, sitting quietly at home all this while, began to consider with himself how the pope had extorted from the emperors, his predecessors, the investiture of prelates; how he had sickened and taxed all the nations by his legates, and also had been the sower of seditions throughout his empire. He therefore began to require homage from all the bishops of Germany, and an oath of allegiance. He also commanded the pope's legates, if they came into Germany without his sending for them, were not to be received. Moreover, he charged all his subjects that none of them should appeal to Rome. Besides

¹⁵³ Frederick Barbarossa was the Duke of Swabia from 1147 to 1152. He followed Conrad III as Holy Roman Emperor.

¹⁵⁴ The term "Two Sicilies" refers to the Kingdom of Sicily and the Kingdom of Naples. Apulia, a region in southern Italy, was part of the Kingdom of Naples.

this, in his letters he set and prefixed his name *before* the pope's name. Upon seeing this, the pope was not a little offended. He directed his letter to Emperor Frederick in the following tenor:

“Adrian, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to Frederick, emperor, health and apostolical benediction. The law of God as it promises to those who honor father and mother long life, so it threatens the sentence of death to those who curse father and mother. We are taught by the word of truth, that everyone who exalts himself shall be brought low. Therefore, my well-beloved son in the Lord, we marvel not a little at your wisdom, in that you seem not to show that reverence to blessed St. Peter, and to the holy church of Rome, which you ought to show. Why is this? In your letters sent to us, you place your own name before ours, by which you incur the note of insolence, indeed, rather of arrogance. Why should I recite to you here the oath of your fidelity, which you swore to blessed St. Peter and to us, and how you observe and keep it? Seeing that you so require homage and allegiance from those who are gods, and all the sons of the high God, and presume to join their holy lands with yours, working contrary to us — seeing that you also exclude our cardinals not only out of your churches, but also out of your cities, those whom we direct as legates from our side — what shall I say then to you? Amend, therefore I advise you, *amend*. For while you go about to obtain from us your consecration and crown, and to get those things you do *not* have, I fear greatly that your honor will lose the things you *have*. Thus, fare you well.”

The Answer of Frederick the Emperor to the Pope.

“Frederick by the grace of God, Roman Emperor, ever Augustus, to Adrian, Bishop of the Roman church, and to all those who are willing to cling to those things which Jesus began to do and to teach, greeting. The law of justice gives to every person accordingly that which is his. Nor do we derogate from our parents, from whom, as we received our dignity from the imperial crown and governance, so in this same kingdom of ours, we render their due and true honor back to them. And for so much as duty is to be sought out in all sorts of men, let us see first in the time of Constantine (Sylvester then being bishop of Rome) what patrimony or regality he had of his own, that was due him and that he might claim. Did not Constantine, of his liberal benevolence, give liberty and restore peace to the church? And whatever regality of patrimony the see of your papacy has, was it not given to them by the donation of princes? Revolve and turn over the ancient chronicles (if either you have not read or neglected what we affirm) where it is to be found. Of those who are gods by adoption, and hold their lordships from us, why may we not justly require their homage, and their sworn allegiance, when he who is both your master and ours (taking nothing from any king or man, but giving all goodness to all men) paid toll and tribute for him and Peter to Caesar, giving you an example to do the same. Therefore he says to you and all men, ‘Learn from me, for I am meek and lowly,’ etc.

“Therefore, either render back your lordships and patrimonies which you hold from us; or else if you find them so sweet to you, then give that which is due to God unto God; and that which is due to Caesar, unto Caesar. As for your cardinals, we shut them out of both churches and cities, because we see they are not preachers but prowlers; not makers of peace, but rakers for money; not pillars and upholders of the church, but the insatiable taxers of the world, and collectors of money and gold. When we see them otherwise (and as the church requires them to be) as members and makers of peace, shining out like lights to the people, assisting poor and weak men's causes in the way of equity, etc., then they will find us forward and ready to relieve them with salaries and all things that are necessary. And where you bring such questions as these to secular men (little conducing to religion) you thereby incur no little note and blemish of your humility, which is keeper of all virtues, and of your meekness. Therefore let your fatherhood beware and take heed, lest in pushing such matters as seem to us unseemly for you, you thereby give offense to those who depend on your word (giving ear to

your mouth, as it were, to an evening shower). For we cannot help but tell you of what we hear; seeing now the detestable beast of pride creeps into the seat of Peter — Providing always as much as we may (by God's grace) for the peace of the church. Fare you well."

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Dissension Between the Pope and the Emperor.

Upon this, Adrian the pope directs a bull against Frederick I, excommunicating him with public and solemn ceremonies, and then conspiring with William Duke of Apulia, he sought all manner of ways to plague the emperor, and to set all men against him, especially the clergy. The pope understanding the intent of the emperor, and how loth he was to come under subjection to his see, devised by all crafty ways to bring it to pass. He sent some sharp letters to him, and yet not so sharp as they were proud and disdainful. In the first of these, the salutation by his legates was this: "Our most blessed father the pope greets you, and the universal company of the cardinals — he as your father, they as your brethren." Meaning that the emperor should understand himself to be a subject and underling to the pope, no less than the cardinals were. The emperor with his princes, perceiving upon perusing the letters, what the pope was aiming at by his legates, could not brook such intolerable presumption; whereupon there was much contention between the legates and the princes. "And from whom, then," ask the legates, "does the emperor receive the empire, if not from the pope?" The German princes were so offended by this, that if the emperor had not stopped them (with some difficulty), they would have used violence against the legates. But the emperor would not permit that. He commanded the legates away, charging them to make no turn on the way, but to depart straight home. And to certify to the whole state of the empire, the truth of the matter, he directs these letters that follow:

The Emperor's Letter sent throughout his empire.

"For so much as the providence of God (on which all power depends, both in heaven and earth) has committed to us, his anointed, this our empire to be governed, and the peace of his churches to be protected by our imperial arms, we cannot but lament and complain to you with great sorrow of heart, seeing such causes of dissension, the root and fountain of evils, and the infection of pestiferous corruption, to thus rise from the holy church, imprinted with the seal of peace and love of Christ.

"Because of this (unless God turns it away) we fear the whole body of the church is likely to be polluted, its unity to be broken, and schism and division arise between the spiritual and temporal governments. Being recently at Bisunze (Büdingen), and there entreating busily about matters pertaining to the honor of our empire, as well as to the wealth of the churches, ambassadors of the apostolical see came, declaring that they brought a legacy to our majesty of great importance, redounding in no small measure to the commodity of our honor and empire.

"The first day of their coming, being brought to our presence, and received by us (as the manner is) with honor accordingly, audience was given them to hear what they had to say. They immediately burst out about the mammon of iniquity, haughty pride, stoutness, and arrogance. Out of the execrable presumption of their own swelling heart, they delivered their message with an apostolical letter. Its tenor was this: "That we should always have before our eyes, how our *sovereign lord* the pope gave us the imperial crown, and that it does not repent him, if we have received greater benefits at his hand.' And this was the effect of that so sweet and fatherly legation, which should nourish the peace of both the church and the empire, to unite them fast together in the band of love.

"And at the hearing of this so false, untrue, and most vain-glorious presumption of so proud a message, not only did the emperor's majesty conceive indignation, but also all the princes

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(there present) were moved with such anger and rage at this, that if our presence and request had not stayed them, they would not have kept their hands from “these wicked priests, or else they would have proceeded with the sentence of death against them.

“Furthermore, because a great number of other letters (partly written already, partly with seals already signed for letters that would be written as they thought good for the churches of Germany) were found about them. By these they would work their conceived intent of iniquity here in our churches, to destroy the altars, to carry away the jewels of the church, and to tear off the limbs and plates of golden crosses, etc. To the intent that their avaricious meaning would have no further power to reign, we commanded them to depart the same way they came. And now, seeing that our reign and empire stands upon the election of princes from God alone, who in the passion of his Son subdued the world to be governed with two swords; and again, seeing that Peter the apostle has so instructed the world with this doctrine, ‘Fear God, honor your king;’ therefore, whoever says that we have and possess our imperial kingdom *by the benefit of the lord pope*, is contrary both to the ordinance of God, and to the doctrine of Peter, and shall also be reproved as a liar.

“Therefore, as our endeavor up to now has been to help and to deliver the servile captivity of the churches out of the hand and from the yoke of such Egyptians, and to maintain the right of their liberties and dignities, we desire you all with your compassion, to lament with us this slanderous ignominy cast upon us and our kingdom. We trust that your faithful good will, which has been ever trusty to the honor of this empire (never yet blemished from the beginning of this city, and of religion) will provide that it will have no hurt through the strange novelty and presumptuous pride of such men. Rather than have this thing come to pass, know this for certain: I would rather incur the danger of death, than suffer such confusion to happen in our days.”

This letter of the emperor fretted the pope not a little, who wrote back to the bishops of Germany, accusing the emperor, and requiring them to work against him what they could.

This pope did not continue very long, only four years and a few months. (1154-1159)

Although Adrian was bad enough, the next pope was much worse. Alexander III was not elected alone, for the emperor with nine cardinals set up another pope named Victor IV. Between these two popes arose a great discord that long continued. So that the emperor, being required to take up the matter, sent for them both to appear before him, so that in hearing them both, he might judge their cause better. Victor came, but Alexander refused to appear. Whereupon the emperor, with the full consent of his bishops and clergy, ratified the election of Victor. Alexander flying into France accursed them both, sending his letters through all Christendom against them, as men to be avoided and cast out of all Christian company. Also at Rome, by flattery and money, he got most of the city on his side. After this, Alexander, coming from France to Sicily, and from there to Rome, was there received with much favor through the help of Philip, the French king.

Emperor Frederick, hearing of this, marched with great force into Italy. Coming at length to Rome, he required the aid of the citizens so that the cause between the two popes might be decided, and that whichever had the best right might be accepted. Alexander mistrusting his side, and doubting the will of the citizens, fled to Venice.

The emperor sent his son Otto, with men and ships against Venice, charging him not to attempt anything before his coming. The young man, more hardy than circumspect, joined battle with the Venetians, was overcome, and taken prisoner by Alexander.

The father, to help the captivity and misery of his son, was compelled to submit himself to the pope, and to entreat for peace. So the emperor coming to Venice (at St. Mark's church, where the bishop was, to get his absolution there) was obliged to kneel down at the pope's feet. The proud pope, setting his foot upon the emperor's neck, said this verse of the psalm, "You shall tread upon the adder and the serpent, the lion and the dragon you shall tread under your feet." ^{Psa 91.13}

[129] A.D. 1155-1164.

The emperor answered, "Not to you, but to Peter." The pope replied, "Both to me and to Peter." The emperor, fearing to give any occasion for further quarrelling, held his peace, and so he was absolved, and peace was made between them. The conditions were *first*, that he should receive Alexander as the true pope, and *secondly*, that he should restore to the church of Rome all that he had taken away. And thus the emperor, obtaining his son's release, departed.

Here, as I noted, a great diversity and variety exists in various writers concerning this matter. Some say the emperor encamped in Palestine before he went to Venice; some say after. So I marvel to see in Volateran (a great favorer of the pope) such a contradiction in his twenty-second book. He says that Otto, the emperor's son was taken in this conflict, which was the cause of peace between his father and the pope. In his twenty-third book he says that the emperor himself was taken prisoner in the same battle. And so, *after* the peace was concluded, he took his journey to Asia and Palestine. During his papacy (which continued twenty-one years), Pope Adrian IV kept sundry councils both in Turin and at Lateran, where he confirmed the wicked proceedings of Hildebrand and his other predecessors, so as to bind all orders of the clergy to the vow of celibacy.

The Life and History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Now, as Thomas Becket (1119-1170) lived in the time of Pope Alexander III (r. 1159-1181), let us narrate something about him, so far as seems worthy of knowing. This is to the end that the truth being sifted from all flattery and lies of those popish writers who record his history, men may better judge both about him, and about his cause.

If it is the *cause* that makes a martyr, I do not see why we should esteem Thomas Becket a martyr, more than any other whom the prince's sword punishes for their crimes. To die for the church I grant is a glorious matter. But the church (as it is a spiritual and not a temporal church) stands upon a heavenly foundation, such as faith, religion, true doctrine, sincere discipline, obedience to God's commandments — and not upon things pertaining to this world, such as possessions, liberties, exemptions, privileges, dignities, patrimonies, and superiorities. If these things are given to the church, I pray God that church-men may use them well. But if they are *not* given, then the church cannot claim them; or if they are taken away, such a matter is in the prince's power. To contend with princes about it, does not in my mind make a *martyr*, but rather a *rebel*. Therefore, though I suppose Thomas Becket was far from the title of a martyr, I wish the law had discovered his fault, rather than have the swords of men strike him down, without the command of either prince or law to do so. It would have been the better way, for the laws to have executed their justice upon him; and certainly it would have been the safest way for the king (Henry II). And also, thereby his death would have been without any suspicion of martyrdom, nor would there have been that enshrining and sainting of him that followed. If the emperors had dealt according to the law with the popes who contended against them, when they had taken them prisoners. That is, if they had used the law of the sword against them, and chopped off the heads of one or two according to their traitorous rebellions, then they would have broken the neck of much of

that disturbance, which long after troubled the church. But the emperors — having both the sword and the truth on their side, would not use their sword. Rather, standing in awe of the pope's vain curse, and reverencing his seat for St. Peter's sake, they dared not lay hands on him, even though the pope was ever so abominable and traitorous a malefactor. The popes, *perceiving* that, took so much upon themselves, not as the Scripture would give them, but as the superstitious fear of emperors and kings would allow them to take.

Now back to the history. If that is true which is set forth by those four men who took it upon themselves to narrate the life of Thomas Becket, then it appears that he was a man of stout, severe, and inflexible temper. Once he had conceived some opinion in his mind, he would in no way, or hardly be removed from it. Threatenings and flattering were both alike to him, following no man's counsel so much as his own. He had more natural than cultivated talents, although he was somewhat skilled in civil law. He had a good memory, and was well trained in courtly and worldly matters. Besides this, he was of a chaste and strict life, if the histories are true. Although in the first part of his life (still being archdeacon of Canterbury, and afterward lord chancellor) he was very civil, courtly, pleasant, much given both to hunting and hawking, according to the manner of the court. And he was highly favored by his prince, who not only had thus promoted him, but had also committed his son and heir to his instruction and government. In this, his first beginning, he was not so well beloved; but afterward he was much hated, both by the king, and also by most of his subjects, with the exception of certain monks and priests (and those who were persuaded by them), who magnified him not a little for upholding the liberties of the church — that is, the licentious life and excesses of churchmen. He was full of devotion, but without any true religion; zealous, but without knowledge. And therefore, just as he was stiff and stubborn of nature, so (a blind conscience being joined with all this) it turned into plain rebellion. He was so superstitious in his obedience to the pope, that he forgot his obedience to his natural and most beneficent king. And in maintaining so contentiously the constitutions and decrees of men, he neglected the commandments of God. But here he is most of all to be reprehended: that he not only (contrary to the king's knowledge) sought to convey himself out of the realm, when holding so high place and calling, but he also set a matter of discord between the pope and his king, and also between the French king and him, contrary to all propriety, good order, natural subjection, and true Christianity. Upon this followed no little disquiet to the king, and damage to the realm.

His first preferment was to the church of Branfield, near the gift of St. Alban.¹⁵⁵ After that, he entered into the service of the archbishop of Canterbury, by whom he was then preferred to be his archdeacon. In time, king Henry made him lord chancellor, and he then left playing the archdeacon, and began to play the chancellor. He fashioned his proceedings like the king's, both in weighty matters and trifles. He would hunt with him, and watched the time when the king dined and slept. He began to love the merry jestings of the court, to delight himself with the great applause of men, and praise of the people. And to pass by his household stuff, he had a bridle of silver, and the bosses of his bridle were worth a great treasure. At his table and in other expenses Becket surpassed any earl. He also acted the good soldier under the king in Gascony, and both won and kept towns. In the forty-fourth year of his age, he was made priest, and the next day he was consecrated bishop.

¹⁵⁵ Braintfield (St. Andrew's), a parish in the union of Hertford, hundred of Cashio, or *liberty of St. Alban's*, 3½ miles N.W. from Hertford. The living is a rectory, valued in the king's books at £11. 6. 8, with about 35 acres of farmland. Matthew Paris wrote that this was Thomas à Becket's first preferment. (*Topographical History of England*, 1848).

Concerning the priesthood of this man, I find histories vary. For if he was beneficed, and chaplain to Theobald (archbishop of Canterbury 1139-1161), and afterwards archdeacon (as some say) then it is likely that he was a priest *before*, and was not (as most English histories say) made priest in one day, and archbishop the next.

Conflict Between Henry II and Thomas Becket.

The chief cause of the conflict that sprung up between the king and Thomas Becket, was this: a canon reviled the king's justices, and the king was offended. The archbishop, to pacify the king, commanded the canon to be whipped and deprived of his benefices for a number of years. But the king was not content with this gentle punishment, because it rather increased the boldness of the clergy. Therefore the king called the archbishop, bishops, and all the clergy, to assemble at Westminster. When they were assembled, the king commanded that such wicked clerics should have no privilege of their clergy, but be delivered to the jailors. And this, he said, their own canons and laws had decreed. The archbishop, counselling with his bishops and learned men, heartily desired the king's gentleness, that under Christ our new king, and under the new law of Christ, he would bring no new kind of punishment into this realm against the old decrees of the holy fathers.

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Becket frequently said that he "neither should nor could suffer it." The king being angered at this, alleges the old laws and customs of his grandfather, observed and agreed upon by archbishops, bishops, prelates, and other privileged persons. He inquired likewise of the archbishop, whether he would agree to the same. To these laws and customs Thomas partly granted, and partly would not grant. There were 28 or 29 of these laws. I thought to recite some of them here, that are not unworthy to be known.

*The Copy of the old Laws and Customs
to which Thomas Becket agreed.*

"1. That no order should be given to husbandmen's children and bondmen's children, without the assent or testimonial of the lords of the country where they were born and brought up: and if their sons become clerics, they shall not receive the order of priesthood without license of their lords.

"2. That if a man of holy church holds any lay fee in his hand, he shall therefore do the king the service that belongs to it, such as juries, assize of lands and judgments, except the execution of death.

"3. That if any man were the king's traitor, and had fled into the church, it would be lawful for the king and his officers to take him out.

"4. That if any felon's goods were brought to holy church, none should keep them there; for every felon's goods are the king's.

"5. That no land should be given to the church, or to any house of religion, without the king's license."

The following Articles, Thomas did not agree to.

"1. If there were any striving for church-goods, between a cleric and a layman, the plea should be done in the king's court.

"2. That neither bishop nor cleric should go out of the land without the king's license, and then he should swear that he would procure no hurt against the king, nor any of his.

Bk. IV. Wm. the Conqueror to Wycliffe (1066-1364)

“3. If any man were denounced accursed, and came back to amendment, the king would not have him sworn, but only find sureties to stand to it, which holy church would award.

“4. That no man, held by the king in chief or in service, should be accursed without the king’s license.

“5. That all the bishoprics and abbeys that were vacant, should be in the king’s hands, until such time that he chose a prelate for it; and he should be chosen from the king’s chapels; and before he was confirmed, he should do his homage to the king.

“6. If any plea were brought to the consistory, they should appeal from there to the archdeacon, and from there to the bishop’s court, and from the bishop’s court to the archbishop’s, and from there to the king, and no further. So that in conclusion, the complaints of holy church must come before the king, and not the pope.

“7. That debts which were owing to a pledge of marriage, should not be pleaded in spiritual, but in temporal courts.

“8. That the Peter-pence, which were gathered to the pope, should be taken to the king.

“9. If any cleric were taken for a felony and so proved, he should first be degraded, and then through judgment be hanged, or if he was a traitor, be drawn.”

Other Laws and Constitutions made at Clarendon in Normandy, and sent to England, to which Becket and the Pope would not agree, for the pope had then fled the realm.¹⁵⁶

“1. If any person is found to bring from the pope, or from the archbishop of Canterbury, any writing containing any interdict or curse against the realm of England, the same man is to be apprehended without delay as a traitor, and is to be executed.

“2. That no monk or any cleric shall be permitted to pass into England without a passport from the king or his justices: whoever does the contrary, is to be seized and imprisoned.

“3. No man is to be so bold as to appeal to the pope, or to the archbishop of Canterbury outside of England.

“4. That no decree or commandment, proceeding from the authority of the pope, or the bishop of Canterbury, be received into England, under pain of arrest and imprisonment.

“5. In general, to forbid any man to carry over any commandment or precept, either of cleric or layman, to the pope, or to the archbishop of Canterbury, under pain of imprisonment.

“6. If any bishop, cleric, abbot, or layman does contrary to this inhibition, or keeps the sentence of interdicting, that person is to be thrust out of the land, with all their kindred, and is to leave all their goods behind them.

“7. All the possessions, goods, and chattels of those who favor the pope or the archbishop of Canterbury, are to be seized and confiscated for the king.

“8. All those of the clergy who are from outside the realm, and derive their rents and profits from the land, are to be summoned and warned through every shire to return home within three months, or else their rents and goods are to return to the king.

“9. That St. Peter’s-pence should no longer be paid to the apostolical see, but are to be reserved diligently in the king’s coffers, and there to be at his commandment.

¹⁵⁶ Pope Alexander III fled to France in April 1162 to escape the antipope Victor IV, who was elected with imperial support. Alexander sought refuge in France to avoid a total victory by Emperor Frederick I (Barbarossa) and to build support in France and England.

“10. That the bishops of Salisbury and Norwich are at the king’s mercy, and are summoned by the sheriff and bealdes (police), that before the king’s justices they do right to the king and his justices, because (contrary to the statutes of Clarendon) by commandment they interdicted the land of Earl Hugh, and published it in their diocese without license from the king’s justices.”

By these and other such laws and decrees it may appear that the abolishing of the pope’s authority is nothing new in the realm of England. The only difference is that the pope then being driven out, could not be kept out so long as he is now. The reason is that the time had not yet come that antichrist should be so fully revealed; nor was his wickedness then so fully ripe as in our time. We will now return to,

*The Communication and Controversy between the King
and Thomas Becket, with his Clergy.*

The king assembling his nobles and clergy, required the punishment of some delinquent clergymen. But Thomas Becket did not assent. The king demanded whether he would consent, so that the customs set forth in the realm (meaning the first part of those decrees above specified) should be observed. To which the archbishop, consulting with his brethren, answered that he was content, but adding this: *Salvo ordine suo*; that is, *Saving his order*. And in like manner all the other bishops answered with the same addition, *Salvo ordine suo*.¹⁵⁷ Hilarius, bishop of Chichester, alone agreed to observe them *bona fide*. The king was greatly offended at this exception, or saving clause. Turning to the archbishop and prelates, he said that, “he was not well content with that clause of theirs, *Salvo ordine suo*, which was captious and deceitful, having some venom lurking under it. And therefore he required an absolute agreement, without any exception, to the king’s ordinances.” The archbishop answered that, “They had sworn to him their fidelity, both life, body, and earthly honor, *Salvo ordine suo*; and those ordinances were also comprehended in the same earthly honor. They would bind themselves to observing them in no other form, but as they had sworn before.” The king was very angry with this, as were all his nobility. As for the other bishops, there was no doubt they would easily have changed their minds, had the boldness of the archbishop not made them more constant than they would have been otherwise.

[131] A.D. 1164.

Becket Yields to the King, but Afterwards Repents.

The day being nearly spent, the king departed in great anger, giving no salutation to the bishops. The following day, the king took from the archbishop all the honors and lordships he had given him before in the time that he was chancellor, showing the great displeasure of the king against him and the clergy. Not long after this, the king left from London (unknown to the bishops) and sailed over to Normandy, to where the bishop of London resorted to crave the king’s favor. He counselled him how to win over some of the other bishops. By this means, most of the bishops were reconciled again to the king. Only the archbishop, with a few others, remained in their obstinacy. The king, to try every means, when he saw that no fears or threats could change Becket’s mind, tried gentleness; but it would not serve. Many of the nobles labored between them to influence Becket, but it would not be. The archbishop of York, with other bishops and abbots, especially the bishop of Chester, did the same. Besides this, his own household daily called upon him, but no one could persuade him. At length, learning what danger might happen not only to himself but to the other clergy, from

¹⁵⁷ Its meaning is essentially *excepting the duty and honor owed to God and His Church*. In respect to the Constitution of Clarendon, mentioned above, he was saying that all should follow them *except* those belonging to his order, whose first duty is to the Church, and thus to the pope — even with regard to some temporal matters.

the king's displeasure, and considering the love and kindness of the king towards him in times past, he was content to give way to the king's wishes. He came to the king at Oxford, and reconciled himself. The king being somewhat softened by this, received him with a more cheerful countenance, yet not so familiarly as before. He said that, "He would have his ordinances and proceedings in the prescribed form, confirmed in the public audience and open sight of all his bishops and all his nobles." After this, the king called all his peers and prelates before him at Clarendon, requiring all of them to have performed what they had promised, in consenting to observing his grandfather's ordinances and proceedings. The archbishop at first drew back from his promise, but at last he was induced to assent. First the bishops of Salisbury and of Norwich came to him, weeping and lamenting to the archbishop, desiring him to have some compassion from them, and to cease this opposition to the king, lest it exasperate the king's displeasure, and cause him to be imprisoned, and the whole clergy to be endangered. Besides these two bishops, two noble peers of the realm went to him, influencing him to relent and yield to the king's wishes. Or if not, that they would be forced to use such violence as would not be consistent with the king's fame, and much less with his quietness. Yet the obstinacy of Becket would not relent. After this, two rulers of the temple came to him, called templars, along with their company, lamenting and bewailing the great danger which they declared was hanging over his head. Yet neither with their tears, nor with their kneelings, would he be persuaded. At length the last message came from the king, signifying with express words, and also with tears, what Becket might expect, if he would not relent.

By this message, either terrified or persuaded, Becket at last submitted. The king immediately assembled the states. The archbishop, before everyone, promises the king obedience and submission, and does so *cum bona fide* (in good faith) leaving out his former addition, *Salvo ordine*. Instead, he promised *in verba veritatis* (in words of truth) to observe and keep the king's customs, and swear to it. After him, the other bishops took the same oath. Upon which the king commanded certain obligatory instruments to be drawn up, of which the king would have one, the archbishop of Canterbury another, the archbishop of York the third, and requiring the latter prelate to also set his hand and seal to it. Though he was ready to do so, Becket desired a little delay so that he (having but newly come to his bishopric) might better peruse the customs and ordinances of the king. This request, because it seemed only reasonable, was easily granted.

Alanus, one of the four writers of the life of Thomas Becket, records that the archbishop on his journey to Winchester, began to greatly repent of what he had done through the instigation chiefly of his cross bearer, who earnestly expostulated with him to yield to the king's request. This was against the privilege and liberties of the church, polluting not only his fame and conscience, but also giving a pernicious example to those that would come after. To make the matter short, the archbishop was touched with such repentance, that keeping himself from all company, lamenting with tears, and with fasting, and afflicting himself with much penance, he suspended himself from all Divine service. He would not be comforted, till he was absolved by the pope, who, compassionating the tears of his dear chick, directed letters to him by the same messenger which Becket had sent to him. In these letters he not only absolved him, but also with words of great consolation encouraged him to be determined in the affair which he took in hand. A copy of that consolatory letter follows here: —

"Alexander bishop, etc. Your brotherhood is not ignorant that it has been advertised to us, how upon the occasion of a certain transgression or excess of yours, you have determined to cease from saying of mass hereafter, and to abstain from the consecration of the body and blood of

the Lord. This determination, I wish you advisedly to consider, and to discreetly ponder how *dangerous* it is (especially in such a personage), and also what inconvenience may rise from it. Your wisdom should not forget what difference there is between those who advisedly and willingly offend, and those who through ignorance and for necessity's sake offend. For, as you read, willful sin is so much the greater, as the same sin is lesser when it is not voluntary. Therefore if you remember you have done anything that your own conscience accuses you of, whatever it is, we counsel you (as a prudent and wise prelate) to acknowledge it. This being done, the merciful and pitiful God, who has more respect toward the *heart* of the doer than to the *thing* that is done, will remit and forgive you for it according to His accustomed great mercy. And we, trusting in the merits of the blessed apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, absolve you from the offense committed, and by the apostolical authority we release you to your fraternity, counselling you and commanding you that henceforth you do not abstain (for this cause) from the celebration of the mass."

This letter, with others of the same kind, the pope wrote to him, animating and comforting him in this quarrel which so nearly pertained to the pope's profit. Becket took no small courage and consolation from this. In the meantime, the king heard how he now refused to set his seal to those sanctions which he yielded to before. He felt no small displeasure against Becket, so that he threatened him. He began to call him to account, and to burden him with payments, so that all men could perceive that the king was against him. The archbishop thought to escape out of the realm, and went in the night (with two or three stealing away with him out of his house), to secretly take shipping elsewhere. Now, among others of the king's ordinances and laws, was this one: "That none of the prelacy or nobility, without the king's license, or of his justices, should depart out of the realm." Yet Becket twice attempted to take shipping to flee to the See of Rome. But the weather not being favorable, he was driven home again, and for that time he was frustrated in his purpose. After his flight became known, the king's officers came to Canterbury to seize Becket's goods in the king's behalf. But the night before their coming, Becket had returned, and was found at home, so they did not proceed in their purpose.

Upon this, the archbishop (understanding the king's displeasure against him, and that the seas would not serve him) made haste to the court, which was then at Woodstock. The king received him, but not so familiarly as he used to do, taunting him jestingly and merrily, as though one realm were not large enough to hold them both. Becket, although he was permitted to go and come at his pleasure to the court, he could not obtain the favor that he wanted. The archbishop of York labored to make peace between them. But the king would not be reconciled unless Becket would subscribe to his laws.

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Dissimulation of the Pope. Becket Cited to Northampton.

The king, considering his regal authority, thought it too much that any subject should stand against him. And the archbishop, emboldened by the authority of the pope, thought himself strong enough against the king and all his realm. So that the archbishop would not yield, but by virtue of his apostolical authority, he censured these laws and constitutions of the king, condemning some, and approving others. Besides this, Rotrodus, archbishop of Rothomage (sent from the pope), also came to make peace between the king and Canterbury. The king was content with this, provided the pope would agree to ratify his ordinances. But when that could not be obtained at the pope's hands, the king being stopped by Becket's apostolic

legacy (being *legatus a latere*¹⁵⁸), sent to the pope to obtain from him that same authority of apostolic legacy for the archbishop of York: but the pope refused. However, the pope was willing that the king himself should be *legate* — at which the king felt great indignation (as Roger of Hoveden writes), so that he sent back the pope's letters.

The pope being perplexed, began according to the old practice of popish prelacy, to play with both hands. He secretly conspired with the one, and openly dissembled with the other. First he granted to the king's ambassadors their request to have the legate removed, and to place the archbishop of York in that office. And then, to protect the cause of Thomas Becket, he adds a promise that Becket would receive no harm or damage thereby. Thus the pope craftily managed the matter between them both. He writes to the king openly, and he secretly directs another letter to Becket. The contents of that letter follow here:

*Alexander the pope,
to Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury.*

“Although we, condescending to the king's request, have granted the gift of our legacy according to his mind, let not your mind be discomforted by this, nor brought into sighs of despair. For before we had granted that, or given our consent to it, the king's ambassadors firmly promised in the word of truth (also ready to be sworn upon it, if I required it) that their letters which he had also obtained, should not be delivered to the archbishop of York without our knowledge and consent to it. This is certain, and so persuade yourself boldly without any scruple, doubt, or mistrust, that it was never my mind or purpose, nor ever shall be (God willing) to subdue you or your church under the obedience of any person, to be subject to anyone except to the bishop of Rome. And therefore we warn you and charge you, that if you perceive the king delivering these foresaid letters, which we trust he will not attempt without our knowledge, then immediately — by some trusty messengers or by your own letters — you will let us know. Thereby we may provide both for your person, your church, and also the city committed to you, to be clearly exempt by our apostolical authority, from all power and jurisdiction of any legacy.”

The king, after he received the letters from the pope, began to put more strength behind his purposed proceedings against the archbishop, beginning with inferiors of the clergy — those who were offenders under his laws, such as felons, robbers, quarrellers, breakers of the peace; and especially those who had committed homicide and murders, of which more than a hundred at that time were proved upon the clergy.¹⁵⁹ He urged and constrained them to be arraigned according to the order of the temporal law, and justice was to be administered to them according to their deserts — such as, first, to be deprived, and so be committed into secular hands. This seemed to Becket to derogate from the liberties of holy church, that the secular power should pass in criminal causes, or sit in judgment against any ecclesiastical person. The clergy had forged this *Law of Exemption* out of popes Anacletus (d. A.D. 92) and Evaristus (d. A.D. 108). By this falsely alleged and pretended authority, they have concocted this constitution from the apostles, giving immunity to all ecclesiastical persons, freeing them from secular jurisdiction! Becket, therefore, like a valiant champion (fighting for his liberties, and having the pope on his side) would not permit his clerics to be examined and deprived for their crimes, unless it was before ecclesiastical judges; no secular judge was to proceed against them. But after their deprivation, if they should commit the same offense again, then the temporal judge might proceed against them. This obstinate and stubborn rebellion of the archbishop stirred up much anger and vexation in the king.

¹⁵⁸ A *legatus a latere* (a legate sent from the pope's side, as it were) represents the pope on some special assignment.

¹⁵⁹ Guliel. Neuburgensis, de gestis Anglorum, lib. 2. cap 16.

And it was not only in him, but also in the nobles and most of the bishops, so that he was almost alone, and a wonder to all the realm.

The king's wrath daily increased more and more against Becket. He had him cited to appear by a certain day at the town of Northampton, there to answer those things which would be laid to his charge. So when the day had come (all the peers and nobles, with the prelates of the realm upon the king's proclamation being assembled in the castle of Northampton) great fault was found with the archbishop. For though he was personally cited to appear, he did not come himself, but sent another in his stead. The reason why he came not, Hoveden assigns to this: that the king had lodged his horses and horse-men in the archbishop's lodging. Being offended by this, Becket sent word that he would not appear unless his lodging was cleared of the king's horsemen, etc. Upon which, by the public sentence of all the nobles, as well as of the bishops, all his movables were adjudged to be confiscated for the king, unless the king's clemency remitted the penalty.

The next day the king laid an action against Becket on behalf of his marshal, for certain injuries done to him, and required the archbishop to repay a certain amount of money lent to him when he was chancellor, amounting to 500 marks. The archbishop did not deny that he received this money from the king, but he said it was a gift, though he could bring no proof of this. The king required him to give security for the payment. The archbishop was so called upon, that either he would be accountable to the king for the money, or else he would incur present danger, the king being so bent against him. Being brought to such a strait, and destitute of his own suffragans, he could not have escaped if five persons, of their own accord, had not stepped in and bound themselves for him, every man for 100 marks each. This was concluded on the second day.

The next morning, which was the third day of the council, the archbishop was sitting below in a conclave with his fellow bishops around him, consulting together. The doors were fast locked on them, as the king had commanded. It was propounded to him on behalf of the king, that he had diverse bishoprics and abbeys in hand which were vacant. Their fruits and revenues were due the king for certain years, of which he had not yet rendered an account to the king. Therefore it was demanded that he bring a full and clear reckoning of them.

Advice of the Bishops, and Becket's Reply.

Thus, while the bishops and prelates were in council, advising and deliberating what was to be done, at length it came to voices. Every man was to speak his mind, and give sentence of what was the best course for their archbishop to take. First was Henry bishop of Winchester, who took part with Becket so much as he dared for fear of the king. He said, "I remember that the archbishop, first being archdeacon, and then lord chancellor, when he was promoted to the church of Canterbury, was discharged from all bonds and reckonings of the temporal court, as all the other bishops could not help but remember and witness."

Next, Gilbert bishop of London spoke, exhorting the archbishop, that he should call to mind from where the king took him and set him up; what and how great the things were that he had done for him; also that he should consider the dangers and perils of the times, and what ruin he might bring upon the whole church (and upon all those present there) if he resisted the king's mind in the things he required. And if it were to render up his archbishopric, even if it were ten times better than it is, he should not hesitate in the matter. To this the archbishop answered, "Well, well. I perceive well enough, my Lord, where you tend toward."

[133] A.D. 1164.

Then Winchester spoke.

“This form of counsel seems to me very pernicious to the catholic church, tending to our subversion, and to the confusion of us all. For if our archbishop and the primate of all England lean toward this example — that every bishop should give up his authority and the charge of the flock committed to him, at the command and threat of the prince — to what state will the church be brought, but that all will be confounded at his pleasure and judgment, and nothing will remain certain by any order of law. As the priest is, so shall the people be.”

Hilary, the bishop of Chichester replies to this statement:

“If it were not that the urgency and the great danger of the times required otherwise and forced us, I would think this counsel would be good to follow. But now seeing that the authority of our canon fails, and cannot serve us, I judge it not best to go so strictly to work, but to so moderate our proceedings, that dispensation with sufferance may win what severe correction may destroy. Therefore my counsel and reason is to give way to the king’s purpose for a time, lest by proceeding too hastily, we exceed so far, that it may redound both to our shame, and to being unable to rid ourselves again, when we would.”

Robert, bishop of Lincoln, spoke much to the same end:

“Seeing it is manifest that the life and blood of this man is sought, one of these two things must be chosen: either he must part with his archbishopric, or else with his life. Now, I do not greatly see what profit he will take in this matter of his bishopric, if his life is lost.”

Next followed Bartholomew bishop of Exeter with his advice. Inclining his counsel to the state of the times, he affirmed how the days were evil and perilous. And if they could escape the violence of that raging tempest by bearing and relenting, it would not be refused. But that could not be, unless strictness gave way to moderation. And the state of the times required no less, especially as that persecution was not general, but personal and particular. And he thought it more holy and convenient for one head to run into some danger, than the whole church of England be exposed to inevitable inconvenience.

The answer of Roger, bishop of Worcester advised neither the one, nor the other. He said that he would give an answer to neither part:

“For if I said that the pastoral function and cure of souls ought to be relinquished at the king’s will or threatening, then my mouth will speak against my conscience, to the condemnation of my own head. And if I give contrary counsel to resist the king’s sentence, they are here who will hear it, and report it to his grace, and so I will be in danger of being thrust out of the synagogue, and accounted among the public rebels, to be condemned with them. Therefore I neither say this, nor counsel that.”

Against these voices and censures of the bishops, archbishop Becket replies, expostulating and checking them with words of rebuke:

“I perceive and understand you go about to maintain and cherish but your own cowardliness under the colorable shadow of sufferance, and under pretense of dissembling softness, to choak the liberty of Christ’s church. Who has thus bewitched you, O insatiable bishops? What do you mean by this? Why, under the impudent title of *forbearing*, do you bear a double heart, and cloak your manifest iniquity? What do you call this ‘bearing with the times,’ to the detriment of the church of Christ? Let terms serve the matter. Why do you pervert that which is good with untrue terms? For you say we must bear with the malice of the time. I grant that with you. Yet we must not heap sin upon sin. Is God not able to help the state and condition of ‘his church, without the sinful dissimulation of the teachers of the church? Certainly God is disposed to try you. And so tell me, when should the governors of the church put themselves in

danger for the church? In time of tranquility, or in time of distress? And now then — the church lying in such great distress and vexation — why should the good pastor not put himself in peril for it? For I do not think it is a greater act or merit for the ancient bishops of the old time, to lay the foundation of the church *then* with their blood, than it is for us to shed our blood *now* for the liberties of that same church. And to tell you plainly, I think it is not safe for you to swerve from an example which you received from your holy elders.”

On the next day, because it was Sunday, nothing was done. So the day after, the archbishop was cited to appear before the King. But the night before he was taken with a disease, so he kept to his bed that day, and was not able to rise. The morning after, some who were about him, fearing that some danger might happen to him, counselled him in the morning to have a mass in honor of the holy martyr St. Stephen, in order to keep him from the hands of his enemies that day. When the morrow had come (being Tuesday) the bishops and prelates came to him, counselling and persuading him covertly by insinuation (for they dared not speak openly) that he should submit himself with all his goods (and also his archbishopric) to the will of the king — if perhaps by that means his indignation might be assuaged. They added that unless he did so, perjury would be laid against him. For being under the oath of fidelity to keep the king’s laws and ordinances, he would not now observe them. To this Becket the archbishop answered again,

“Brethren, you see and perceive well how the world is set against me, and how the enemy rises and seeks my confusion. And although these things are dolorous and lamentable, yet the thing that grieves me most of all, is this: the sons of my own mother are pricks and thorns against me. And although I hold my peace, yet posterity will know and report how cowardly you have turned your backs, and left your archbishop and metropolitan alone in his conflict, and how you have sat in judgment against me (even though guiltless of crime) now for two straight days. And you are ready to do the same not only in the civil and spiritual court, but also in the temporal court. But in general, I charge and command this (on the virtue of pure obedience, and in peril of your order) that you be present personally in judgment against me. And that you not fail to do so, I here appeal to our mother (the refuge of all those who are oppressed) the church of Rome. And if any secular men lays hands on me (as it is rumored they will) I strictly enjoin and charge you, in the same virtue of obedience, to exercise your ecclesiastical censure upon them, as it becomes you to do for a father and an archbishop. And this I would have you understand, that though the world rages, and the enemy is fierce, and the body trembles (for the flesh is weak), yet God so favoring me, I will neither cowardly shrink from it, nor vilely forsake my flock committed to my charge,” etc.

But the bishop of London, contrary to this commandment of the archbishop, immediately appealed from him. And thus the bishops departed from him to the Court, except two — Henry of Winchester, and Joceline of Salisbury. They returned with him secretly to his chamber, and comforted him. This done, the archbishop (who yesterday was so sorely sick that he could not stir out of his bed) now addresses himself to his mass of St. Stephen with all solemnity, as though it had been an high festival day, with his metropolitan pall, which was not used except upon the holy days, etc.

The mass being ended, the archbishop (putting off his pall, his mitre, and other robes) proceeded to the king’s court. Yet, not trusting to the strength of his mass, in order to make the matter more sure, he also takes the sacrament privately with him, thinking himself sufficiently defended by it against all evils. In going to the king’s chamber (there to await the king’s coming) as he entered the door, he takes from Alexander his crozier, the cross, with the cross-staff, in the sight of all who stood by, and carried it in himself. The other bishops followed him, saying that he was doing other than what became him. Among others, Robert,

bishop of Hereford offered to bear his cross, rather than have Becket do so, for it was not seemly; but the archbishop would not allow him. Then the bishop of London said to him, "If the king sees you come armed into his chamber, he may perhaps draw out his sword against you, which is stronger than yours, and then what will this profit you?" The archbishop answered again, "If the king's sword cuts carnally, yet my sword cuts spiritually and strikes down to hell. But you, my lord, as you have played the fool in this matter, so you will not yet leave off your folly for anything I can see." And so he came into the chamber.

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Becket Accounted a Traitor and Flees the Kingdom.

The king hearing of his coming, and of his manner, did not tarry long. First, the crier called the prelates and all the lords of the temporality together. That being done (and everyone placed in his seat according to his degree) the king began with a great complaint against the archbishop for his manner of entering into the court, "not as a subject into a king's court, but as a traitor, showing himself in such a way as has not been seen before in any Christian king's court, professing the Christian faith." To this all there present gave witness with the king, affirming Becket had always been a vain and proud man, and that the shame of his act not only redounded against the prince himself, but also against his whole realm. They said, too, that this had so happened to the king, because he had done so much for such a man, advancing him so highly. And so all together, on every side and with one cry, called Becket a traitor, as someone who refused to give earthly honor to the king, in keeping his laws and ordinances (as he had sworn to do), and at whose hands he had also received such honor and great preferments. Therefore he was well worthy (they said) to be handled like a perjured traitor and rebel. Whereupon there was great doubt and fear what would befall him. The archbishop of York, coming down to his men, said that he could not abide to see what the archbishop of Canterbury was likely to suffer. Likewise, the tipstaves¹⁶⁰ and other ministers of the assembly, coming down with an outcry against him, crossed themselves at seeing his haughty stubbornness, and the business that was about him. Some of his disciples were sitting at his feet, comforting him softly, and bidding him to lay his curse upon them. Others bid him not to curse, but to pray and forgive them; and if he lost his life in the quarrel of the church and its liberty, he should be happy. In the meantime, Bartholomew bishop of Exeter came, desiring Becket to have regard and compassion for himself, and also of the others, or else they were all likely to suffer. For "a precept comes out from the king that whoever takes your part shall be taken, and suffer as an open rebel. It is said, too, that Joceline bishop of Salisbury, and William bishop of Norwich, are to be brought to the place of execution, for resisting and making intercession for the bishop of Canterbury." When he had said this, the archbishop, looking upon the bishop of Exeter, "From hereafter avoid me," he said. "You do not understand, nor do you savor those things that are of God."

The bishops and prelates then went aside by themselves, away from the other nobles, which the king permitted them to do. They took counsel together what was to be done. Here the matter stood in a doubtful perplexity, for they must either incur the dangerous indignation of the king, or else they must proceed with the nobles in condemnation against the archbishop for resisting the king's sanctions. In this strict necessity, at length they agreed upon this, that with common assent they would cite the archbishop to the See of Rome for perjury. And that they would oblige and bind themselves to the king with a sure promise, to

¹⁶⁰ A tipstave or tipstaff refers to a staff with a metal tip, carried as a sign of office by officers such as bailiffs or constables. The term can also denote the officers themselves who carry such a staff.

work their diligence in deposing the archbishop, on this condition: that the king would promise their safety, and discharge them from the peril of the judgment which was against them. So all the bishops, thus obliging themselves to the king, went to the archbishop, one speaking for the rest (which was Hilary bishop of Chichester), saying, "Once you were our archbishop, and so long we were bound to your obedience. But now, having once sworn your fidelity to the king, you resist him, neglecting his injunctions and ordinances concerning and pertaining to his civil honor and dignity. We hereby pronounce you perjured, nor are we bound to give obedience to an archbishop who is thus perjured. But putting ourselves and all ours in the pope's protection, we cite you to his presence." They assigned him his day and time to appear. Upon this, the archbishop sent to Rome in all haste to the pope, informing him by letters of the whole matter — how, and why, and by whom he was cited.

The archbishop thus being cited up to Rome, still sat with his cross in the court, neither giving way to the king's request, nor abashed with the clamor of the whole court against him, calling him traitor on every side. At length the king, by certain earls and barons, commanded him that without delay he should come and render a full account of all that he had received as the profits and revenues of the realm during the time he was chancellor, and specifically for the 150,000 marks for which he was accountable to the king. The archbishop answered,

"The king knew how often he had made his reckoning of those things which were now required of him; and that Henry, his son and heir of his realm, with all his barons, and also Richard Lucy, chief justice of England, told him that he was free and clear before God and holy church from all receipts and reckonings, and from all secular exactions on the king's behalf. And that, thus taking his discharge at their hands, he entered into his office; and therefore he would make no other account besides this."

When this word was brought to the king, he required his barons to enforce the law against him. They sentenced Becket to be apprehended and laid in prison. This done, the king sent the earl of Cornwall and Devonshire, and the earl of Leicester, to declare his judgment to Becket. The archbishop answered,

"Hear, my son, and good earl, what I say to you: how much more precious the soul is than the body, so much more ought you to obey me in the Lord, rather than your earthly king. Neither does any law or reason permit the children to judge or condemn their father. Therefore, to avoid both the judgment of the king, of you and all others, I put myself wholly to the arbitration of the pope, under God alone, to be judged by him, and by no other. To his presence I appeal here before you all. I commit the ordering of the church of Canterbury, my dignity, with all other things pertaining to it, under the protection of God and him. And as for you, my brethren and fellow bishops, who would rather obey man than God, you also I call and cite to the audience and judgment of the pope, and depart hereafter from you, as from the enemies of the catholic church, and of the authority of the apostolic see."

While the barons returned with this answer to the king, the archbishop, passing through the throng, takes his palfrey (horse), holding his cross in one hand, and his bridle in the other, with the courtiers following after, and crying, "Traitor! traitor! Tarry, and hear your judgment." But he passed on. While the king was at supper, Becket prepared his journey to escape secretly. Changing his garment and his name, he went first to Lincoln, and from there to Sandwich, where he took ship and sailed to Flanders. From there he journeyed into France, as Hoveden writes. However Alanus, differing somewhat in the order of his flight says that, "he did not depart that night; but at supper-time the bishops of London and Chichester came to him, declaring to him that if he would surrender his two manors of

Oxford and Wingham to the king, there was hope to recover the king's favor, and to have all forgiven. But when the archbishop would not agree, as those manors belonged to the church of Canterbury, the king hearing of it took great displeasure. So that the next day Becket was glad to send to the king for leave to depart the realm. The king answered, "He would pause till the next day, and then he would have an answer." But Becket did not wait for his answer. He conveyed himself away secretly to Louis the French king. But before he came to the king, Gilbert the bishop of London, and William, the earl of Arundel, were sent from the king of England to France, requiring the French king, on the part of the king of England, not to receive or retain in his dominion the archbishop of Canterbury.

The French king, understanding the matter, and thinking to have some advantage thereby against the king of England, not only harbors Becket, but he also writes to the pope, and entreats him to support the cause of the archbishop.

[135] A.D. 1165.

The king sent another embassy to Pope Alexander. The ambassadors sent on this journey were Roger archbishop of York, Gilbert bishop of London, Henry bishop of Winchester, Hilary bishop of Chichester, Bartholomew bishop of Exeter; with other doctors and clerics; also William earl of Arundel, with other lords and barons. Coming to the pope's court they were received in a friendly way by some of the cardinals. Among the cardinals there arose some dissension about the matter. Some judged that the bishop of Canterbury, in defense of the liberties of the church, was to be maintained. Some thought again, that he (being a disturber of peace and unity) was to be bridled for his presumption, rather than fostered and encouraged. But the pope wholly inclined to Becket. Therefore the following day, the pope was sitting in consistory with his cardinals. The ambassadors were called to a hearing of Becket's matter. First began the bishop of London; next, the archbishop of York; then Exeter; and the other bishops, each one in order. Their orations were not well received by the pope; some of them were disliked. The earl of Arundel perceiving this, began in this manner:

"Although it is unknown to me, who am both unlettered and ignorant, what these bishops have said here, and I am unable to express my mind in language as they have done — yet being sent and charged to this by my prince, I neither can nor should do anything but declare (as well as I may) what is the cause of our being sent here. It is not indeed to contend or strive with any person, nor to offer any injury or harm to any man, especially in this place, and in the presence here of such a one to whose beck and authority all the world stoops and yields. But for this time, our legation is directed here to present before you, and in the presence of the whole church of Rome, the devotion and love of our king and master, which he has ever had, and still has towards you. And that the same might better appear to your excellency, he has assigned and appointed to this legation, not the least, but the greatest, not the worst, but the best and greatest of all his subjects — both archbishops, bishops, earls, barons, plus other potentates — of such worthiness and parentage, that if he could have found greater in all his realm, he would have sent them, both for the reverence of your person, and of the holy church of Rome.

"Over and beside this, I might add more (which your holiness has sufficiently tried and proved already) the true and hearty fidelity of our king and sovereign toward you (in his first entrance to his kingdom) — wholly submitting himself, with all that is his besides, to your will and pleasure. And truly, to testify of his majesty, how he is disposed to the unity of the catholic faith. We believe there is none more faithful to Christ than he, nor more devout to God, nor yet more moderate in keeping the unity of peace to which he is called. And as I may be bold to profess this of our king and master, so I do not affirm the archbishop of Canterbury to be a

man who is destitute or unfurnished with gifts and qualities in his calling. Rather, he is a man both sage and discreet in those things which pertain to him, except that he seems to some to be quicker and sharper than he needs to be. If not for this blot alone, and if the breach between our king and him had not so happened, both authorities together (the temporal and spiritual) might quietly have flourished, one with the other, in much peace and concord, both under a prince so worthy, and a pastor so virtuous. Therefore, the case so standing as it does, our message here, and our supplication to your vigilant prudence, is that (through your favor and wisdom) the neck of this dissension may be broken, and that reformation of unity and love (by some good means) may be sought.”

This oration of his, although it was liked for its softness and moderation, it did not persuade the Romish bishop to condescend to their request — which was to have two legates or arbitrators sent into England, to examine the controversy between the king and the archbishop. But the pope would not grant their petition, as it would be prejudicial and tending to the oppression of the archbishop. Therefore he desired them to await his coming. Otherwise, Becket being absent, the pope would not in any case proceed against him. But alleging that their appointed time had expired, they said, “We cannot wait for the coming of Becket, but must return to the king with our cause frustrated, and without the pope’s blessing.” Within four days after, Becket came to the pope’s court. Prostrating himself at his feet, he brought out of his bosom a scroll containing the customs and ordinances of the king. The pope received the scroll, and read it in the open hearing of his cardinals. He condemned and accursed most of the decrees of the king, which he called “his grandfather’s ordinances.” Besides this, the pope blamed Becket for having yielded so much at the beginning. Yet, because he was repentant, the pope was rather content to absolve him for it. And because of Becket’s great troubles which he had sustained for the liberties of holy church, the pope dismissed him for that day, with great favor.

Thomas Becket Resigns His See to the Pope.

The next day, pope Alexander assembled his cardinals together in his secret chamber. Archbishop Becket appeared before them, making this oration to the pope and his popelings, which here I thought to set out in our English tongue, so that posterity hereafter may understand either the vain superstition or vile slavery of the churchmen in those days. Not being content with their own natural prince and king given to them by God, they must seek further to the pope.

The Oration of Becket resigning his bishopric to the Pope.

“Fathers and lords, I ought not to lie in any place, much less before God and in your presence here. Therefore, with much sighing and sorrow of heart, I grant and confess that these troubles of the church of England were raised through my miserable fault. For I entered into the fold of Christ, but not by the door of Christ. For the canonical election did not call me lawfully to it, but terror of public power drove me in. And although I took this burden upon myself against my will, yet it was not the will of God, but man’s pleasure that placed me in that office. Therefore it is no wonder all things have gone contrary and backward with me. And as for resigning it again, if I had so done, and given into their hands the privilege of my episcopal authority, which had been granted to me at the command of the king (as my fellow bishops urgently called upon me to do), then I would have left a pernicious and dangerous example to the whole catholic church. Therefore I thought it good to defer that to your presence. And now acknowledging my ingress not to be canonical, and therefore fearing it to have a worse end — and again pondering my strength and ability (as insufficient for such a charge) lest I be found to hold that office to the ruin of the flock to whom I was appointed an unworthy pastor, I here render up to your fatherly hands the archbishopric of Canterbury,” etc.

And so, removing his ring from his finger, and offering it to the pope, he desired a bishop to be provided for the church of Canterbury, seeing that he thought himself not fit to fulfill the office. And so (with tears, as the history says) he ended his oration.

This done, the archbishop was bid to stand aside, and the pope conferred with his cardinals about the resignation of Becket, what was best to be done. Some thought it best to take the opportunity offered, thinking that thereby the king's wrath might easily be assuaged, if the church of Canterbury were assigned to some other person, and Becket otherwise provided for. Others again thought otherwise, whose reason was,

“If he (who for the liberties of the church had ventured not only his goods, dignity, and authority, but also his life) should now be deprived at the king's pleasure, it might be a precedent to others hereafter. And so it might redound not only to the weakening of the Catholic church, but also to the derogation of the pope's authority.”

To be brief, this latter sentence at length prevailed. And so Becket received his pastoral office from the pope's hand again, with commendation and much favor.

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But as he could not very well be placed in England, the pope in the meanwhile sent him with a monk's habit into the abbey of Pontigny in France, where he remained for two years. From there he moved to Senon, where he abode for five years. So the time of his exile continued seven years in all.

Upon this, the king being certified by his ambassadors of the pope's answer, how his favor inclined more to Becket than to him, was moved (very naturally) with displeasure. And upon sailing from England to Normandy, he directed certain injunctions against the pope and the archbishop of Canterbury.

These and other injunctions Becket partly specifies in a letter, writing to a friend of his in this manner:

“Thomas archbishop of Canterbury, to his well-beloved friend, etc.

“Be it known to your brotherly goodness that we, with all ours here (by God's grace) are safe and in good health. Having a good hope and trust in your faithful friendship, I charge you, and require you, that either by the one who brings this, or by some other (whom you know faithful and trusty to our church of Canterbury, and to us) you write with all speed what is done. As to the king's decrees set out here, they are these: That all havens and ports should be diligently kept, that no letters of the pope's interdict or curse be brought in. And if any monks bring them in, they shall have their feet cut off; if he is a priest or cleric, he shall be mutilated; if he is a layman, he shall be hanged; if he is a leper he shall be burned. And if any bishop departs for fear of the pope's interdict, let him have nothing else besides his staff in his hand. Also the king's will is that all scholars and students beyond the seas shall repair home, or else lose their benefices. And if they still remain, they shall lose the liberty of ever returning. Further, if any such priests are be found who for the pope's suspension or interdict refuses to officiate, they shall be mutilated. In short, all such priests who show themselves to be rebels to the king, let them be deprived of their benefices,” etc.

Besides these and similar injunctions, it was also set forth by the king's proclamation (A.D. 1166). That all manner of persons, both men and women, whoever were found of the kindred of Thomas Becket, should be exiled, without taking any part of their goods with them, and be sent to him wherever he was. This was no little vexation to Becket to behold these. Moreover, as he was then living with Gwarine, abbot of Pontigny, to whom the pope

had commended him, the king wrote to the abbot, and required him not to retain the archbishop of Canterbury in his house. For if he did, the king would drive out of his realm all the monks of his order; upon which Becket was forced to move. He went to Louis the French king, who placed him at Senon, where he remained for five years.

Letter of the pope to King Henry. And his answer to the pope.

In the meantime the pope wrote to King Henry, to exhort and charge him to show favor to Thomas Becket. In the course of the epistle, are these words:

“Therefore we desire, admonish, and exhort your honor by these our apostolical writings, and also enjoin you upon the remission of your sins, on behalf of Almighty God, and of St. Peter, prince of the apostles, by our authority, that you will receive back the aforesaid archbishop into your favor and grace, for the honor of God, his church, and of your own realm,” etc.

Thus have we heard the pope’s entreating letter. Now here is another letter sent to the king, in which the pope menaces him.

“Bishop Alexander, servant of the. servants of God, to King Henry, king of England, health and apostolical blessing,

“How fatherly and gently we have oft-times entreated and exhorted, both by legates and letters, your princely honor, to be reconciled again with our reverend brother Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, so that he and his may be restored again to their churches and other possessions pertaining to them. Your wisdom is not ignorant of this, seeing it is notified and spread almost throughout Christendom. Therefore, as up to now we could not prevail with you, nor move or stir your mind with fair and gentle words, it laments us not a little, to be so frustrated and deceived in the hope and expectation which we had conceived of you. Especially seeing that we love you so dearly, as our own dearly beloved son in the Lord, and understand that so great a jeopardy hangs over you.

“But as much as it is written, ‘Cry out and do not cease, lift up your voice like a trumpet, and declare to my people their wickedness, and to the house of Judah their sins.’^{Isa 58.1} Also so far as it is commanded in Solomon, that ‘the sluggish person should be stoned with the dung of oxen,’¹⁶¹ we have thought it good, therefore, not to forbear or support your stubbornness any longer against justice and salvation. Nor should the mouth of the archbishop be stopped any longer; but that he may freely prosecute the charge of his office and duty, and revenge with the sword of ecclesiastical discipline, the injuries both of himself, and of his church committed to his charge.

“And here I have sent to you two legates, Peter de ponte Dei, and Bernard de Corilio, to admonish you about the same. But if you will neither be advised by us, nor give ear to them in obeying, it is to be feared, doubtless, that such things as they shall declare to you from us in our behalf may happen and fall upon you. Dated at Benevent, the ninth day before the kalends (1st day) of June.”

An answer to the Pope

To answer these letters, there was another letter drawn out and directed to the pope, made by some of the clergy, it seems. But it was not without consent of the king, as may appear by the title, inveighing against, and disapproving the misbehavior of the archbishop. The tenor of it follows here, and it begins:

¹⁶¹ There is no such verse, whether in Songs, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or Sirach.

“Time now requires us to seek help more than to make complaints. For the holy mother church (our sins deserving it), lies in a dangerous state of great decay, which is likely to ensue unless the present mercy of the Lord supports her.

“Such is the wickedness now of schismatics, that the father of fathers, Pope Alexander (for the defense of his faith, and for the love of righteousness) is banished out of his country; not able to keep free residence in his own proper see, because of the hardened heart of Frederick the Pharaoh (Barbarossa).

“The church of Canterbury also is miserably impaired and blemished, in the spiritual as well as in the temporal estate. Much like a ship in the sea, being destitute of her guide, it is tossed in the floods, and wrestles with the winds, while the pastor being absent from his province, dares not remain there through the power of the king. Being overly wise (to the jeopardy of himself, his church, and us also), he has brought and entangled us likewise with himself in the same partaking of his punishments and labors, not considering how we ought to forbear, and not resist superior powers. Also he shows himself unkind to us, who with all our affections bear with him the burden of his afflictions, yet not ceasing to persecute us who stand in the same condemnation with him. For between him and our sovereign prince, the king of England, a certain matter of contention arose, upon which they were both agreed, that a day should be appointed to have the controversy discussed by equity and justice.

“The day having come, the king commanded all the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of the church to be called in a solemn assembly, So that the greater and more general this council was, the more manifest the detection of this stubborn malice should appear and be seen.

“Therefore, at the day mentioned above, this troubler of the realm and of the church (Becket), presents himself in the sight of our catholic king. Not trusting the quality and condition of his cause, he arms himself with the armor of the cross, as if brought into the presence of a tyrant. Because of this, the king’s majesty being somewhat aggrieved (yet because he would be delivered from all suspicion) commits the matter to the hearing of the bishops.

[137] A.D. 1166.

“This done, it rests in the bishops to decide and cease this contention, and to set agreement between them, removing all occasion of dissension. Going about this thing, this archbishop comes in to them, forbidding and commanding that no man should proceed in any sentence upon him before the king.

“This being signified to the king, his mind was grievously provoked to anger. His anger, notwithstanding, would have been easily assuaged if the other would have submitted himself, and acknowledged his default. But adding stubbornness to his trespass, through the greatness of his excess, he was the author of his own punishment, which he now bears by the civil law. And yet he shames to crave pardon for his deserts at the king’s hand, whose anger he does not fear to stir up in such a troublesome time of the persecution of the church. Thus he augments and increases thereby the persecution which the church now lies under. It would have been much better for him to have tempered himself with the bridle of moderation, in the highest estate of his dignity, lest in exceeding too far in straining the strict points of things by over presumption, perhaps *through* his presumption (it not being in lowly and tolerable things), he might fall from higher. And if the detriment of the church would not move him, yet the great benefits and preferments of riches and honors ought to persuade him not to be so stubborn against the king. But here perhaps his friend and our adversary will object that his bearing and submitting to the king in this behalf would be prejudicial against the authority of the apostolical see. Although he did not, or might not, understand that the dignity of the church would suffer a little detriment in that judgment, he might and ought to have dissembled for the time being, to obtain peace for the church. He will object again, alleging the name of

father, that it sounds like a point of arrogance for children to proceed in a judgment of condemnation against the father, which is not convenient. But he must understand again, that it was necessary that the obedience and humility of the children should temper the pride of the father, lest afterward the hatred of the father might redound upon the children. Therefore, by these premises, you, father, may understand that the action of our adversary ought to fall down as void and of no effect, who has thus proceeded against us only under the influence of malice, having no just cause or reason to stand upon.

“And as much as the care and charge of all churches (as you know) lies upon us, it stands upon us to provide concerning the state of the church of Canterbury, by our diligence and circumspection. This, so that the church of Canterbury, by the excesses of its pastor, are not driven to ruin or decay.”

By this epistle it may appear that Becket (being absent from England) went about to work some trouble against some of the clergy and the laity, in excommunicating those whom he took to be his evil-willers.

Now, to understand further what his working was, or who he excommunicated, this letter sent to William bishop of Norwich, will declare.

A Letter of Becket to the Bishop of Norwich.

“He binds himself to the penalty of the crime, whoever receiving power and authority by God, does not use and exercise it with due severity in punishing vice: but winking and dissembling, ministers boldness to wicked doers, maintaining them in their sin. For the blood of the wicked is required at the hand of the priest, who is negligent or dissembles. And as the Scripture says, ‘Thorns and brambles grow in the hands of the idle drunkard.’ Therefore, lest (through our too excessive sufferance and dissembling) the transgressions of manifest evil-doers should also be laid to our charge, and redound to the destruction of the church through our guilty silence; we therefore, following the authority of the pope’s commandment, have laid our sentence of curse and excommunication upon the Earl Hugo: commanding you throughout all your diocese to publicly denounce the said earl as accursed, so that, according to the discipline of the church, he will be sequestered from the fellowship of all faithful people. Also, it is not unknown to your brotherhood, how long we have born with the transgressions of the bishop of London who, among other acts, I would to God were not a great doer and favorer of this schism, and a subverter of the rites and liberties of holy church. Therefore, being supported with the authority of the apostolic see, we have also excommunicated him. Besides him, also the bishop of Salisbury, because of his disobedience and contempt: and others likewise, upon diverse and sundry causes, whose names follow here subscribed: — Hugo Bernard’s son, Rudolph de Brock, Robert de Brock a cleric, Hugo de St. Clare, and Letardus a cleric of Norfolk, Nigellus of Scacavil, and Richard Chaplin, William of Hasting, and the friar who possesses my church of Monchot. We therefore charge and command you by the apostolical authority and ours, and on the virtue of your obedience, and on the peril of salvation, and of your order, that you cause these to be openly proclaimed excommunicate, throughout all your diocese, and to command all the faithful to avoid their company. Fare you well in the Lord.

“Let not your heart be troubled, nor fear: for we stand sure through the assistance of the apostolic see, God being our support against the shifts of the malignant sort, and against all their appeals. Furthermore, all those who have been solemnly cited by us will sustain the like sentence of excommunication, if God wills, on Ascension-day, unless they otherwise agree with me. That is, to wit, Geoffrey archdeacon of Canterbury, and Robert his vicar, Rice of Wilcester, Richard de Lucy, William Giffard, Adam of Cherings, with others: who, either at the command of the king, or upon their own temerity, have invaded the goods and possessions either pertaining to us, or to our clerics about us. With these also we excommunicate all those

who are known, either with aid or council, to have incensed or set forward the proceeding of our king against the liberties of the church, and exiling of the innocents. And those also who are known to impeach or hinder by any manner of way the messengers (sent either from the pope, or from us) for the necessities of the church. Fare you well again, and ever.”

Up to here the reader has seen diverse and sundry letters of Thomas Becket, from which we may collect a sufficient history of his doings and demeanor — even if nothing further were said about him — concerning his lusty and haughty spirit, about whatever suited either his degree or cause which he took in hand. And here perhaps I may seem to tarry too long in the history of this one man, having to write about so many others who were better than he was. Yet for the weaker sort who have considered him a saint, and still consider him so, having little understanding to judge or discern in the causes of men, I thought to add one more letter below. In this letter, he complains about his king to a foreign power — doing all in his power to stir up for his own cause, mortal war to the destruction of many. For suppose that wrong had indeed been done to him by his prince, was it not enough for him to flee? What cause did he have for his own private revenge, to drive potentates into public discord? Now, having no just cause, but rather offering injury in a false quarrel, to so complain about his prince — whatever is to be said about this, let every man judge who sees this letter.

*An Epistle of Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury
to Pope Alexander.*

“To our most loved father and lord, Alexander, by the grace of God bishop, Thomas the humble minister and servant of the church of Canterbury, due and reverend obedience. Long enough and too long most loving father have I forborne, still looking for the amendment of the king of England, but I have reaped no fruit from my long patience. Rather, while I thus forbear unwisely, I augment and procure the detriment and diminishing of my authority, and also of the church of God.

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“For oftentimes I have by devout and religious messengers invited the king to make condign satisfaction. And also by my letters (copies of which I have sent you) I have intimated and pronounced God’s severity and vengeance against him, unless he repents and amends. But notwithstanding that, he grows from evil to worse, oppressing and crushing the church and sanctuary of God; persecuting both me and those who take part with me. So that with fearful and threatening words, his purpose is to terrify those who (for God’s cause and my own) seek any way to relieve and help me. He also wrote letters to the abbot of the Cistercian order, that as he valued the abbacy of his order (which he said was under his power) he should not receive me into its fellowship, nor do anything else for me. Why should I use many words? So much has the rigor and severity of the king, as well as his officers, showed itself under our patience and sufferance. So that, if a great number of men, yes and of the most religious sort, were to show you the matter as it is indeed, I partly doubt whether your holiness would give credit to them or not. Therefore, with heaviness of mind considering these things, and beholding the peril of the king as well as of ourself, I have publicly condemned not only those pernicious customs, but all those perversities and wicked doings by which the church of England is disturbed and brought to confusion, and also the writings by which they were confirmed. I excommunicated generally the observers and exacters of these things, as well as their inventers and patrons, along with their favorers, counsellors, and whatever coadjutors either of the clergy or laity. I also absolved our bishops from their oath, by which they were so strictly enjoined to observe these things.

“These are the articles which in that writing I have principally condemned. First, that it is inhibited to appeal to the apostolic see for any cause, except by the king’s license. That a

bishop may not punish any man for perjury, or for breaking his vow of fidelity. That a bishop may not excommunicate any man who holds from the king *in capite*,¹⁶² or interdict either their lands or offices without the king's license. That clerics and religious men may be taken from us to secular judgment. That the king or any other judge may hear and decide the causes of the church and tithes. That it shall not be lawful for any archbishop or bishop to go outside of the realm, and to come at the pope's call, without the king's license; and diverse others such as these. I have also excommunicated John of Oxford, who has communicated with that schismatic and excommunicate person (Reginald Coloniensis) who also, contrary to the commandment of the lord pope and ours, has usurped the deanery of the church of Salisbury, and has (to renew his schism) taken an oath in the emperor's court. I have also denounced and excommunicated Richard of Worcester, because he has fallen into the same damnable heresy, and communicated with that famous schismatic of Cologne — devising and foregoing all mischief possible, with the schismatics and Flemings, to the destruction of the church of God, and especially of the church of Rome, by a composition made between the king of England and them. Also Richard de Lucy, and Jocelin de Baliol, who have assisted the favorers of the king's tyranny and workers of their heresies. Also Rudolph de Brock, and Hugo de St. Clare, and Thomas the son of Bernard, who have usurped the possessions and goods of the church of Canterbury without our license and consent. We have also excommunicated all those who, without our license, stretch out their hands to the possessions and goods of the church of Canterbury. We have not yet excommunicated the king himself personally, still waiting for his amendment. Notwithstanding, we will not defer to excommunicate, unless he quickly amends, and is warned by what he has done. And therefore, so that the authority of the apostolic see, and the liberty of the church of God, which in these parts are almost utterly lost, may by some means be restored, it is fitting and very necessary that what we have done in this should be ratified by your holiness, and confirmed by your letters. Thus I wish your holiness to prosper and flourish long.”

By this epistle, whoever wishes to understand the doings of Becket, may partly judge what is to be thought of them. In some part they may be imputed either to ignorance of mind, or blindness of zeal, or human frailty. Yet in this point, to so vilely complain about his natural prince, he can in no way be defended. But such was the blindness of the prelates in those days, who measured and esteemed the dignity and liberties of Christ's church by nothing else than by the goods and possessions flowing and abounding in the clergy. They thought there was no greater point of religion in the church, than to maintain them. For this cause they most abominably abused Christian discipline and the excommunication of the church. And what wonder if the acts and doings of this archbishop now seem to us in these days both fantastical and strange, when the suffragans of his own church and clergy, writing to him, could but reprehend him, as may be seen in this their epistle:

*An effectual and pithy letter, full of reason and persuasion,
sent from all the Suffragans of the Church of Canterbury,
to Thomas Becket their Archbishop.*

“Such troubles and perturbations as happened through the strangeness of your departure out of the realm, we hoped by your humility and prudence would have been reduced again (God's grace working with them) into a peaceable tranquility. And it was no little joy to us, to hear of you in those parts where you are conversant, how humbly you behaved yourself there, not vaunting yourself at all against your prince and king; and that you attempt no uprisings or wrestlings against his kingdom, but that you bear with much patience the burden of poverty;

¹⁶² *In capite*: An ancient English tenure, by which either person or land was held immediately by the king, or by his crown, by either knight-service or socage (payment of rent).

and gave yourself to reading and prayer, and to redeem the loss of your time spent, with fasting, watchings, and tears; and so, being occupied with spiritual studies, to tend and rise up to the perfection of virtue, etc. But now, through the secret relation of some, we hear (what we are sorry for) that you have sent a threatening letter to him, in which there is no salutation premised. In this letter you also pretend no entreating nor prayers for obtaining favor, nor use any friendly manner in declaring what you write. But menacing with much austerity, you threaten to interdict him, and to cut him from the society of the church. If you accomplish this thing with like severity, as you threaten to do in words, you will not only put us out of all hope of any peace, but also put us in fear of hatred and discord without measure, and without any redress among us. But wisdom will consider before the end of things, laboring and endeavoring to finish that which she wisely begins. Therefore your discretion would do well to diligently forecast and consider what you tend toward; what end may ensue from it, and where you are going with it. Certainly, for our parts, hearing what we hear, we are discouraged from what we hoped for. Previously, having some good comfort of tranquility to come, we are cast from hope to despair. So that, while one is drawn thus against another, there is scarcely any hope or place left to make entreaty or supplication. Therefore, writing to your fatherhood, we exhort and counsel you by way of charity, that you not add trouble to trouble, nor heap injury upon injury. But that you so behave yourself, that all menaces being set aside, you rather give yourself to patience and humility, and yield your cause to the clemency of God, and to the mercy of your prince. And in so doing you will heap coals of charity upon the heads of many. Thus charity shall be kindled, and that which menacings cannot do (by God's help and good men's counsel) perhaps pity and godliness will obtain. It would be better to sustain poverty with praise, than in great promotions to be a common note to all men. It is right well known to all men, how kind the king has been to you — from what baseness to what dignity he has advanced you, and also into his own familiarity he has so much preferred you. So that, from the northern ocean to the Pyrenean mountains, he has subdued all things to your authority. It went so far that whoever could find any favor with you, were accounted fortunate men among all others.

[139] A.D. 1166-1169.

“And, furthermore, lest your estimation be over-matched by any nobility, he (against the mind of his mother, and of his realm) has placed and ratified you substantially in ecclesiastical dignity, and advanced you to this honor in which you stand: trusting through your help and counsel to reign more safely and prosperously. Now, if he finds disquietude in which he trusted to have quietness, what will all men say or think of you? What recompence or retribution will this be thought to be, for so many and great benefits received? Therefore (if it pleases you), you would do well to favor and spare your fame and estimation, and to overcome your lord and sovereign with humility and charity. If our advice cannot move you to this, the love and fidelity you bear to the bishop and holy church of Rome ought to incline you not to attempt any such thing whereby the troubles of the church our mother may increase, or whereby her sorrow may be augmented in the loss of those, whose disobedience she now bewails. For what if it so happens through provocation, that the king (whom all his subjects and kingdoms obey) relinquishes the pope, which God forbid, and denies all obedience to him, just as the pope denies help or aid to the king against you? What inconvenience would grow from it? And do you think he does not have great instigations, supplications, gifts, and many fair promises to do so? Yet (notwithstanding) he abides firm up to now, in the rock, despising with a valiant mind all that the world can offer. This one thing we fear, lest his mind (whom no worldly offers can assail, no glory, riches, or treasure can overturn) be subverted only through indignation of unkindness. This thing, if it chances to happen through you, then may you sit down and sing the song of the Lamentation of Jeremiah, and weep your full.

“Consider therefore, if it pleases you, and foresee well with yourself, this purpose of yours, if it proceeds, how hurtful and perilous it will be — not only to the pope, and to the holy church of Rome, but also to yourself most especially. But perhaps some around you, of haughty and high-minded stoutness, more stout than wise, would not have you take this way, but would give you contrary counsel, to rather prove and declare what you are able to do against your lord and prince, and to practice against him and all his, the utmost of your power and authority. This power and authority of yours, to the one who offends is fearful; and to the one who will not amend, it is terrible. Some perhaps will whisper such counsel as this in your ear. But we say this in response to them, and we answer for our king, whom notwithstanding we do not affirm to be without fault. Yet we speak confidently and protest in his behalf, that he is always ready to amend and make satisfaction.

“The king, appointed as the Lord’s anointed, provides for the peace of his subjects all that he is able. And therefore to the intent that he may preserve this peace in his churches and among his subjects committed to him, he wills and requires that such ordinances as are due to the kings, and were exhibited to them before this time, are to be exhibited to him also. If any contradiction has sprung up between him and us in this, when he was admonished from the pope by the reverend bishops of London and Hereford, he did not burst into any defiance. But he meekly and humbly answered that in whatever the church or any ecclesiastical person can show himself aggrieved, he would stand to the judgment of the church of his kingdom. Also he is ready no less to perform this, thinking nothing more sweet to him than to be admonished of his fault, if he has offended the Lord, and to reform it. And not only to reform and amend his fault, but also to satisfy it to the utmost, if the law so requires him. Therefore, seeing that he is so willing to recompense and satisfy the judgment of the church in all things pertaining to the church — refusing no order that will be taken, but in all things submitting his neck to the yoke of Christ — by what right, by what canon, or reason can you interdict him, or excommunicate him? It is a laudable thing and a virtue of great commendation in wise men, to wisely go with judgment and reason, and not be carried away with puffs of hasty violence.

“Whereupon this is the only and common petition of us all, that your fatherly care will diligently provide for your flock and sheep committed to you, so that they do not miscarry, or run to any ruin through any inconsiderate or too much heady counsel in you. But rather, that through your softness and sufferance, they may obtain life, peace, and security. It moves us all, what we hear of late was done by you against the bishop of Salisbury, and the dean of the same church, prosperously, as some men suppose. You have given out against him the sentence of excommunication and condemnation, before there was any question of their crime, following in this, it seems, more the heat of hastiness than the path of righteousness. This is a new order of judgment, unheard of to this day in our laws and canons, first to condemn a man, and after to inquire of the fact committed. Lest you hereafter attempt to exercise this order in like manner against our sovereign and king, or against us and our churches, and the parishes committed to us, to the detriment of the pope, and the holy church of Rome, and to no little confusion for us all, we therefore lay here against you, for ourselves, the remedy of appeal. And as before, openly in the public face of the church with lively voice, we appealed to the Pope for certain perils that might have happened, so now again, in writing, we appeal to the pope, assigning as the term of our appeal the day of the Lord’s ascension.

“Most humbly and reverently beseeching your goodness, that you, taking a better way in this matter, will let your cause fall, sparing in this both the labors and charges of yourself, as well as ours. And thus we wish you right well to fare, reverend in the Lord.”

*The Letter of Matilda the Empress, and Mother of the King,
to Thomas Becket.*

“My Lord the Pope commanded me, and upon the forgiveness of my sins enjoined me, that I should be a mediator and means of peace and concord between my son and you, by reconciling yourself to him, which (as you know) you requested me to do. Therefore, with more earnest and more affection (for the divine honor as well as for holy church) I took the enterprise upon myself. But I assure you, by the way, that the king, his barons, and council, take it grievously, that you, whom he entirely loved, honored and made greatest in all this realm with the intent to have more comfort and better trust in you, should thus rebel (as it is reported), and stir his people against him. Yes and further, that as much as it lies in you, you went about to disinherit him, and deprive him of his crown. On the occasion of this, I sent Lawrence to you, our trusty and familiar servant archdeacon, by whom I pray that I may understand your mind in this, and your good will toward my son, and how you mean to behave yourself toward his Grace (if my prayer and petition may be heard by him in your behalf). But this one thing I assure you, that unless it is through your great humility and moderation, evidently appearing in you, you cannot obtain the favor of the king. What you mean to do in this, I pray you send me word by your proper letters and messengers.”

Now to proceed further in the order of the history. After these letters were sent to and fro (A.D. 1169), which was the fifteenth year of the reign of King Henry II, the king doubted and feared that the archbishop would proceed in his excommunication against him. So he made his appeal to the presence of the pope. He requested to have certain legates sent down from Rome, to take up the matter between the archbishop and him. Moreover, he requested that those who were interdicted might be absolved. Thereupon two cardinals came to Normandy, sent from Alexander the Pope with letters to the king. They appointed the archbishop to meet them there before the king, on St. Martin’s day. But the archbishop, neither agreeing with the day nor the place, delayed his coming till the eighth day after. Nor would he go any further than to Grisortium. where the two cardinals and archbishop, with other bishops meeting together, had a treaty of peace and reconciliation. But it came to no conclusion.

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Letter of Two Cardinals to the Pope, Concerning Becket.

Because the content of this treaty or action is sufficiently contained in the letters written to the pope by cardinals William and Otto, it requires no further labor than to give the letter itself, as follows.

*A copy of the Epistle written and sent by two Cardinals to the Pope,
concerning the matter of Archbishop Becket.*

“William and Otto, cardinals of the church of Rome to Alexander the Pope, etc. Coming to the land of the king of England, we found the controversy between him and the archbishop of Canterbury sharper and more vehement than we wished. For the king, and the greater part of those around him, said that the archbishop had grievously stirred up the French king against him (Louis VII); and he also made the earl of Flanders, his kinsman (who bore no displeasure toward him before), his open adversary, ready to war against him, as is most certain by diverse evidences. Thus when we came to Cadomus, into the king’s presence, we gave the letters of your fatherhood into his hands. After he had received and considered them (bringing out other letters received from you before, which were somewhat different and altering from these which he received from us) he was moved with no little indignation. He said that after our departure from you, the archbishop had received from you other contrary letters, by virtue of which he was exempted from our judgment, so that he would not be compelled to answer us.

“Moreover, the king affirmed to us, and the bishops present there testified the same, that concerning the old and ancient customs of his progenitors (about which a complaint had been made to you), what was intimated to you was, for the most part, false and untrue. They further offered to us, that if there were any such customs or laws in his time, which seemed prejudicial or disagreeable to the statutes of the church, he would willingly be content to revoke and disannul them. Whereupon we, with other archbishops, bishops, and abbots of the land, hearing the king be so reasonable, labored by all the means we might, that the king should not utterly break from us, but rather would incline to have the matter between him and the forenamed archbishop, brought before us. Because of this, we directed our chaplains to the archbishop, with letters appointing for him both the time and place where he might safely meet with us at the feast of St. Martin. Nevertheless, pretending certain excuses, he made delays, putting off the time from the day of St. Martin to the eighth day following, which stirred the king’s heart more than is to be thought.

“Thus although we offered safe conduct to the archbishop, yet when he refused to meet us in the borders of the king, to satisfy his mind we condescended to meet him within the land of the French king, in the place where he himself appointed — because there should be no hindrance in us by which to stop his profit. After we had entered communication, we began to exhort him, all that we could, to submit and humble himself to his sovereign and king, who had heaped such benefits and dignities upon him. Being thus moved and exhorted by us, he departed aside to consult with his council on the matter. At length, after counsel was taken, he came again, answering in this manner: that he would submit and humble himself to the king, ‘Saving the honor of God, and liberty of the church, saving also the honesty of his person, and possessions of churches; and moreover, saving the justice of him and of all his in all things,’ etc. After this communication, we moved and required him more urgently, that he would come to the specialties.¹⁶³ Likewise we demanded of him, if he would stand and submit himself to our letters, if the king and the bishops were contented to do so. To which he said that, ‘he had received from you a commandment, not to answer until he and all his were restored fully to all their possessions; and then he would proceed in the matter, according to what commandment he would receive from the apostolic see.’

“Thus breaking off communication, seeing that he neither would stand to judgment, nor come to conformity, we thought to relate this to the king, and so we did. We declared what he had expressed to us — yet not uttering all, but keeping back a great part of what we had heard and seen. When the king and his nobles understood this, he affirmed to us again, that in this he was cleared so much the more, for the archbishop would not stand to their judgment, nor abide their trial. After much heaviness and lamentation by the king, the archbishop, bishops, and abbots of the realm requested of us, whether we had any such power, by virtue of our commission, to withstand Becket and proceed against him. And perceiving that our authority would not serve this end; and fearing lest the archbishop, refusing all order of judgment, would again work disquietude to some noble personages of the realm; and seeing that our authority could not extend so far as to help them against him, they consulted among themselves. They agreed with one consent, to make their appeal to your audience, prefixing accordingly the terms of their appeal.”

By this epistle of these two cardinals sent to the pope, all the discourse and manner of that assembly concerning the confidence between the cardinals and the archbishop may sufficiently appear. When William, who was the more eloquent of the two cardinals, had reasoned long with Becket concerning the peace of the church — which Becket said he preferred above all things — the cardinal said,

¹⁶³ *Specialties*: in law, a contract or obligation under seal, with its promises, conditions, and penalties.

“Well then, seeing all this contention between the king and you rises upon certain laws and customs to be abrogated, and that you regard the peace of the church so much, then what do you say? Will you renounce your bishopric, and the king will renounce his customs? The peace of the church now lies in your hands, either to retain or to let go; what do you say?”

Becket replied, “The proportion is not the same. For (saving the honor of my church and my person) I cannot renounce my bishopric. On the other hand, it becomes the king for his soul’s health and honor, to renounce his ordinances and customs.” This he proved, because the *pope* had condemned those customs; and he likewise with the church of Rome had done the same, etc.

After the cardinals had returned, the French king seeing the king of England disquieted and solicitous to have peace (or at least pretending to set up an agreement between them) brought the matter to a communication among them. In this communication, the French king made himself an umpire between them. The king of England, hearing that the archbishop would commit himself to Louis’s arbitration, was more willing to allow his presence. Whereupon, many being present there, the archbishop, prostrating himself at the king’s feet, declared to him on his knees, that he would commit the whole cause of the dissension that rose between them, to Louis’s arbitration; adding (as he did before) “Saving the honor of God.” The king (as said before) was greatly offended at this word, hearing and seeing the stiffness of the man sticking so much to this word. He was highly displeased, rebuking him with many grievous words, as a proud and stubborn man, and also charging him with being an ungrateful person, having sundry and great benefits bestowed upon him, and forgetting what Henry had so gently done and bestowed upon him. Speaking to the French king present there, the king of England says,

“See, sir, if it pleases you, whatever displeases this man, he calls it ‘contrary to the honor of God.’ And so by this means he would vindicate and claim for himself both what is his and what is mine also. And yet as I will not do anything contrary or prejudicial to God’s honor, I offer him this: there have been kings in England before, both of greater and less puissance (power) than I have. Likewise there have been many bishops of Canterbury, both great and holy men. What the greatest and most holy of all his predecessors before him have done to the least of my progenitors and predecessors, let him do the same to me, and I am content.”

All those who stood by, hearing these words of the king, cried with one voice, “The king has debased himself enough to the bishop.” The archbishop made no answer, but kept silent. “What,” says the French king to him, “my lord archbishop, will you be better than those holy men? Will you be greater than Peter? Why do you stand doubting? Here now you have peace and quietness placed in your own hands, if you will take it.”

[141] A.D. 1169-1170.

To this the archbishop replied,

“It is true. My predecessors were both much better and greater than I, and every one of them for his time, although he did not extirpate all, yet he plucked up and corrected somewhat, whatever seemed adverse and repugnant to God’s honor. For if they had taken these all together away, no such occasion then would have been left for any man to raise up this fiery trial now against us — that we, being so approved with them, might also be crowned with them, being likewise partakers of praise and reward, as we are partakers of their labor and travel. And though some of them have been slack, or have exceeded their duty, we are not bound to follow their example in that. When Peter denied Christ, we rebuke him; but when he resisted the rage of Nero, we commend him in that. And therefore, because he could not find it in his conscience to consent to what he should in no way dissemble, he did not. And because of

this, he lost his life. By such like oppressions, the church has always grown. Our forefathers and predecessors, because they would not dissemble the name and honor of Christ, they therefore suffered. And shall I, to have the favor of one man, allow the honor of Christ to be suppressed?"

The nobles standing by, hearing him speak this way, were greatly grieved by him, noting in him both arrogance and willfulness, in perturbing and refusing such an honest offer of agreement. But especially one among the rest was most grieved, who openly protested there, that seeing the archbishop had so refused the counsel and request of both kingdoms, he was not worthy to have the help of either of them. But as the kingdom of England had rejected him, so the realm of France should not receive him.

Dissimulation of King Louis. Becket Returns to England.

Alan, Herbert, and another of his chaplains who committed to history the doings of Becket, record (whether truly or not I cannot say) that the French king sent for him, as one who greatly sorrowed and lamented the words that Becket had spoken. At his coming, Becket prostrated himself at Louis's feet, confessing his fault, in giving counsel to him in such a cause (pertaining to the honor of God) to relent in this, and to yield to the pleasure of man. Therefore, declaring his repentance, he desired to be absolved of it. So that after this, the French king and Becket were great friends together. It was to much and extent, that when King Henry sent to the king to entreat him, and desire that he would not support or maintain his enemy within his realm, the French king utterly denied the king's request. He took part with the archbishop, rather than with Henry.

Besides these quarrels and grudges between the king and the archbishop mentioned above, there followed yet another, which was this: shortly after this communication between the king and Becket, the king of England returned from Normandy to England (A.D. 1170, in the sixteenth year of his reign). He kept his court of parliament at Westminster, in which (through the assent both of the clergy and the lords temporal) he caused his son Henry to be crowned king.¹⁶⁴ This coronation was done by the hands of Robert archbishop of York, with the assistance of other bishops — such as Gilbert of London, Jocelin of Salisbury, Hugo of Durham, and Walter of Rochester. Becket of Canterbury, who was neither mentioned nor called for, took no little displeasure in this; nor did Louis the French king, hearing that his daughter Margaret was not crowned with her husband. Gathering a great army, he immediately marched into Normandy. But the matter was soon composed by the king of England, who sent his son to him in Normandy, and there entreated and concluded peace with him, promising that his son would be crowned again, and then his daughter would be crowned also. But the archbishop, not ceasing his displeasure and emulation, sent to the pope, complaining of these four bishops, especially of the archbishop of York, who dared be so bold in his absence, and without his license, to crown the king, being a matter that was proper and peculiar to his jurisdiction. At this request, the pope sent down the sentence of excommunication against the bishop of London. He suspended the other three bishops with the archbishop of York.

This being done, the archbishop of York with the other bishops resorted to the king with a grievous complaint, declaring how miserably their case stood, and what they had sustained for fulfilling his commandment. The king, hearing this, was highly moved, and no wonder.

¹⁶⁴ Not Henry III, but Henry the Young King, co-ruler with Henry II, or titular king of England (1170-1183).

But what was the remedy? The time of the ruin of the pope had not yet come; and what prince then could withstand the injurious violence of that Romish potentate?

In the meantime, the French king with his clergy and courtiers, lost no occasion to excite and solicit pope Alexander against the king of England, to excommunicate him also, thinking to gain some advantage against the realm. Nor was king Henry ignorant of this, which made him even more ready for reconciliation. At length, two legates came down from the pope — the archbishop of Rothomage and the bishop of Navern — with the direction and full commission either to drive the king to be reconciled, or to be interdicted by the pope's censures out of the church. The king understanding he was in greater straits than he could avoid, at length through the mediation of the French king and of other prelates and great princes, was content to yield to peace and reconciliation with the archbishop, whom he both received to his favor, and also permitted and granted him free return to his church again. Concerning his possessions and the lands of the church of Canterbury, although Becket labored greatly for it, yet the king (then in Normandy) would not grant it before he returned to England, to see how he might agree with his subjects.

Thus a sort of peace being concluded between the king and him, the archbishop returned to England, after six years banishment. There he was right joyfully received by the church of Canterbury; although he was not so greatly welcomed by Henry the Young King. So that coming up to London to the king, he was sent back to Canterbury, and told to keep his house there. Roger Hoveden mentions in his chronicle, that the archbishop (on Christmas day) excommunicated Robert de Brock for cutting off the tail of a certain horse of his the day before. In the meantime, the four bishops mentioned before, whom the archbishop excommunicated, sent to him, humbly desiring to be released from their censure. When the archbishop would not grant this clearly and simply, without cautions and exceptions, they went over to the king, declaring to him and complaining of their miserable state, and the discourteous handling by the archbishop. The king then conceived great sorrow in his mind, and displeasure toward Becket. He lamented to them, that among so many that he had done things for, there was none who would revenge him against his enemy.

Becket Slain at Canterbury by Four Soldiers.

On the occasion of these words, four of those who were around the king, hearing him thus complain and lament, addressed themselves in great heat and haste, to satisfy the grieved mind and quarrel of their prince. Within four days after Christmas, sailing over to England, they came to Canterbury, where Becket was commanded to keep. After certain consultations among themselves, they pressed at length into the palace where the archbishop was setting with his company about him. First they tried him with words, to see whether he would relent to the king's mind, and come to some conformity. They brought to him, they said, commandment from the king, and bid him choose whether he would rather receive it openly there, or secretly. Then the company was asked to leave, and Becket sat alone. They said, "You are commanded from the king beyond the sea, to repair to the king's son here, and to do your duty to him, swearing your fidelity to him for your barony and other things, and to amend those things in which you have trespassed against him." The archbishop refusing to swear, and perceiving their intent, called in his company again. In multiplying words to and fro, at length they came to the matter of the bishops who were excommunicated for the coronation of the king. They commanded in the king's name that he absolve and set them free again. The archbishop answered that, "He neither suspended nor excommunicated them, but the pope did. Therefore, if that was the matter that grieved them, they should resort to the pope. He had nothing to do with the matter."

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Then Reginald, one of the four, said to him, "Although you in your own person did not excommunicate them, yet through your instigation it was done." To whom the archbishop replied, "And if the pope, in settling the injuries done to me and my church, wrought this revenge for me, I confess it does not offend me at all." They said,

"Thus then it well appears by your own words, that it pleases you right well (in contempt and revilement of the king's majesty) to sequester his bishops from their ministry, who at the commandment of the king served in the coronation of his son. And seeing that you have so presumed to stand thus against the exaltation of our sovereign, our *new* king, it seems likely that you aspired to take his crown from him, and to be exalted to king yourself."

Becket replied,

"I do not aspire to the crown and name of the king, but rather, if I had four more crowns to give him, I would set them all upon him. Such good will I bear to him, that only his father the king excepted, there is none whose honor I more tender and love. And concerning the sequestering of those bishops, I give you to understand this, that nothing was done in that behalf without the knowledge and assent of the king himself. When I had made my complaint to him at the feast of Mary Magdalene, of the wrong and injury done to me and my church in this, he gave me his good leave to obtain at the pope's hand such remedy as I could, moreover promising his help to me in the same."

Reginald responded,

"What is this that you say? Do you make the king a traitor, and a betrayer of the king, his own son? That when he had commanded the bishops to crown his son, he would give you leave afterward to suspend them for doing so? Certainly, it would have been better for you not to have so accused the king of this treachery."

The archbishop said to Reginald, that he was present there at that time, and heard it himself. But he denied that, and swore it was not so. "And do you think (they said) that we, the king's subjects, will or ought to suffer this?" And so approaching near to him, they said he had spoken enough against his own head; upon which followed loud shouts with many threatening words. Then the archbishop said, "I have, since my coming over, sustained many injuries and rebukes, concerning both myself, my men, my cattle, my wines, and all other goods — notwithstanding that the king, writing to his son, required of him that I should live in safety and peace. And now, beside all the other things, you come here to threaten me." To this Reginald answered, "If there are any who work you any injury other than is right, the law is open, why do you not complain?" "To whom (asked Becket) should I complain?" "To the Young King," they said. Then Becket said,

"I have complained enough, if that would help, and I have sought remedy at the king's hands, so long as I could be suffered to come to his speeches. But now, seeing that I am stopped from that, nor can find redress of such great vexations and injuries as I have and do daily sustain, nor can have the benefit of the law or reason — such right and law as an archbishop may have, that I will exercise, and I will be hindered by no man."

At these words one of them, bursting out in exclamation, cried, "He threatens, he *threatens*. What? will he interdict the whole realm and us altogether?" "No, that he shall not do (says another). He has interdicted too many already." And drawing nearer to him, they protested and denounced him, as having spoken words to the jeopardy of his own head. And so departing in great fury and with many high words, they rushed out the doors. But returning to the monks, they charged them in the king's name, to keep him available, that he should

not escape away. “What,” asked the archbishop, “do you think I will flee away? No, not for the king, nor for any man alive, will I stir one foot from you.” “No (they said), you shall not leave, even if you would.” And so they departed, the archbishop following them out the chamber door, crying after them, “Here, here, *here* you will find me,” laying his hand upon his crown.

The names of these four soldiers mentioned above were Reginald Bereson, Hugh Mortevil, William Thracy, and Richard Brito. Having gone to put on their armor, they returned the same day. But finding the hall door of the palace of Canterbury shut against them, they went to an inward back door leading into the orchard. There they broke a window, and opened the door, and so they got into the palace. The monks (it being about even-song time) had gotten the archbishop into the church. Being persuaded by them, he had his cross borne before him. And through the cloister, by a door broken open for him, he proceeded into the choir. The armed men following after, at length came to the church-door. The monks would have shut this door against them, but as the history says, the archbishop would not allow them. So the armed men approached into the church; and the archbishop meeting them on the stairs, there he was slain. Every one of the four soldiers struck Becket in the head with a sword. Afterward, fleeing into the north, at length, and with much ado, they obtained their pardon from the pope by the king’s procurement, and as some histories record, they went to Jerusalem.

Epilogue concerning Becket

Thus you have the life and death of Thomas Becket. As to what judgment we should form respecting him, let his own actions and conduct declare. Although the Scripture ought to be the only rule for us to judge all things by, yet if anyone requires further testimony to satisfy the mind respecting his conduct, we have the judgments of certain men, who in years and times, are almost as ancient as Becket.

We begin first with the testimony of someone of his own religion and church, and also not far from his own time. In writing of Becket’s martyrdom and miracles, he gives us the judgment and opinion of others concerning his promotion and behavior. The Chronicle being written in Latin, it is translated here for the English reader:

“There are many who, as to his promotion, do not regard it as canonical. For it was effected by the influence of the king (thinking him to be a man ready and useful to him) rather than by the assent either of the clergy or of the people. It is remarked in him as presumption and lack of discretion, that when scarcely worthy to take the oar in hand, he would take it upon himself to sit at the helm and guide the ship of the church, where the crew being religious in gesture and vesture, customarily have their prelate from the same profession. Whereas Becket scarcely bearing the habit of a clergyman, and going about in his changes and soft apparel, is more conversant among the delicate rufflers in the court. He savors of worldly things, not refusing to climb up to the high preferment of such a holy dignity, but rather *aspiring* to it, willingly and of his own accord. Moses, we read, did otherwise. Being the friend of God, and sent by Him to conduct his people Israel out of Egypt, he *trembled* at the message, and said, ‘Who am I, Lord, that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring your people Israel out of Egypt?’” etc. ^{Exo 3-11}

And although scarcely any testimony is to be accepted from that age (all being blinded and corrupted with superstition), let us hear what the ancient historian Neubergensis says. Being a contemporary, and continuing his history to the time of King Richard I, he has these words, writing about Thomas Becket:

“Many are prone, in those whom they love or praise (judging them more by affection than prudence) to allow and approve whatever they do. Yet if I might judge this reverend man truly, I do not think his doings and actions were praiseworthy or allowable, in so far as they were unprofitable and only stirred up the anger of the king, from which afterward sprang many and great mischiefs — even if what he did might have proceeded from a laudable zeal.”

Also, the words of Caesarius the monk refer to this matter, written about 48 years after the death of Thomas Becket (A.D. 1220). His words are to this effect: —

“There was a question moved among the masters of the university of Paris, whether Thomas Becket was saved or damned? To this question Roger, a Norman, answered that he was worthy of death and damnation, because he was so obstinate against God’s minister, his king. On the other hand, Peter Cantor, a Parisian, disputed this, saying and affirming that his miracles were great signs and tokens of salvation, and also of great holiness in that man. Moreover, they affirmed that the cause of the church allowed and confirmed his martyrdom, for which church he died,” etc.

[143] A.D. 1170-1171.

False Miracles Ascribed to Becket, Blasphemous Anthem.

Thus you have the judgment and censure of the school of Paris, touching this question of the sainting of Thomas Becket. In this judgment, the greatest argument rests in the miracles said to have been wrought by him *after his death*. Let us therefore pause a little, and examine these miracles. In this examination we will find one of two things will be true.

(1) If the miracles were wrought, they were not wrought by God, but by a contrary spirit, whom Christ our Lord warns us about in his gospel, saying, “There will arise false Christs and false prophets, and they will show great signs and wonders such that, if possible, they would deceive even the elect,” Mat 24.24; 2The 2.9; Rev 13.14.

(2) Or else we will find that no such miracles were ever wrought at all, but were feigned and forged by idle monks, and by nuns and friars, for the exaltation of their churches and the profit of their purses.

This second thing, indeed, seems rather to be the truth, as may appear by the miracles themselves, set forth by one of his own monks, and of his own time. This monk, in five solemn books, has included all the revelations, virtues, and miracles of the archbishop. I have seen and perused these books. In them is contained the whole sum of his miracles, numbering 270. And they are far beyond all truth and reason. Some are ridiculous, some monstrous, vain, and absurd, some blasphemous, and some so impudent that not only they deserve no credit (altogether savoring of mere forgery), but also they would abash a modest pen to write them down. Now, if miracles serve for convincing infidels, then what necessity was there, in a Christian realm that has the word of God, for God to work such miracles after the death of a man who never wrought any miracle in his entire life? Then if we consider the *object* of these miracles, what purpose they tend to, but merely to bring men to Canterbury, with their vows and offerings to enrich the Convent?

Besides the number of these miracles, which is said to be so great that they lose all credit, what disease is there, belonging to man or woman, in the curing of which some miracle has not been wrought by this wonder-worker — such as fevers, gout, tooth-ache, palsy, consumption, falling sickness, leprosy, headache, broken arms, maimed legs, swelling throats, raising up the dead who have been departed two days, with numberless others.

To recite all these prodigious revelations and fantastical miracles, falsely imagined and ascribed to this archbishop, would be nothing less than to write a legend of lies, and to occupy the people with trifles. And because it rather pertains to the idle profession of such dreaming monks and cloisterers, who have nothing else to maintain their religion with, I will not take their profession out of their hands. Therefore, I omit all vain and lying apparitions and miracles, such as how this angry saint (three days after his death) appeared by vision at the altar in his Pontifical robes, commanding the choir not to sing, but instead to say this office of his mass, *Exurge, quare ohdormis, Domine*, etc.¹⁶⁵ To omit also the blasphemous lie, how in another vision the archbishop said that, “his blood cried out of the earth to God, more than the blood of righteous Abel.” Also in another vision that appeared to a monk, how this saint Thomas had his place in heaven appointed with the apostles, above Stephen, Lawrence, Vincent, and all other martyrs, for which this reason is given — that St. Stephen, Lawrence, and others, suffered only for their own cause; but this Thomas Becket suffered for the universal church. Also, how it was shown to a young man twelve years before the death of Becket, that among the apostles and martyrs in heaven there was a vacant place left for a certain priest of England, which was credibly supposed to be him. Also, how a certain knight’s son, being dead for two days, was revived again as soon as he had the water of Canterbury put into his mouth, and had four pieces of silver offered by his parents in Canterbury, in the child’s behalf. All these, I say, with others like them, I omit, giving only this one story, or another that follows, which will suffice to express the vanity and impudent forgery of all the rest.

There is a miracle of a countryman of Bedfordshire, whose name was Edward. In his drunkenness, bursting into another man’s house, who was his debtor, he took from his house a whetstone, and a pair of hedging gloves. The other party seeing this value was not sufficient for his condemnation, entered an action of felony against him for other things besides, such as for stealing his wimble, his axe, his net, and other cloths. Whereupon Edward was condemned, and sentenced to have both his eyes put out. This punishment being executed on him by the malice of his adversary, and lying in great danger of death by bleeding, he was counselled to make his prayer to this Thomas of Canterbury. This done, says the miracle, someone appeared to him by night, in white apparel, bidding him to watch and pray, and to put his trust in God and our lady, and holy St. Thomas à Becket. In conclusion, the miracle fell out as follows. The next day at evening, the man, rubbing his eyelids, began to feel his eyes restored again; first, in a little measure, after in a greater measure, so that one was grey in color, the other black.

I thought to describe this one miracle here, so that by this one you might judge the rest of his miracles. This is why, as I said, if the holy sainting of Thomas Becket stands on nothing but his miracles, what credit is to be given to it? And it may easily be seen by this, on what a weak ground his shrine has stood for so long. Another fable as notable as this, we read in the history of Gervasius. Thomas Becket appearing to a certain priest named Thomas, declared to him that he had so brought it to pass, that all the names of the monks of the church of Canterbury, with the names of the priests and clerics, and with the families belonging to that city and church of Canterbury, were written in the book of life!

But whatever is to be thought of his miracles, or however the testimony of the school of Paris, or of these ancient times, went with him or against him, it is certain that this anthem,

¹⁶⁵ [Arise, why do you sleep, Lord? \(Psa 44.34\).](#)

recently written and used in his praise, is blasphemous, and derogates from the praise of Him to whom alone all praise and honor are due.

By the blood of Thomas,
Which he for you did spend,
Grant us, Christ, to climb,
Where Thomas did ascend.

The King's reaction to Becket's murder.

After the death of Thomas Becket, the king feared the pope's wrath and curse. He sent the archbishop of Rothomage, with other bishops and archdeacons, to the pope with his excuse, which the pope would in no way hear. After other messengers were sent, it was shown to them that on Good Friday, the pope customarily absolved or cursed, and it was rumored that the king of England, with his bishops, would be cursed, and his land interdicted, and that they would be put into prison. After this, certain of the cardinals showed the pope that the messengers had power to swear to the pope, that the king would obey his punishment and penance. So that, on the same day the pope cursed the perpetrators of Becket's murder, and all who either aided or harbored them.

The king's ambassadors could find no grace or favor for a long time at the pope's hands. At length it was agreed that two cardinals should be sent down to inquire into the matter concerning those who were consenting to Becket's death. The king, perceiving what was being prepared at Rome, and still being uncertain what the design of the pope and the arrival of the cardinals would tend to, prepared himself to invade Ireland with a great army. He gave charge and commandment that no bearer of any brief or letter should come into England, or leave the realm, without special license and assurance that he would bring nothing that would be prejudicial to the realm.

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Penance Enjoined on the King for the Death of Thomas Becket.

This being ordained, the king, with 400 great ships, took his voyage to Ireland, where he subdued in a short time the whole land. At that time it was governed under five kings, of whom four submitted themselves to King Henry. Only the fifth refused to submit, keeping to the woods and marshes.

While the king was thus occupied in Ireland, the two cardinals that were sent from the pope, Theodine and Albert, had come to Normandy. The year following, the king went to meet them (October, A.D. 1172). The king, returning from Ireland, into England by Wales, and from there to Normandy, cleared himself there of the charge, before the pope's legates, as to the death of Becket. He swore he was neither aiding nor consenting, but only that he spoke severely against him, because his knights would not avenge him against Thomas. For this reason, the following penance enjoined him under his oath:

First, that he would send so much money into the Holy Land, as would supply 200 knights or soldiers for the defense of that land.

Also, that from Christmas-day next following, he would set forth himself to fight for the Holy Land, for the space of three years, unless he were otherwise dispensed with by the pope.

Also, that if he would make his journey into Spain, he would fight there against the Saracens, and for as long as he abided there, he might prolong his journeys to Jerusalem.

Also, that he would not hinder, nor cause to be hindered by him, any appeal made to the pope of Rome.

Also, that neither he nor his son would depart or dissever from Pope Alexander, or from his catholic successors, so long as they in turn would count him or his son as catholic kings.

Also, that the goods and possessions taken from the church of Canterbury would be restored, as they stood the year before Thomas Becket departed the realm; and that free liberty would be granted to all those who were outlawed for Becket's cause, to return again.

Also, that the customs and decrees established by him against the church, would be extinct and repealed (except those that concerned his own person, etc.), besides other private fastings and alms enjoined of him.

All these conditions the king with his son agreed to, debasing himself in such submission before the two cardinals, that they took no little glory from it, using this verse of the Psalm: "He looks on the earth, and it trembles, He touches the hills, and they smoke," Psa 104.32. It is mentioned, too, that a little after, the king returning from Normandy to England, came first to Canterbury, (A.D. 1174). And as he came within sight of Becker's church, lighting off his horse, and putting off his shoes, he went barefoot to the tomb, the steps of which were found bloody, through the roughness of the stones. Not only that, but he received the further penance of the discipline of the rod, by every monk of the cloister. By this great degradation of the king (if it were true), we may see the blind and lamentable superstition and ignorance of those days.

Strife revives between York and Canterbury

The next year (A.D. 1175), a convocation of bishops was held at Westminster by Richard archbishop of Canterbury. All the bishops and abbots of the province of Canterbury and of York were present. They determined, as was done in the days of King Henry I (A.D. 1113), the obedience that York would pay to Canterbury. That is, whether the archbishop of York might bear his cross in the diocese of Canterbury or not. Something of this was mentioned before in this history. Upon these and other such matters, such controversy arose between these two sees, that the one appealed the other to the bishop of Rome.

In these and similar causes, how much better it would have been if the supremacy had remained nearer home, in the king's hands. Not only much labor and travelling would have been saved by this, but also the great and wasteful expenses at Rome might have been spent with much more fruit and profits among the cures and flocks committed to them.

We stated already, among the acts and doings of Pope Alexander III, how he had brought the emperor's head under his foot in St. Mark's church at Venice, when the peace was concluded there; and a compact was made between the pope and Emperor Frederick. This is the pacification that historians Roger Hoveden, and Walter Gisburn refer to at about this time (A.D. 1177), bringing in two letters sent from the pope to Richard archbishop of Canterbury, and to Roger archbishop of York, and Hugh bishop of Durham. Out of these letters, the portions that serve our present purpose, I have inserted here.

The Letter of Pope Alexander.

"Alexander servant of the servants of God, to his reverend brethren Roger archbishop of York, and Hugh bishop of Durham, greeting and apostolical blessing. The submissiveness and service of your kind devotion, which till now you are known to have given both devoutly and laudably to us and to the church, requires that we should describe to you, as to our special friends, the prosperous success of the church, and to let you know, as spiritual children of the church, what has happened to the same. For it is appropriate, convenient, and also honest,

that you, whom we have had so firm and sure in our devotion, should now be cherished and made joyous in the prosperity of us and of the church.”

And about the end of the epistle it follows thus:

“The next day, which was the feast of St. James, the emperor so requesting us, we came to the church of St. Mark to celebrate our solemn mass there — where (as we were coming in the way) the emperor met us outside the church, and placing us on his right hand, he so brought us into the church. After the mass was done, placing us again on his right hand, he brought us to the church door. And moreover, when we would mount our palfrey,¹⁶⁶ he held our stirrup, exhibiting to us such honor and reverence, as his progenitors usually exhibited to our predecessors. Therefore, these will serve to excite your diligence and zeal towards us, that you may rejoice with us and the church in these our prosperous successes, and also that you may open the same source of peace to other devout children of the church: that those who are touched with the zeal of the house of the Lord, may be thankful and rejoice in the Lord for the great peace which he has given. *Given at Venice, the 26th of July.*”

And yet, in this same year, the contention revived again between the two archbishops of York and Canterbury. The occasion of it was this: the manner and practice of the pope, when he wants money, to send some cardinal abroad to gather in his harvest. So in this year, a cardinal came from Rome into England, called Hugo, who would keep a council at Westminster. A great concourse of bishops, abbots, priors, doctors, and others of the clergy resorted to this council. As every one was placed in his order there, and according to his rank, first comes the archbishop of York. Anticipating the other archbishop, he came somewhat sooner, and placed himself on the right hand of the cardinal. The archbishop of Canterbury following shortly after, and seeing the first place occupied, refuses to take the second place, complaining of the archbishop of York, as having prejudiced his see. So while the one would not rise, and the other would not sit down, there arose no small contention between them. The archbishop of Canterbury claimed the upper seat by the pre-eminence of his church. On the other hand, the archbishop of York alleged the old decree of Gregory, by which this order was appointed between the two metropolitans of Canterbury and York — that whichever of them should be first in election, should have the preeminence in dignity before the other. Thus contending to and fro, they grew so heated in words, that at last they turned to blows. How strong the archbishop of York was in reason and argument, I cannot tell; but the archbishop of Canterbury was stronger at the arm's end. His servants being more in number and like valiant men, not allowing their master to take up with such a trick, so succeeded against York, as he sat on the right hand of the cardinal, that they plucked him down from the hand to the foot of the cardinal onto the ground, treading and trampling upon him with their feet, so that it was a marvel he escaped with his life. His robes were all rent and torn from his back.

[145] A.D. 1172-1189.

But what did the noble Roman cardinal Hugo do? Standing up in the midst, and seeing the house in such a broil, he committed himself to flight. The next day the archbishop of York brings his torn robes to the cardinal, to bear witness what injury and violence he had sustained; appealing and citing the archbishop of Canterbury to the bishop of Rome. And thus the holy council was dissolved the same day it was begun.

Death of Henry II – 1189.

¹⁶⁶ *Palfrey*: a light saddle horse.

Under the reign of King Henry II, the dominion and crown of England extended so far as had not been seen in this realm before him. Histories record him as possessing under his rule and jurisdiction, first, Scotland, to whom William king of Scots, with all the lords temporal and spiritual, did homage both for them and for their successors (the seal of which remains in the king's treasury); also Ireland, England, Normandy, Aquitaine. Gaunt, etc., to the mountains of the Tyrenees. He was also protector of France; to whom Philip the French king yielded both himself and his realm wholly to his government (A.D. 1181). He was also offered to be made king of Jerusalem, by the patriarch and master of the hospital there. Being distressed by the Sultan, brought him the keys of the city, desiring his aid against the infidels. He refused this offer, alleging the great charge which he had at home, and the rebellion of his sons, which might happen in his absence.

The wisdom, discretion, manhood, and riches of this prince was so spread abroad and renowned in all quarters, that messages came from Emmanuel emperor of Constantinople, Frederick emperor of Rome, and William archbishop of Treves in Germany, the duke of Saxony, and from the earl of Flanders, and also from the French king, to ask counsel and determination in difficult questions from this King Henry, as one who is most wise, and schooled in all wisdom and justice, so as to solve their questions and doubts. Alphonso king of Castile, and Sancius king of Navarre, being in strife for certain castles and other possessions, submitted them (of their free accord, and by their oath) to abide the award of this King Henry; who made his award and pleased them both. It is to be supposed by this, that this king, to whom other princes so resorted as their arbiter and judge, was not given either to sloth or vicious living. From this it may appear that the acts of this prince were not so vicious as some monkish writers describe.

Among many other memorable things in this king, one is that he reigned thirty-five years. Despite having such wars with his enemies, he never put upon his subjects any tribute or tax. And yet his treasury after his death amounted to over 900,000 pounds, besides jewels, precious stones, and household furniture. But as there is no felicity or wealth in this mortal world so perfect, as not to be darkened with some cloud of adversity; so it happened to this king. Among his other princely successors, this affliction followed him: that his sons rebelled and stood in arms against him, taking the part of the French king against their father.

At the coronation of his son Henry, whom the father joined with him as king — being both father and king — notwithstanding, he set down the first dish before his son, as if he was only an attendant, renouncing the name of a king. The archbishop of York, sitting on the right hand of the Young King, said, “Sir, you have great cause this day to joy, for there is no prince in the world who has such an attendant this day,” etc. And the young king disdainingly his words, said, “My father is not dishonored in doing this, for I am a king and a queen's son, and he is not.” And not only this, but afterwards he even persecuted his father. And so in his youth, when he had reigned but a few years, he died, teaching us what is the reward of breaking the commandment of God. Exo 20.12

After him likewise, Henry's son Richard (who was called Richard *Coeur de Lion*) rebelled against his father. And also John, his youngest son, did not depart much from the steps of his brethren. It went so far that Richard, taking part against his father, brought him to such distress of body and mind, that for sorrow of heart Henry fell into a fever, and within four days departed (A.D. 1189), after he had reigned thirty-five years.

And thus much concerning the reign of Henry II, and the death of Thomas Becket in the days of Pope Alexander III. This pope had usurped the keys of the ecclesiastical government

for twenty-one years (or as Gisburn writes, twenty-three years), governing the church with much tumult.

This pope, among many other acts, had certain councils, some in France, some at Rome, in Lateran. In these it was decreed that no archbishop should receive the pall, unless he would first swear to obey the pope.

The Solemnity of the Pall

Concerning the solemnity of this pall, as to the order and manner of giving and taking it, with obedience to the pope, I thought it good to present it as contained in their own words.

*The form and manner, how and by what words,
the pope traditionally gives the pall to the Archbishop.*

“To the honor of Almighty God, and of blessed Mary the virgin, and of blessed St. Peter and Paul, and of our lord Pope _____, and of the holy church of Rome, and also of the church of _____, committed to your charge, we give to you the pall taken from the body of St. Peter, as a fulness of the pontifical office, which you may wear within your own church upon certain days which are expressed in the privileges of the said church, granted by the apostolic see.”

In like manner, the oath of every bishop swearing obedience to the pope proceeds thus:

“I, _____, bishop of _____, from this hour henceforth, will be faithful and obedient to blessed St. Peter, and to the holy apostolic church of Rome, and to my lord _____ the pope. I shall be in no council, nor help either with my consent or deed, whereby either of them, or any member of them may be impaired, or whereby they maybe taken with any evil taking. The counsel which they shall commit to me either by themselves, or by messenger, or by their letters wittingly or willingly I shall utter to none to their hindrance and damage. As to retaining and maintaining the papacy of Rome, and the regalities of St. Peter, I shall be an aider (so my order be saved) against all persons, the legate of the apostolic see, both in going and coming, I shall honorably treat and help in all necessities. Being called to a Synod I shall be ready to come, unless I am hindered by some lawful and canonical impeachment. I shall visit the palace of the apostles every third year either by myself or my messenger, except otherwise being licensed by the apostolic see. All such possessions as belong to the table and diet of my bishopric, I shall neither sell, nor give, nor lay to mortgage, nor lease out, nor remove away by any manner of means without the consent and knowledge of the bishop of Rome; so God help me and the holy gospel of God.”

The History and Doctrines of the Waldenses.

In the reign of King Henry (about A.D. 1178), I find in Roger Hoveden and others, that in the city of Toulouse there was a great multitude of men and women whom the pope’s commissioners prosecuted and condemned as heretics. Some of them were scourged naked, some were chased away, and some were compelled to abjure. Concerning their opinions I can give no certain account, because I find the papists so often falsified things in their accusations, untruly collecting men’s words, not as they meant them, but twisting and depraving men’s assertions in such a way that pleased themselves. But I find that one of the commissioners or inquisitors (Henry the abbot) wrote in a letter about one of them, that “Following a new opinion, he affirmed that the holy bread of eternal life, consecrated by the ministry of the priest, was not the body of the Lord,” etc.

In the time of Pope Alexander, the doctrine and name commenced of those who were called “Poor men of Lyons,” who from Waldus or Waldo, a chief senator in Lyons, were named “Waldenses” (about A.D. 1100, or as Laziard writes A.D. 1170).

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Not long before this time lived Gratian, master of the decrees, and Peter Lombard, master of the sentences, both arch-pillars of all papistry. Two others followed them, as bad or worse than they were, Francis and Dominic,¹⁶⁷ maintaining blind hypocrisy no less than the others maintained proud prelacy. As these labored one way — to corrupt the simplicity of the Christian religion by superstition and worldly advancement— so it pleased Christ on the contrary, working against them, to raise up the Waldenses against the pride and hypocrisy of the others.

Thus we never see any great corruption in the church, that some sparks of the true and clear light of the gospel by God's providence do not remain. Whatever doctors Austin, Reinerius, Sylvius, Cranzius, with others write about them in their popish histories — defaming them and accusing them as disobedient to orders, rebels to the catholic church, and despisers of the Virgin Mary — yet in weighing their articles, those who judge impartially, trusting truth rather than wavering with the times, will find it otherwise. They maintained nothing but the same doctrine which is now defended in the church.

*The history of the Waldenses concerning
their origin and doctrine, with their persecutions.*

The origin of these Waldenses was one Waldus, (or Waldo ¹⁶⁸), a man of great substance in the city of Lyons. About the year 1160 some of the best and chief inhabitants of the city of Lyons, walking in a certain place in their old accustomed manner, especially in the summertime, conferred and consulted together on various matters, either to pass the time, or to debate their measures. Among them, it chanced that one suddenly fell dead. Waldus was among them at the time. Looking at the matter more earnestly than the others, and terrified with so awful an example, and God's Holy Spirit working within him, he was stricken with a deep and inward repentance. Upon this followed a great change, with a careful study to reform his prior life. So that *first* he began to minister large alms of his goods to those who were in need. *Secondly*, he instructed himself and his family with the true knowledge of God's word. *Thirdly*, he admonished all who resorted to him on any occasion, to repentance and virtuous amendment of life. Partly through his extensive charities to the poor, partly through his diligent teaching and wholesome admonitions, more of the people frequented about him daily. And when he saw them ready and diligent to learn, he began to give them certain easy portions of the Scripture, which he had translated himself into the French tongue. For as he was wealthy in riches, so he was also not unlearned in languages.

Although Laziard, Volateran, with others, describe him as utterly unlearned, and charge him with ignorance, yet to others who have seen his works still remaining in old parchment documents, it appears that he was able to declare and translate the books of Scripture, and also to collect the comments of the learned upon them.

But whatever he was, whether lettered or unlettered, the bishops and prelates seeing him thus intermeddle with the Scriptures, and have such followers about him, even though it was only in his own house and in private conference, could not abide that the Scriptures should be explained by anyone other than themselves. And yet they would not take the pains to explain it themselves. So they threatened to excommunicate him if he did not cease to do

¹⁶⁷ [Founders of the Franciscan \(1209\) and Dominican Orders \(1216\).](#)

¹⁶⁸ [Peter Waldo \(1140-1205\).](#)

so. Waldus seeing that his proceedings were godly, and that their malice was stirred up without just or godly cause, neglected the threatenings and frettings of the wicked. He said, "God must be obeyed rather than man." ^{Act 4.19} To be brief, the more diligent he was in setting forth the true doctrine of Christ against the errors of antichrist, the more maliciously their fierceness increased. So that when they saw their excommunication was despised, they did not cease to persecute him with prison, with sword, and banishment, till at length they had driven both Waldus and all those who favored his true preaching out of the city.

This is when they were first called *Waldenses*, or the poor men of Lyons — not because they would have all things in common among them, or that professing any willful poverty, they would imitate to live as the apostles did (as Eneas Sylvius ¹⁶⁹ falsely said of them); but because being thrown out from country and goods, they were *compelled* to live poorly, whether they would or not.

And thus much touching the first occasion and beginning of these men, and of the restoring and maintaining of the true doctrine of Christ's gospel, against the proud proceedings of popish errors. Now, concerning their articles, I find them to be the following, in order and in number: —

1. Only the holy Scripture is to be believed in matters pertaining to salvation, and no man's writing, or man besides.
2. All things necessary to salvation are contained in holy Scripture, and nothing is to be admitted in religion, but only what is commanded in the word of God.
3. There is one only Mediator; other saints are in no way to be made mediators, or to be invoked.
4. There is no purgatory, but all men are justified by Christ to life, or without Christ they are condemned; and besides these two, there is no third or fourth place.
5. That all masses, namely, such as those sung for the dead, are wicked and ought to be abolished.
6. All men's traditions are to be rejected, or at least not to be reputed as necessary to salvation; therefore this singing and superfluous chanting in the chancel should cease — constrained and prefixed fasts bound to days and times; differentiating meats; the variety of degrees and orders of priests, friars, monks, and nuns; superfluous holy days; the various benedictions and hallowing of creatures, vows, pilgrimages; with all the rites and ceremonies brought in by man — all ought to be abolished.
7. The supremacy of the pope usurping rule above all churches, and especially above all realms and governments, and his usurping of the jurisdiction of both the swords (spiritual and temporal), is to be denied; and no degree of orders is to be received in the church, except priests, deacons, and bishops.
8. The communion under both kinds (both bread and wine) is necessary to all people, according to the institution of Christ.
9. The church of Rome is the very Babylon spoken of in the Apocalypse; and the pope is the fountain of all error, and the very antichrist.

¹⁶⁹ Eneas Sylvius, or Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (1405-1464), later became Pope Pius II.

10. They reject the pope's pardons and indulgences. ¹⁷⁰

11. The marriage of priests and of ecclesiastical persons is godly, and also necessary in the church.

12. Those who hear the word of God, and have a right faith, are the right church of Christ. And the keys of the church are given to this church to drive away wolves, and to institute true pastors, and to preach the word, and to minister the sacraments. ¹⁷¹

These are the principal articles of the Waldenses, although there are some who add more to them; and some again divide these into more parts.

The Waldenses, exiled at length, were dispersed into many and various places. Many remained long in Bohemia. Writing to their king, Vladislaus, to clear themselves against the slanderous accusations of Dr. Austin, they gave their confession together with an apology of their Christian profession. They defended with strong and learned arguments the same defense and confession which is now received in most reformed churches concerning grace, faith, charity, hope, repentance, and works of mercy. As for purgatory, they say that Thomas Aquinas was the creator of it. ¹⁷²

[147] A.D. 1189.

Concerning the supper of the Lord, their faith was that it was ordained to be eaten, not to be shown and worshipped; for a memorial, not for a sacrifice; to serve for the present ministrations, and not for reservation; to be received at the table, not to be carried out of doors — according to the ancient use of the primitive church, when they used to have communion sitting. And they prove this both by an old chronicle called *Chronica Gestorum*, and also by ancient Origen writing upon the third book of Moses. They bring in his words, which are these, proving that this sacramental bread should not be reserved: —

“Whoever receives this bread of the supper, of Christ upon the second or third day after, his soul shall not be blessed, but polluted. Therefore because the Gibeonites brought old bread to the children of Israel, they were enjoined to carry wood and water,” etc. ^{Jos 9.27}

Dr. Austin, disputing against them about this matter of the holy eucharist, urges them with this question, whether it is the same Christ present in the sacrament, which is present at the right hand of the Father? If it is not the same Christ, ;then how is it true in the Scripture, “One faith, one Lord Jesus Christ?” ^{Eph 4.5} If it is the same Christ, then how is he not to be honored and worshipped here as well as there?”

To this the Waldenses answer and grant that Christ is one and the same with his natural body, in the *sacrament*, which he is at the *right hand* of his Father — but not in the same existence of his body. For the existence of his body in heaven is personal and local, to be apprehended by the faith and spirit of men. In the sacrament, the existence of the body is not personal or local, so as to be apprehended or received by our bodies in a personal or corporeal manner, but in a sacramental manner. That is, where our bodies receive the *sign*, and our spirit receives the thing *signified*. Moreover, in heaven the existence of his body is

¹⁷⁰ This article seems to be written about those in Bohemia not long after, for indulgences did not come in before Boniface VIII (r. 1294-1303).

¹⁷¹ Some ancient authors add another article — viz. “They receive and approve of two sacraments only, Baptism and the Communion.” [Ed.]

¹⁷² Some attribute the doctrine of purgatory to Clement of Alexandria (d. 202); some as a solution to the Donatist schism (303); some to Gregory of Nyssa (335-394); some to Gregory I (A.D. 590). It became dogma at the Second Council of Lyons (1294), which cited pope Innocent IV (r. 1243-1254). Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) expounded on it in his *Summa Theologica*.

complete with the full proportion and quantity with which he ascended. Here, the existence of his complete body, with its full proportion, measure, and stature, does not and *cannot* stand in the sacrament.

That answer being made to the captious proposition of Dr. Austin, the Waldenses (retorting a similar question to him) demand that he answer them: Whether it is all one Christ substantially and naturally, which sits in heaven, and which is under the forms of bread and wine, and in the receivers of the sacrament? If he grants it to be so; then they bid him say — seeing that Christ is in the sacrament as well as in heaven, and as well in the receiver as in the sacrament, and it is all one Christ in substance and nature — then why is the same Christ not to be worshipped in the breast of the receiver, as well as under the forms of bread and wine in the sacrament; seeing that he is there in a more perfect manner in man, than in the sacrament? For in the sacrament he is there only for a time, and not for the sacrament's sake, but for the man's sake. But in man he is not there for the sacrament's sake, but for his own sake. And that is not for a season, but forever, as it is written, “He that eats this bread shall live forever,” etc. ^{Joh 6.51}

Besides this, seeing that *transubstantiation* is the passing of one substance into another, they question him again, whether the forms of bread and wine remaining, the substance is changed into the whole person of our Lord Christ Jesus — that is, into his body, soul, and divinity — or *not* into the whole Christ? If he grants the whole, then they say that it is impossible (concerning the divinity) both to nature and to our faith, that any creature can be changed into the Creator. If he says, the bread is changed into the body and soul of Christ, but not into his divinity, then he separates the natures in Christ. If he says, into the body alone, and not the soul, then he separates the natures of the true manhood, etc. And so it cannot be the same Christ who was betrayed for us; for he had both body and soul. To conclude, to whatever part Austin would answer, this doctrine of *transubstantiation* could not be defended without great difficulties.

Besides this, Eneas Sylvius, writing of their doctrine and assertions (as he found them, perhaps making worse of them than they taught or meant, reports of them in this manner:

“The bishop of Rome is equal with other bishops. Among priests there is to be no difference of degree. No priest is to be reputed for any dignity of his order, but for the worthiness of his life.

“The souls of men departed enter either into everlasting pain, or everlasting joy. There is no fire of purgatory. To pray for the dead is vain, and a thing only invented for the lucre of priests.

“The images of God (e.g. the Trinity) and of saints should be abolished. The hallowing of water and palm are a mere ridicule. The religion of begging friars is an invention of the devil. Priests should not pursue riches in this world, but rather follow poverty, being content with their tithes, and men's devotion. The preaching of the word should be free to all men called to it.

“No deadly sin is to be tolerated for the sake of a greater convenience. The confirmation which bishops exercise with oil, and extreme unction, are not to be counted among the sacraments of the church. Auricular confession is but a childish thing; it is enough for every man to confess himself in his chamber to God. Baptism ought to be administered only with pure water, without any mixture of hallowed oil. The temple of the Lord is the wide world. The majesty of God is not restrained within the walls of temples, monasteries, and chapels, such that his grace should be found in one place more than in another.

“Priests' apparel, ornaments of the high altar, vestments, corporals, chalices, plates, and other churchware, are of no use. It makes no matter in what place the priest consecrates or ministers

to those who require it. It is sufficient to use only the sacramental words without other superfluous ceremonies.

“The suffrages (intercessions) of saints, reigning with Christ in heaven, are prayed for in vain; they are unable to help us. In saying or singing the hours and matins of the day, the time is lost. A man ought to cease from his labor on no day, except Sunday.

“The feasts and festivals of saints ought to be rejected. Those fasts which are compulsory and enjoined by the church, have no merit in them.”

I thought it good to give the doctrines of the Waldenses in English, being thus specified by Eneas Sylvius (who afterwards was pope), so that they are less to be doubted, being described by the pen of this pope. Thus we may better know what their opinions were, and also understand how this doctrine that is now preached and taught in the protestant church, is not new doctrine, inasmuch as we see it both taught and persecuted almost 400 years ago.

Having sufficiently spoken of their doctrine, we will now somewhat briefly touch upon the order of their life and conversation, as we find it registered in a certain old book of the inquisition.

“The manner of the Waldenses is this: kneeling and leaning on some bank or stay, they continue in their prayers with silence so long as a man may say the Lord’s prayer thirty or forty times. And they do this every day both before and after dinner, with great reverence among themselves and those who are of their own religion, but no strangers with them; likewise before and after supper; also when they go to bed, and in the morning when they rise, and at certain other times also, in the day as well as in the night. They use no other prayer but the Lord’s prayer, without any ‘Hail, Mary,’ or the creed, which they affirm is not by Christ, but only by the church of Rome. Although, they use the seven articles of faith concerning Christ’s divinity, and the seven articles concerning Christ’s humanity,¹⁷³ and the Ten Commandments, and the seven works of mercy,¹⁷⁴ which they have compiled together in a compendious book.

“Before they go to meal they ask a blessing, and that the Lord Christ may have mercy upon them, and they say the Lord’s prayer. This being said, the elder among them begins thus in their own tongue:

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‘God who blessed the five barley loaves, and two fishes in the desert before his disciples, bless this table, and what is set upon it, or will be set upon it: In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.’ And likewise, when they rise from the meal, the senior gives thanks, saying the words of the Apocalypse, ‘Blessing, and worship, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honor, virtue, and strength to God alone for ever and ever. Amen.’ And he adds, ‘God reward those in their hearts, and be beneficial to all those who are beneficial to us, and bless us. And may the God who has given us bodily food grant us his spiritual life; and may God be with us, and we always with him.’ To which they respond, ‘Amen.’ And thus saying grace, they hold their hands upward, looking up to heaven. After their meal, and grace being said, they teach and exhort one another, conferring together upon their doctrine.”

In their doctrine and teaching they were so diligent and painstaking, that Reinerius, a writer about their time, and a violent enemy against them, in a long process in which he describes their doctrine and teaching, testifies that he heard of one who knew the party, that a certain

¹⁷³ The fourteen articles of faith concerning the Godhead, are outlined by Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologiae*, but originally articulated in the Apostle’s Creed. That creed is presumably is what the Waldenses recited.

¹⁷⁴ The seven *blesseds* from the Sermon on the mount, Mat 5.3-9.

heretic (as he calls him, merely to turn a person away from our [Roman] faith, and to bring him to that of the Waldenses) swam in the night, and in the winter time, over the river Ibis, to come to him, and to teach him. So perfect were they in the Scriptures, Reinerius says, that he heard and saw an unlettered countryman who could recite the whole book of Job word by word, without book, and others who knew the whole New Testament perfectly by heart.

And although some of them rather strangely and unskillfully expounded the words, "*Sui non receperunt eam,*" Joh 1.11; "swine did not receive him;" yet they were not so ignorant and devoid of learning, nor so few in number, that they did not greatly spread. So that Reinerius has these words:

"There was none who dared to stop them for the power and multitude of their favorers. I have often been at their inquisition and examination, and there were forty churches infected with their heresy, so that in one parish of Cammach, there were ten open schools of them," etc.

And Reinerius, when he had said all he could in slandering and impugning them, he is yet driven to confess this, where he distinguishes their sect from every other sect.

"This sect of the Lyonists has a great show of holiness, they live justly before men, and believe all things well of God, and hold all the articles contained in the creed; only they blaspheme the Romish church, and hate it," etc.

Now to say a little about their persecutions. After they were driven out of Lyons, they were scattered into various places (the Providence of God so permitting it), that the sound of their doctrine might be heard abroad in the world. Some went to Bohemia; many fled into the provinces of France; some into Lombardy, others into other places, etc. But as the cross commonly follows the true and sincere preaching of God's word, so neither could these be allowed to live or remain at rest. There are yet to be seen the consultations of lawyers, archbishops, and bishops of France, which still remain in writing, for the extirpation of these Waldenses, written over 300 years ago. By this it appears that there was a great number of them in France.

Besides, there was a council held in Toulouse about 350 years ago, (A.D. 1229) against these Waldenses, who had been condemned in another council at Rome before that.

What great persecutions were raised up against them in France by the pope's commissioners, alluded to before, appears by their writings. I will recite some of their words, which towards the end are these: —

"Who is such a stranger that he does not know of the condemnation decreed of the heretical Waldenses — so many years ago, so famous, so public, followed up with such great labors, expenses, and travel of the faithful, and sealed with so many deaths of these infidels, who were so solemnly condemned and openly punished?"

By this we may see that persecution is no new thing in the church of Christ, when antichrist so long before (even 300 years ago) began to rage against these Waldenses. Likewise afterwards in Bohemia, under the name of Taborites (as Sylvius records) they suffered no little trouble. But never was persecution stirred up against them, or against any other people, more terrible than in these later years by the French king, Francis I (A.D. 1545). The lamentable story is described in Sleidan.¹⁷⁵ And hereafter in the course of this book, when we come to the proper period, it will be narrated more at large (by the grace of Christ). In this persecution it is stated that in one town, Cabriera, 800 persons were slain at once,

¹⁷⁵ Johannes Sleidan (1506-1556) was one of the first historians of the Reformation epoch.

without respect to women or children of any age. Forty of these — women and most of them great with child — were thrust into a barn. The windows kept shut with pikes, and fire being applied to them, they were all consumed. Besides these, in a cave not far from the town Mussium, 25 persons were at the same time destroyed with smoke and fire. At Merindolum (when all the rest had fled away) one young man, being found, was tied to an olive-tree, and most cruelly killed with torments. There was much more persecution, as will appear hereafter in the history translated out of Sleidan.

There is also an old document of process, in which it appears that 443 were brought to examination in Pomerania, Marchia, and places thereabouts (c. A.D. 1391).

And thus much touching the origin, doctrine, and lamentable persecutions of the Waldenses who, as declared, first began about the time of King Henry II of England (1154-1189).

It now remains in the order of time, to narrate other incidents which occurred during the reign of this king, that are not unworthy to be observed.

There was a great war in Palestine, when the city of Jerusalem, with the cross and king of the city, and others of the temple, were taken by the Saracens, and most of the Christians there were either slain or taken. There was cruel murder and slaughter by the Turks,¹⁷⁶ who caused all the chief Christians to be brought out and beheaded before his face. So that Pope Urban III died for sorrow (1187), and Gregory VIII, the next pope after him, did not live two months. Then, in the days of Pope Clement III, sorrow was growing daily for the loss of Palestine, and the destruction of the Christians. King Henry of England, and Philip the French king, the duke of Burgundy, the earl of Flanders, the earl of Campania, with other Christian princes, with a general consent on St. George's day, took the mark of the cross upon themselves, promising together to voyage into the Holy Land. At this time (the histories say), the king of England first received the red cross, the French king took the white cross, the earl of Flanders took the green cross, and likewise other princes took various colors, so that everyone would be known by his proper cross. But King Henry II (after the three years had expired in which he promised to perform his voyage) sent to the pope for a further delay of his promise, offering to erect three monasteries instead.

Almaric, king of Jerusalem, destroyed Babylon (A.D. 1170),¹⁷⁷ so that it has never to this day been restored, but lies waste and desolate. In this was fulfilled what the prophets threatened against Babylon. Almaric had a son named Baldwin, and a daughter called Sibylla.

Sibylla was first married to Willerm, marquis of Mount Ferrat, by whom she had a son also named Baldwin. After him she was married to another husband named Guido de Liziniaco, earl of Joppa and of Ascalon. After the death of Baldwin, and the next heir, by descent his crown fell to Sibylla the wife of Guido. The peers and nobles, joining together in council, offered Sibylla as the lawful heir to the crown, that she should be their queen, with this condition, that she should separate, by solemn divorce, from her husband Guido. But she refused the kingdom offered to her on that condition, till at last the magistrates, with the nobles in general, granted to her, and confirmed by their oaths, that whoever she would choose as her husband, they would all obey as their king.

[149] A.D. 1000-1190.

¹⁷⁶ The Turks (*i.e.*, Ottomans) didn't arise till c. 1299. These were Muslims, loosely known as *Saracens*.

¹⁷⁷ This is sheer fiction. In 1170, Almaric defended the Templar fortress at Darum against Saladin's forces.

Guido her husband, among the rest, humbly requested her that the kingdom might not be destitute of government on his account, or for his private loss. At length, consenting to their entreaty with tears, she was solemnly crowned their queen, and received their allegiance by their oath. Upon this, Guido, without any hope of wife and kingdom, departed quietly to his own place. Then the queen, assembling her states and prelates together, conferred with them about choosing a king according to what they had promised and sworn to her, that they would obey as their king whomever she named as her husband. Thus, while they were all in great expectation, every man waiting to see whom she would nominate, the queen with a loud voice said to Guido, who stood among them, "Guido, my lord, I choose you for my husband, and yielding myself and my kingdom to you, I openly proclaim you to be the king." At these words all the assembly, amazed, wondered that one simple woman had beguiled so many wise men. She was worthy, no doubt, to be commended and extolled for her singular virtue, both of faithfulness and prudence. She so managed the matter, that she obtained for her husband the kingdom, and retained for herself her husband, whom she faithfully loved.

Character of King Henry II of England.

Having previously described the public acts of King Henry, I now mean to say something about his private condition. He was of mean stature, eloquent and learned, manly and bold in chivalry, fearful of the mutability and chance of war, lamenting the death of his soldiers, more than loving them when alive. No one was more courteous and liberal for obtaining his purpose. In peace and tranquility none was rougher; stubborn against the stubborn; sometimes merciful to those he had vanquished; strict toward his household servants, but liberal to strangers; liberal of public things, sparing of his own; whoever he once took a displeasure against he hardly or never would receive again to favor; somewhat lavish with his tongue, a willing breaker of his promise; a lover of his ease, but an oppressor of his nobility; a severe avenger and promoter of justice; variable of word and crafty in his talk; a nourisher of discord among his children; moreover the papists, bearing him no good will (for Thomas Becket's quarrel, and such like, as may be gathered), term him an adversary of the faith. He died in the thirty-fifth year of his reign, in the castle of Chinon in Normandy.

King Richard I – Slaughter of the Jews.

King Richard, the eldest son of Henry II, succeeded his father (A.D. 1189); at which time Pope Clement III sat at Rome (r. 1187-1191), succeeding Gregory, who died shortly before from sorrow for the loss of the holy cross.

It happened that the day before his coronation, by public edict, the king had commanded the Jews and their wives not to presume either to enter the church or palace during the solemnization of his coronation among his nobles and barons. Yet while the king was at dinner, the chief of the Jews, with several others, entered the court gates. A Christian man, being offended, struck one of them, and bid him stand further from the court gate, as the king had commanded. Others, following the example and displeased against the Jews, offered similar insults. Others also, supposing that the king had so commanded, fell upon all the Jews who stood outside the court gate. First they beat them, but afterwards they took up stones and other such things as they could get, and threw them at the Jews from the court gates. Some they wounded, some they slew, and some they left for dead.

Among the Jews, there one who was called *the blessed Jew of York*. He was so severely wounded, that for fear of his life, he said he would become a Christian, and was baptized, thus escaping death and the persecutors' hands. In the meanwhile, a great rumor spread throughout London, that the king had commanded to destroy all the Jews. Upon which, the citizens, and innumerable people, being assembled to see the king's coronation, armed

themselves and came together. The Jews thus being slain for the most part, the rest fled into their houses where, for a time, they were defended. But at length their houses were set on fire, and they were destroyed within them.

These things being declared to the king while he was with his nobles and barons at dinner, he immediately sent Ranulfe de Glanville, the lord high steward of England, with other noblemen to accompany him, so that they might stay and refrain these excesses of the Londoners. But all was in vain; for in so great a tumult, there was none who either regarded what the nobility said, or revered their persons, but rather with stern looks and threatening words, they advised them to depart, and quickly. Thinking it best to do so, they departed. The tumult and insurrection continued till the next day. At that time the king, sending certain of his officers into the city, commanded them to apprehend and present those who were the chief of the malefactors. Three were condemned to be hanged; one, because he had robbed a Christian's house in the tumult; and the other two because they set fire to the houses to the great danger of the city. After this, the king sent for the man who was converted to Christianity from a Jew, and in the presence of those who saw where he was baptized, the king asked him whether he had become a Christian or not? He answered the king, "No; but to the intent he might escape death, he promised to do whatever the Christians would have him do." Then the king asked the archbishop of Canterbury (other archbishops and bishops being present) what would be best to do with him? Unadvisedly answering, he said, "If he will not be a man of God, let him be a man of the devil;" and so the man returned to Judaism.

Then the king sent his writs to the sheriffs of every county, to inquire for the authors of this outrage. Three of them were hanged; and several were imprisoned. So great then was the hatred of Englishmen against the Jews, that as soon as they began to be removed from the court, the Londoners fell upon them, set their houses on fire, and destroyed their goods. The countryside, following the example of the Londoners, did the same. And thus the year which the Jews took to be their Jubilee, was a year of confusion for them. In the city of York, the Jews obtained a certain castle for their preservation. Afterward, there were not willing to return it to the Christians. When they saw no other remedy, but to be vanquished by force, they first offered money for their lives. When that would not be accepted, by the counsel of an old Jew among them, every one of them, with a sharp razor, cut another's throat, by which 1500 of them perished.

King Richard goes to the Holy Land – A.D. 1189.

King Richard, after the death of his father, coming to his senses, and remembering his rebellion against his father, sought absolution. And, in satisfaction for it, he agreed with Philip the French King, to take a voyage with him for the recovery of *Christ's Patrimony*, as they call the Holy Land (this was the Third Crusade).

After this, King Richard, preparing to set all things in an order before his going, committed the whole government of the realm principally to William, bishop of Ely, his chancellor, and to Hugh, bishop of Durham, whom he appointed the chief justice of all England in his absence. He also sent to Pope Clement, in behalf of William, bishop of Ely, that he might be made the pope's legate throughout England and Scotland, which also was obtained. Thus the bishop, being advanced to high authority, provides out of every city in England, two palfreys, and two sumpters (mules), and also out of every abbey, one palfrey, and one sumpter, for the king's service in Palestine.

These things being set in order, the king, according to his appointment, sailed into France, where the French king and he conferring together, postponed their voyage till after midsummer. In the meantime, the king occupied himself in redressing and establishing those things which were requisite. He appointed the captains and constables over his navy, and set the laws to be observed in his voyage upon the seas, but especially his care was to make unity and concord between parties who were at variance, and to reconcile them.

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After King Richard had composed those things which were to be redressed within the realm, he advanced on his journey, and came to Touraine, France, to meet with Philip II, the French king. After that he went to Vezelay, where the French king and he, joining together for the continuance of their journey, assured themselves by solemn oath, swearing fidelity to one another. The form of their oath was this:

“That either of them should defend and maintain the honor of the other, and bear true fidelity to him of life, members, and worldly honor; and that neither of them should fail one another in their affairs; but the French king would aid the king of England in defending his land and dominions, as he would himself defend his own city of Paris if it were besieged; and that King Richard of England likewise would aid the French king in defending his land and dominions, not otherwise than he would defend his own city of Rouen if it were besieged,” etc.

But how slenderly this oath held these two kings. The chief occasion by which it first fell apart, will be declared in the sequel of the history (the Lord willing).

The laws and ordinances appointed by King Richard for his navy were these:

1. That whoever killed any person on shipboard, should be tied with the one who was slain, and thrown into the sea.
2. And if he killed him on the land, he should in like manner be tied with the party slain, and be buried with him in the earth.
3. Whoever is convicted by lawful witness to draw out his knife or weapon, with the intent to strike any man, or that has struck anyone to the drawing of blood, shall lose his hand.
4. Also, whoever strikes any person with his hand, without an effusion of blood, will be plunged three times in the sea.
5. Whoever speaks any offensive or disrespectful words in reviling or cursing one another, for as often as he has so reviled, he shall pay that many ounces of silver.
6. A thief or felon who has stolen, being lawfully convicted, shall have his head shorn, and boiling pitch poured upon his head, and feathers or down strewed upon it, whereby he maybe known; and so at the first landing-place they come to, he will be cast up there, etc.

King Richard sent his navy by the Spanish seas, and by the straits of Gibraltar, to meet him at Marseilles. But again, he went himself to Vezelay, to the French king. The two kings from there went to Lyons. There, the bridge over the Rhone gave way with the press of people, and many, both men and women, were drowned. The two kings were then constrained to separate for the rest of their journey, arranging to meet in Sicily. And so Philip made his way to Genoa, and King Richard to Marseilles, where he remained eight days, where he had appointed his navy to meet him. From there he crossed over to Genoa, where the French king was. He passed on by the coast of Italy, and entered the Tiber not far from Rome. Meeting with Ottoman, who was the cardinal and bishop of Hostia, he complained greatly about the filthy simony of the pope and the pope's court — for receiving 700 marks for

consecrating the bishop Cenomanensis; 1500 marks from William the bishop of Ely for his office as legate; and likewise, an infinite sum of money from the bishop of Bordeaux, for acquitting him when he should have been deposed for a certain crime laid to his charge by his clergy, etc.

Kings of France and England at Messina.

August 7, 1189, King Richard departed from Marseilles. September 23d he arrived at Messina (Sicily), with such a noise of trumpets and shawms,¹⁷⁸ with such a rout and show, that it was to the great wonder and terror both of the Frenchmen and all others who heard and beheld the sight.

The French king had come to the town of Messina before September 16th, and had taken for his lodgings the palace of Tancred, king of Sicily. After his own arrival, King Richard soon went to him. After the two kings had conversed together, immediately, the same day, the French king set sail for the land of Jerusalem. But after he was out of the haven, the wind rose against him, and he returned to Messina. The last day of September, Richard passed over the flood of Delfar, and there gained a stronghold called De la Bagmare, or Le Bamre. After placing a sufficient garrison there, he returned to Messina. October 2nd he won another stronghold, and deposited all his store and provision there, which came from England or other places.

The citizens of Messina saw that the king of England had won the castle and island in De la Bagmare, and also the monastery of the Griffons. Fearing that the King might extend his power further to invade their own city — and if he could, the whole Isle of Sicily — they were stirred up against the king's army, to shut the Englishmen outside the gates, and to protect their walls against them. The Englishmen seeing this, made for the gates, and would have broken them open by force. They were so incensed that the king, riding among them with his staff, and breaking some of their heads, could not assuage their fierceness. Such was the rage of the Englishmen against the citizens of Messina.

October 4th, the archbishop of Messina came to King Richard with two other archbishops, and also with the French king, and other earls, barons, and bishops, to seek peace. As they were consulting with one another, and had almost concluded the peace, the citizens of Messina poured out of the town. Some went up on the mountains, some with open force invaded the mansion or lodging of Hugh Brun, an English captain. The noise of this, came to the king's ears. He abruptly broke off the conference with the French king and the rest, and departed. Coming to his men, he commanded them to immediately arm themselves. Then, with some of his soldiers, he made it to the top of a mountain and put the citizens to flight, chasing them down the mountain, to the very gates of the city. Some of the king's servants pursued them within the city, where five valiant soldiers, and twenty of the king's servants were slain. The French king looking on, did not once desire to rescue those men, contrary to his oath and league with the king of England. Rather, the French king being present there with his men, rode in the midst of them safely and without harm back and forth. He might well have assisted the king Richard's men if he wished.

The English army learned how their comrades were slain, and the Frenchmen were permitted in the city, and that they were excluded and the gates barred against them. They were also stopped from buying food and other things. With great indignation, they gathered their weapons, burst open the gates, and scaled the walls. And so, winning the city, they set

¹⁷⁸ *Shawm*: a medieval oboe.

up their flags, with their English arms (heraldic shields) upon the walls. When the French king saw this he was offended. He requested the king of England that the arms of France might also be set up and joined with his, but King Richard would not agree. However, to satisfy his mind, he consented to take down his arms, and commit the custody of the city to the Hospitallers and Templars of Jerusalem, till Tancred king of Sicily and he could agree on the conditions.

In the meantime, as these two kings of France and England were wintering at Messina, the emperor Frederick I ¹⁷⁹ and his son Conrad, with a mighty army of 15,000 Germans and others, were likewise coming overland to relieve the Siege of Acre, which had begun in 1189. But on June 10, 1190 the emperor fell off his horse into the Saleph river (S. Turkey), and was drowned. Conrad, his son, taking command of his army, came to the siege of Acre in Palestine, in which he too died. As a consequence of the arrival of this German army, there was famine in the camp, which lasted two months. A loaf of bread, which sold for one penny before the German army came, afterward sold for three pounds. For this reason, many Christian soldiers perished through famine. The chief food which the princes had to feed on was horse-flesh. This famine being so miserable, some good bishops who were in the camp — namely, Hubert bishop of Salisbury, with certain others — took up a general collection throughout the camp, for the poor.

[151] A.D. 1190.

They made such a provision that in this penury of all things, no man was so destitute and needy, that he did not have something for his relief. A few days after this, by the merciful providence of God, who is the feeder of all creatures, ships came to them with an abundance of corn, wine, and oil.

Richard Overcomes Cyprus, and Proceeds to the Siege of Acre.

The siege of this town of Acre lasted a long time (1189-1191). Just as it was ably assailed by the Christians, so it was strongly defended by the Saracens, especially by the help of wildfire, which the Latins called *Greek fire*; so that, there was great slaughter on both sides.

The year following (A.D. 1191), King Richard sent over his galleys to Naples,¹⁸⁰ there to meet his mother Elenor, and Berengaria (the daughter of Sancius king of Navarre), whom he purposed to marry. In the meantime, King Richard showed himself exceedingly bountiful and liberal to all. He gave several ships to the French king; he bestowed rich rewards upon others; and from his goods and treasure he distributed largely to his soldiers and servants about him. It was reported that he distributed more in one month, than any of his predecessors did in a whole year. By this he obtained great love and favor, which not only redounded to the advancement of his fame — but also to his great advantage and profit, as the sequel would prove.

Now to proceed in the progress of King Richard. He left the city of Messina and went to Catana where Tancred king of Sicily then stayed. He was honorably received and remained with King Tancred three days and three nights. On the fourth day, as he was departing, Tancred offered him many rich presents in gold and silver, and precious silks. King Richard would receive nothing but one little ring, as a token of his good will. For this, King Richard

¹⁷⁹ That is, Barbarossa, the one on whose neck Pope Alexander trod in the church of Venice, saying this verse of the psalm, "You shall tread on the serpents and the adders." (see bottom of p. 128)

¹⁸⁰ *Galley*: A large medieval vessel with a single deck propelled by sails and oars, with guns at stern and prow; a complement of 1,000 men; used mainly in the Mediterranean for war and trading.

gave Tancred a rich sword. At length, when King Richard took his leave, King Tancred would not let him part without giving him four great ships and fifteen galleys. And he himself would accompany Richard for two days journey to a place called Tavernium.

The next morning as they took their leave, Tancred declared to Richard the message which the French had sent him king a little earlier by the duke of Burgundy. It was this:

“That the king of England was a false traitor, and would never keep the peace between them. If Tancred would war against him, or attack him secretly by night, Philip would assist him with all his power, and join with him to the destruction of Richard and all his army,” etc.

Richard the king protested that he was no traitor, nor ever was. And as to the peace begun between them, it would never be broken through him. Nor could he believe that the French king, being his good lord and his sworn partner in that voyage, would utter any such words by him. When Tancred heard this, he produced the letters of the French king sent to him by the duke of Burgundy. He affirmed that if the duke of Burgundy denied bringing the letters, he was ready to meet him by any of his dukes. King Richard receiving these letters, and musing not a little upon them, returned to Messina.

From that time, King Richard being angered against King Philip, never showed him any gentle countenance, peace, or amity, as he had customarily done before.

Soon after this, King Philip sailed for Acre. The next month King Richard also sailed towards Acre with 150 great ships, and 53 great galleys, well-manned and appointed. On Good Friday there rose a mighty tempest, which scattered his entire navy. The king with a few ships, was driven to the isle of Crete. The ship that carried the king's sister, queen of Sicilia, and Berengaria, daughter of the king of Navarre, with two other ships, were driven to the isle of Cyprus. The king moaned greatly for the ship of his sister, and Berengaria his intended wife, not knowing where they were. After the tempest had blown over, he sent his galleys diligently to search for the ship in which his sister was, and the maiden whom he was to marry. At length they were found safe and well at the port of Limisso in the isle of Cyprus. However, the two ships which were in their company in the same haven, were lost. The king of Cyprus was then Isakius (also called the emperor of the Griffons). He captured and imprisoned all the Englishmen who were cast by shipwreck upon his land; and he would not allow the ship carrying the two ladies to enter the port.

The tidings of this was brought to King Richard. In his great wrath, he gathered his galleys and ships together, landed in Cyprus, and there — first in gentle terms — he signifies to King Isakius how he and his Englishmen, coming as strangers to the support of the Holy Land, were driven upon his borders by distress of weather. And therefore, with all humble petition, he besought Isakius in God's behalf, and for reverence of the holy cross, to release those prisoners which he had in captivity. And he asked this king to restore the goods which he detained in his hands, that belonged to those who were drowned, to be employed for the benefit of their souls, etc. And this the king, once, twice, and thrice requested of Isakius. But answering proudly, Isakius sent the king word that he would neither let the captives go, nor return the goods of those who were drowned, etc.

When King Richard heard how little Isakius made of his humble and honest petition, and how nothing could be gotten without force; he soon commanded his army to put on their armor and to follow him, to revenge the injuries received from that proud and cruel king of Cyprus. He desired them to put their trust in God, and not to doubt that the Lord would stand with them, and give them the full victory. Isakius in the meantime, stood guarding the sea coasts where the Englishmen would arrive, with swords, bills, and lances, and such

other weapons as they had. They set boards, stools, and chests before them as a wall. However, only a few of them were in armor, and for the most part they were inexpert and unskilled in the feats of war. Then King Richard with his soldiers, issuing out of their ships, first set his bowmen forward. With their shots, they made a way for others to follow. The Englishmen thus gaining the land, pressed so fiercely upon the Griffons, that after long fighting, and many blows, Isakius was put to flight. King Richard valiantly pursued and slew many. Several he took alive, and would have taken the king if night had not come on and parted the battle. Thus King Richard returned with much spoil and great victory to the port of Limisso, which the townsmen had abandoned for fear. There he found a great abundance of corn, wine, oil, and provisions.

The same day, Joan the king's sister, and Berengaria the maiden, entered the port and town of Limisso, with fifty great ships and fourteen galliots (small, light ships). So that the whole navy, meeting there together, numbered 254 tall ships, and over 60 galliots. Then Isakius, seeing no way to escape by sea, pitched his tents five miles off, swearing that the third day he would give battle to King Richard. But Richard attacked the tents of the Griffons early, while they were unawares and still asleep, and made a great slaughter of them. Isakius was compelled to run away naked, leaving his tents and pavilions to the Englishmen, full of horses and rich treasure; also the imperial standard with a costly streamer. The lower part of it was all covered and wrought with gold. King Richard then returned with victory and triumph to his sister and Berengaria. Shortly after, he married Berengaria, in the isle of Cyprus.

Isakius was afterwards captured and sent in chains of silver and gold to Tripoli. All things having been set in order regarding the possession of the isle of Cyprus, he committed the keeping of it to Radulph, son of Godfrey, lord chamberlain. King Richard departed from the isle of Cyprus, with his ships and galleys, towards the siege of Acre.

On his voyage he met with a great bark, filled with 1500 soldiers and men of war. They pretended to be Frenchmen, and showed their flag with French arms, but were really Saracens in disguise. They were secretly sent with wildfire, and barrels of unknown serpents, to defend the town of Acre. King Richard perceiving this at length, soon set upon them, and vanquished them. Most of them were drowned; some were taken alive. The next day King Richard came to Acre. Soon after his arrival, the Pagans within the city seeing their walls undermined, and towers overthrown, were driven to escape with life and limb, and to surrender the city to the two kings.

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Another great help to the Christians in winning the city was this: in the city of Acre there was a secret Christian among the Saracens, who during the siege, used to toss over the walls, into the camp of the Christians, certain letters written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, in which he disclosed to the Christians from time to time, the doings and counsels of their enemies, revealing how and by what way they would work, and what to beware of. His letters always began thus: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." By this, the Christians were greatly advantaged in their proceedings. But it was a source of great heaviness to them, that he would never tell his name. Nor when the city was taken, could they ever discover who he was.

To make a long siege into a short narration, on July 12, 1191, upon agreement, the princes and captains of the Pagans came to the tent of the Templars, to commune with the two kings regarding peace and surrendering their city.

On July 20th, King Richard, speaking with the French king, desired that they two with their armies would bind themselves by oath to remain there in the land of Jerusalem for three years, to win and receive back those countries. But Philip said he would swear no such oath. So about the beginning of August, Philip the French king, went from Acre to Tyre, even though King Richard and all the princes of the Christian army, with great entreaty, desired him to tarry. This shows what a shame it was for him to come so far, and now to leave undone that for which he came. After his departure the Pagans refused to keep their covenants. They would neither restore the holy cross, nor the money, nor the captives, as they had pledged. They sent word to King Richard, that if he beheaded the hostages left with him at Acre, they would chop off the heads of those captives of the Christians who were in their hands. Shortly after this, Saladin, sending great gifts to King Richard, requested that the time limited for beheading the captives might be prolonged past the agreed forty days. But the king refused to take his gifts, or to grant his request. Whereupon Saladin caused all the Christian captives in his possession to be immediately beheaded. This was August 18th. Yet King Richard would not shorten the time previously prescribed for the execution of his prisoners, which was August 20th. On that day he caused the prisoners of the Saracens, openly in the sight of Saladin's army, to lose their heads. The number came to 2500. He excepted certain principal ones, whom he reserved for future purposes and considerations — especially to exchange for the holy cross, and for some of the Christian captives.

After this, King Richard purposed to besiege the city of Joppa. But along the way between Acre and Joppa, Saladin with a great multitude of his Saracens came fiercely against the king's rear. But through God's merciful grace, the king's warriors acquitted themselves so well, that Saladin was put to flight (whom the Christians pursued for three miles). The same day many of his nobles and captives were lost. Saladin had not been put to such confusion for forty years. From there King Richard went to Joppa, and then to Ascalon, where he found the city of Joppa forsaken by the Saracens, who dared not abide the king's coming. And at Ascalon, Saladin threw down to the ground, and forsook the holy land of Syria. Through all of this territory, the king had free passage without resistance, nor did the Saracen prince dare to encounter King Richard afterward.

Richard Taken by the Duke of Austria.

Many other valiant and famous acts were achieved by king Richard and the French king, and more would have been accomplished had those two kings not fallen into discord, and separated themselves. Philip, the French king, returned home within a short while, and soon invaded Normandy. He urged John, the brother of King Richard, to seize the kingdom of England in his brother's absence. John then made league with the French king, and did homage to him. Richard being in Syria at the time, heard of this, and made peace with the Turks for three years. Not long after (the following spring) King Richard returned home also. But during his return he was driven by severe weather into parts of Istria (Croatia), and to a town called Synaca. There he was taken by Leopold V, duke of Austria, and sold to Emperor Henry VI, for 60,000 marks.¹⁸¹

King Richard, thus being shipwrecked, and traitorously taken and sold to the emperor by the Duke of Austria, was kept in custody there for a year and three months. In some histories, it is affirmed that King Richard, returning out of Asia, came to Italy with prosperous winds, where he desired from the pope to be absolved from an oath that was

¹⁸¹ The Austro-Hungarian Empire then included Slovenia and Croatia on the eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea, where King Richard was driven ashore by the storm.

made against his will; but he could not obtain the absolution. And so setting out from there towards England, passing by the country of Conrad, the marquis — whose death was falsely imputed by the French king to the king of England — was there traitorously taken, as said before, by Leopold, duke of Austria. However, in another history I find the matter more credibly laid out, which says, “King Richard slew Leopold’s brother, while playing chess with him in the French king’s court. Leopold, taking his advantage of the situation, treated Richard cruelly by delivering him to the emperor. The French king in the meantime, started a war in Normandy; and Earl John, the king’s brother, invaded England. But the barons and bishops of the land mightily withstood John, and besieged him in the castle of Windsor. There they took from him all the castles and forts which he had gotten. Thus the earl, seeing no hope of prevailing in England, and suspecting the deliverance of the king his brother, went to France, and stayed with the French king. At length it was agreed and concluded with the emperor, that King Richard should be released for 100,000 pounds. That sum of money was gathered and made in England, out of chalices, crosses, shrines, candlesticks, and other church plate — also with public contributions from friars, abbeys, and other subjects of the realm. Part of this sum was immediately paid, and hostages and pledges were taken for the remainder. This was about the fifth year of Richard’s reign. Then it was obtained from the pope, that priests might then celebrate with chalices of pewter and tin; and so it was granted and continued long after.

Thus King Richard being ransomed, was restored and returned to England. At his return, Earl John his brother, coming to him with humble submission, desired to be pardoned for his transgressions. King Richard answered, “I would to God that your misconduct, just as it dies in oblivion with me, so may it remain in remembrance with you;” and so he gently forgave him. After he had recovered his holds and castles, Richard caused himself to be crowned again. This being done, he went with his forces against the French king, and drove him out of Normandy. After that, he went against the Welshmen, and subdued them.

The year following (A.D. 1197), Philip the French king broke the truce made between him and King Richard, and the king was compelled to sail over again to Normandy to withstand the malice of his enemy. About that time, my history records a man that some called *Fulco*. Some say he was the archbishop of Rouen, named Walter. Fulco then being in England, and coming into the king’s presence, said to him with great courage and boldness; “You have, O mighty king, three daughters, very vicious and of evil disposition. Take good heed of them, and at once provide good husbands for them, lest, by an untimely bestowal in marriage, you not only incur great loss and injury, but also utter ruin and destruction for yourself.” The king in a rage said,

“You lying and mocking hypocrite! You do not know where you are, or what you say. I think you are mad, or not within your wits. For I never had a daughter, as all the world knows, and therefore, you open liar, get out of our presence.”

[153] A.D. 1191-1205.

Fulco answered,

“No, and like your grace, I do not lie. but say the truth. For you have three daughters which I continually frequent your court, and wholly possess your person, and such three naughty ones as never before were heard of. I mean, mischievous *strife*, greedy *covetousness*, and filthy *luxury*. And therefore I say again, O king, beware of them, and at once provide marriages for them, lest in not doing so, you utterly undo both yourself and the whole realm.”

The king took his words in good humor, with correction of himself, and confession of it. Whereupon he immediately called his lords and barons before him, to whom he declared the conversation of Fulco, who desired him to beware of his three daughters, *pride*, *avarice*, and *luxury*, with advice to marry them off immediately, lest further inconvenience ensue both to himself and to the whole realm:

“His good counsel (my lords) I intend to follow, not doubting all your consent to it. Therefore here before you all, I give my daughter swelling *pride* to wed the proud Templars; my greedy daughter *avarice* to the covetous order of the Cistercian monks; and last of all, my filthy daughter *luxury* to the riotous prelates of the church, whom I think to be very appropriate men for her. They are so severally well-agreeing to all their natures, that like matches in our realm are not to be found for them.”

And thus much concerning Fulco.

Death of Richard I. Succeeded by John – 1199.

Not long after this, a certain noble personage found a great treasure both of gold and silver hidden in the ground, a great part of which he sent to King Richard, as chief lord and prince over the whole country. The king refused it, saying that he would have all or none, for he was the principal chieftain over the land. But the finder would not condescend to that. Therefore the king laid siege to a castle of his, called Galuz, thinking that the treasure lay there. But the keepers and warders of the castle, seeing themselves insufficient to withstand the king, offered him the castle, desiring to depart with life and armor intact. The king would in no way grant this, but he bid them to re-enter the castle again, and to defend it in all the forcible ways they could. It so turned out, that as the king with the duke of Brabant went about the castle, viewing its various places; a soldier within, named Bertrand Cordoun, struck the king with an arrow in the arm. The iron remained and festered in the wound, so that the king would die within nine days. Because he was not content with half the treasure that another man found, the king lost all his own treasure that he had.

The king being thus wounded, had the man who shot him brought to him. He asked him the reason why he wounded him? The man answered (as the history says) that he thought to kill rather than be killed. And whatever punishment he should sustain, he was content, if he might kill the man who had earlier killed his father and brothers. The king, hearing his words, freely forgave him and had a hundred shillings given to him. Although (as the history adds) after the death of the king, the duke of Brabant caused the man to be hanged after great torments. The history of Gisburn, however, says that the killer of King Richard coming to the French king, thinking to have a great reward, was commanded to be drawn apart with horses, and his quarters to be hung up. Another history affirms, and Gisburn partly testifies the same thing, that a little before the death of King Richard, three abbots of the Cistercian order came to him, to whom he was confessed. And when he saw them hesitate at his absolution, he added these words — that he willingly committed his body to be eaten by worms, and his soul to the fire of purgatory, there to be tormented till the judgment, in the hope of God’s mercy.

King John.

After the death of King Richard, called *Coeur de Lion*, his brother John, earl of Morton, began his reign, A.D. 1199. The archbishop put the crown on his head, and swore him to defend and to maintain the church. Unless he resolved in his mind to do so, the archbishop charged him not to presume to take this dignity upon himself. On St. John the Baptist’s day next following, King John sailed into Normandy and came to Rouen, where he was royally received. A truce was concluded between him and the French king for a time. And there the

earl of Flanders came to him, and all other lords of France who were of King Richard's band and friendship, and were sworn to him. Not long after this, Philip the French king made Arthur of Brittany a knight in 1202,¹⁸² and received his homage for Normandy, Brittany, and all his other possessions beyond the sea; and he promised him assistance against King John. After this, King John and the French king conferred with their lords for about one hour. The French king asked for so much land for himself and Knight Arthur, that King John would grant him *none*. And so John departed in wrath. That same year, a legate came into France, and commanded the king, upon pain of an interdict, to release someone named Peter out of prison, who was elected to a bishopric. He was accordingly released.

After that, the legate came into England, and commanded King John, also under pain of an interdict, to deliver the archbishop whom he had kept as prisoner for two years. The king refused to do this till the legate had paid him six thousand marks. This is because he had defeated the archbishop in armor, in a battle against him (when the "bishops of the land mightily withstood John," p. 152); and John had him swear that upon his deliverance, the archbishop would never wear armor against any Christian man.

At this time King John divorced his wife, daughter of the Earl of Gloucester, because they were in the third degree of kindred. Afterwards, on the advice of the French king, King John wedded Isabel, daughter of the Earl of Angouleme; and in return, Arthur of Brittany paid homage to King John for Brittany and other lands.¹⁸³

At this time there was a contention between King John and Geoffrey the archbishop of York. This was because, *first*, the archbishop would not permit the sheriff of York to proceed in those duties which he had to perform for the king within his diocese. *Secondly*, because he had excommunicated the sheriff. *Thirdly*, because Geoffrey would not sail with the king to Normandy, to perform the marriage between Louis, the French king's son, and his niece.

In the year 1202, Philip the French king required that King John should part with all his lands in Normandy and Pictavia, giving them to Arthur, John's nephew, or else Philip would war against him. When King John refused, the next day the French king with Arthur attacked his towns and castles in Normandy, and caused him much trouble. However, the French king received such a repulse at the Englishmen's hands, that the English, so pursued the Frenchmen in their flight, that they not only took Arthur prisoner with many others, but so overthrow them, that none was left to bring tidings home.

Progeny of Henry II. Arthur of Brittany was nephew to King John, and son to Geoffrey, who was the elder brother to John. King Henry II had eight children; one was William, who died in childhood; the second, Henry, died also while his father was still alive; the third, Geoffrey, earl of Brittany, who likewise died during his father's days, leaving behind him two children, Arthur and Brecca; the fourth, Richard *Coeur de Lion*, king; the fifth, John, now reigning; and three daughters besides.

Arthur being captured, was brought before king John, and having been exhorted with many gentle words to leave the French king, and to incline to his uncle, he answered boldly and with great indignation. He demanded the kingdom of England, with all the other dominions belonging to it, as the lawful heir of the crown. By this he provoked the king's displeasure

¹⁸² Arthur, duke of Brittany, was recognized as the heir presumptive to the English throne by his uncle, King Richard I, in 1190, despite being just a child at the time. His uncle John usurped the throne from him.

¹⁸³ Arthur of Brittany paid homage to King John of England as part of a truce between John and Philip II of France. In January 1200, Philip agreed to withdraw his support for Arthur in return for John paying homage to Philip for his French possessions. As part of this agreement, Arthur gave homage (payment) to John for Brittany.

against him and was sent to the tower of Rouen. There at length he finished his life. Whether it was by leaping into the ditch, thinking to make his escape, or by some other secret hand, or some other chance, it is not yet agreed upon in history. King John was under great suspicion; whether justly or unjustly the Lord knows.

The year following, John lost all his holds and possessions in Normandy, through the power of the French king. After these losses, other troubles came upon him, with as great or greater enemies — that is, with the pope and his popelings in the affair of the archbishop of Canterbury.

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Dispute Concerning the Archbishopric of Canterbury.

In A.D. 1205, Hubert the archbishop of Canterbury died. Before his body had yet been committed to the earth, the younger monks gathered themselves together at midnight, and elected their superior Reginald. Without the king's license, or even his knowledge, they placed him in the metropolitan seat. And lest the king should make the election void, they charged him by virtue of his oath to keep it all secret, and to reveal nothing till he came to the pope. But contrary to his oath, as soon as he came into Flanders, he published abroad the whole matter. The next day the elder monks sent to the king, desiring him, of his gracious license, to choose canonically their archbishop. The king most gently and favorably granted their petition, desiring that for his sake they would show favor to John Gray, then bishop of Norwich, as indeed they did, electing him to that See of the primacy. As the authority of kings and princes was then but small in their own dominions, without the pope's consent and confirmation; he also sent to Rome to have the election ratified by the pope. The suffragans of Canterbury, not a little offended at these two elections, then sent speedily to Rome to have them both stopped; for they had not been consulted about them. And from them grew a most prodigious tumult.

In this year the clergy grew so unruly that they neglected their charge. They incensed the king's displeasure so much against them, that he ordered the goods be taken of those who were faulty.

A Letter of King John, Regarding the Lands and Goods of those Clergymen who refused to celebrate Divine Service.

“The king to all clerical and lay persons within the bishopric of Lincoln, greeting. Know that from Monday next before the feast of Easter, we have committed to William of Cornhill, archdeacon of Huntington, and to Joseline of Canvil, all the lands and goods of the abbots and priors, and of all the spiritual persons; and also of all clerics within the bishopric of Lincoln, who will not from that time celebrate divine service. And we command you, that from there you assist them as our bailiffs; and believe them in those things which they tell you privately on our behalf. — Witness ourself at Clarendon the 18th day of March, in the 9th year of our reign.”

But to proceed in this troublesome election: the next year the *suffragans* of the province of Canterbury on one side, and the *monks* of Canterbury on the other, came before the pope with their brawling matter. First, the monks, presenting Reginald their superior, desired that their election might be confirmed. The suffragans likewise complained that the monks should presume to choose the archbishop without their consent, and therefore desired the first election to be annulled. The pope, deciding the matter, pronounced with the monks; charging the suffragans and bishops to meddle no more with that election, but to let the monks alone. The monks of Canterbury, now having the whole election in their hands, fell

out among themselves. The younger ones who had chosen Reginald as their superior, wished that election to stand. The elder monks replied that the first election was done by stealth and by night, and by the younger ones among them, without the counsel of the other monks. Besides this, it was done without the king's license and appointment, and without due solemnity.

When they had spoken at length on both sides, and could not agree on one person, Pope Innocent III (r. A.D. 1198-1216) condemned both their elections, commanding them to choose Stephen Langton for their archbishop, who was then cardinal of St. Chrysogon. The monks then answered that they dared not so do without consent of their king. The pope in a passion, taking the words out of their mouths, said to them,

“We desire you to know that we have full power and authority over the church of Canterbury, and are not accustomed to tarry for the consent of princes. Therefore we command you, on pain of our great curse, that you choose him alone whom we have appointed.”

The monks abashed and terrified at these words, consented, though they murmured much in their hearts. And thus Stephen Langton was made archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁸⁴

On this occasion King John conceived an exceeding displeasure against the clergy and monks of Canterbury for doing so many things against his prerogative. Without his license they elected their archbishop, and set aside the bishop of Norwich, whom he had appointed. They wasted a great part of his treasure, and to bring all to the devil, they made Stephen Langton their high metropolitan. In his anger, John banished 64 of them from the land.

The king then sent messengers to the pope with his letters, in which he sharply remonstrates with the pope, because he so discourteously refused the election of the bishop of Norwich, and set up Stephen Langton, consecrating him archbishop of Canterbury. And among other things he adds that he will stand for his liberties, if need be, unto death. He concludes, saying,

“That if he is not heard in this request, he will so provide for the sees that there shall be no such gadding and coursing any more over to Rome, allowing no longer the riches of the land to be transported there. And seeing that from his own archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of the church, he has been sufficiently provided and instructed in all kinds of knowledge, he shall not need to seek judgment and justice abroad.”

When these came to the pope, he directs letters in return to the king in this form:

“Innocent, pope, servant of the servants of God, to our well-beloved son in Christ, the king of England, health and apostolical blessing. Whereas we have written to you previously, exhorting and entreating you in a humble, diligent, and gentle way; you have written to us in reply, in a threatening and upbraiding manner; both spitefully and frowardly. And whereas we have borne with you and given way to you above what our right and duty required, you for your part have given to us not so much as by right and duty you are bound to do. And though your devotion, as you say, has been very necessary to us, yet consider again that ours also is not a little opportune and expedient for you. And whereas we have not shown at any time the like honor to any prince as we have to you, you again have so much derogated from our honor, as no other prince has presumed to do besides you alone — pretending certain frivolous causes and occasions,” etc.

Then alluding at length to the election of Langton, the pope thus proceeds:

¹⁸⁴ In 1225 Stephen Langton would identify and number all the chapters of the Bible, just as we have them today.

“Therefore, be it known to your discretion or kingly prudence, that as this election of Stephen Langton has proceeded without fraud or deceit upon a person fit for the office, we therefore will for no man’s pleasure, neither may we without danger of fame and of conscience defer or protract any longer the consummation of the said election. Therefore, my well-beloved son, seeing that we have had respect to your honor, above what our right and duty required, study to honor us so much as your duty requires in return, so that you may more plentifully deserve favor both at God’s hand and ours; lest by doing the contrary you bring yourself into such a sea of troubles of which you will afterwards scarcely free yourself again. For know this for a certainty, that in the end it must fall out that he shall have the better, to whom every knee of ‘things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth’ will bow, whose place I serve in earth, though I am unworthy. Therefore, do not set yourself to obey their persuasions, who always desire your unquietness, so that they may fish better in the troubled water. But commit yourself to our pleasure, which will undoubtedly turn to your praise, glory, and honor.”

Not long after this letter was sent, a charge and commandment proceeded into England to certain bishops, requiring them by apostolic authority, that if the king would not receive the prior of Canterbury and his monks, they should interdict him throughout his realm. For the execution of this, four bishops were appointed by the pope’s bulls, namely, William, bishop of London; Eustace, bishop of Ely; Walter, bishop of Winchester; and Giles, bishop of Hereford. These bishops went to the king, and showed their commission from the pope, and wished him to consent. But the king refused, and would by no means grant their request. The next morning, after the Annunciation of the Virgin, they went and pronounced the general interdict throughout all England, so that the church doors were shut with keys and other fastenings, and with walls, etc.

[155] A.D. 1205-1210.

The Pope Curses King John.

Now when the king heard of this, he was moved against them, and took all the possessions of the four bishops into his hands, appointing certain men to keep the livings of the clergy throughout the realm, and that they should enjoy no part of it. This being done, the bishops cursed all those who kept or meddled with church goods.

After a time, certain prelates on the king’s part, made an arrangement with these bishops. And when the form of agreement was concluded, it was engrossed in two indentures. The four bishops set their seals to one part, and the other part the bishops, earls, and abbots carried to the king. When the king saw the arrangement he liked it well, only he would not agree to make restitution of the church goods. So he sent to the four bishops again, that they should remove that point of restitution. But they answered stoutly that they would not remove one word. Then the king sent word to the archbishop, by the four bishops, that he would come to Canterbury to speak with him. When the archbishop Stephen came to Canterbury, the king sent his treasurer to him, the bishop of Winchester, to persuade him to remove from the indentures the clause of restitution. But he refused to alter a word of it, which so angered the king that immediately it was proclaimed throughout England at the king’s command, that all those who had any church livings, and went overseas should come back to England by a certain day, or else lose their livings forever. And in that proclamation, he further charged all sheriffs within the realm, to inquire if any bishops, abbots, priors, or any other churchman (from that day forward) received any command from the pope, that they should take his or their body and bring it before him: and also that they should take into their hands, for the king’s use, all the church lands that were given to any man by the

Archbishop Stephen, or by the priors of Canterbury, from the time of the election of the archbishop. He further charged that all the woods that were the archbishop's, should be cut down and sold.

When tidings came to the pope that the king had acted this way, he was moved with fiery wrath, and sent to the king two legates (Pandulph and Durant), to warn him in the pope's name that he should cease his doings to the holy church, and amend the wrong he had done to the archbishop of Canterbury, to the priors and the monks of Canterbury, and to all the clergy of England. And further, that he should restore the goods that he had taken against their will, or else they would curse the king by name. And for this purpose, the pope gave them his bulls and letters patent.¹⁸⁵ These two legates, coming into England, came to the king, and informed him of the pope's pleasure. Then the king answered,

“All that you have said I would gladly do, and all other things that you would ordain; but as to the archbishop, I will tell you as it lies in my heart. Let the archbishop leave his bishopric, and if the pope then entreats for him, perhaps I may give him some other bishopric in England; and upon this condition I will receive and admit him.”

Then said Pandulph to the king, “Holy church was never accustomed to degrade an archbishop without reasonable cause; but she was ever accustomed to correct princes who were disobedient to her.” “What? How now?” said the king, “Do you threaten me?”

“No,” said Pandulph, “but you have now openly told us how it stands in your heart; and now we will tell you what is the pope's will. He has wholly interdicted and cursed you for the wrongs you have done to the church and to the clergy. And for so much as you continue in your malice, and will come to no amendment, you are to understand that from this time forward the sentences against you have force and strength. And all those who have had intercourse with you before this time, whether they be earls, barons, knights, or any other, we absolve them safely from their sins up to this day. But from this time forward we accurse them openly, and specially by this our sentence, who hold intercourse with you. And we absolve, moreover, earls, barons, knights, and all other manner of men, of their homages, services, and fealties. Also, Sir King, all the kings, princes, and great dukes of Christendom, have requested the pope to give license to them to cross themselves, and to war against you, as God's great enemy, and to win your land, and to appoint for king whomever the pope pleases. And we here now absolve of their sins all those who will rise against you here in your own land.”

Then the king, hearing this, answered, “What further shame may you do to me than this?”

Pandulph again: “We say to you, by the word of God, that neither you, nor any heir that you have after this day, shall be crowned.”

So the king said, “By him who is Almighty God, if I had known of this thing before you came into this land, and that you had brought me such news, I would have made you stay away these twelve months from my realms.”

Then Pandulph answered,

“Full well we thought, at our first coming, that you would have been obedient to God and to holy church, and have fulfilled the pope's commandment which we showed and pronounced to you. And now you say that if you had known the cause of our coming, you would have made us stay away a whole year. You might as well say that you would have taken a whole year's respite

¹⁸⁵ (Law) *Letters patent*: official documents granting a right or privilege.

without the pope's leave. But even if we were to suffer death for it, we will not shrink from telling all the pope's message and will, that he gave us in charge."

In another chronicle I find the words between the king and Pandulph somewhat other than as described, as if the king had threatened him with hanging if he had foreknown of his coming. Pandulph answered, that he looked for nothing else at the king's hands, but to suffer for the church's rights. Whereupon the king, being mightily incensed, departed. The king, being then at Northampton, desired the sheriffs and bailiffs to bring out all the prisoners there, who had deserved to be put to death, to the intent (as some think) to make Pandulph afraid. Among them was a certain clergyman who, for counterfeiting the king's coin, was condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. To anger Pandulph, the king commanded that he be hanged higher than the rest. Pandulph hearing of this, though he began to fear lest he be hanged himself, still went with courage to the church to bring out bell, book, and candle, charging that no man, under pain of cursing, should lay hands upon the clergyman. Upon this, the king and the cardinal parted in no little anger. Pandulph went to Rome, and reported to the pope and the cardinals what had been done.

Then the pope summoned all the bishops, abbots, and clergy of England, to repair to Rome, to consult about what was to be done. In this council it was decreed that John king of England should be accursed, with all those who held with him. However, it was not yet permitted that the people should assume the cross to fight against him, because as yet John had shed no blood. But afterwards the pope, seeing that King John would not stoop under his subjection, sent to the French king, that upon remission of all his sins, and those of all who would accompany him, he should invade the realm of England.

Pope Innocent again commanded, on pain of his great curse, that no man should obey King John. He forbid all persons to eat and drink with him, or talk with him, or to commune or counsel with him. Indeed, he forbid his own familiar household to do king John any kind of service, either at bed, or at board, in church, in hall, or in stable. Nor was the pope content with this, but he gave a definitive sentence that King John should be removed from his regal seat and deposed, and another put in his place. And for the speedy execution of this sentence, he appointed the French king Philip, promising to give him full remission of all his sins, and the clear possession of the whole realm of England, to him and his heirs, if he either killed him or expelled him.

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The next year the French king began his attempt, being well-manned with bishops, monks, prelates, priests, and their servants. But behold the work of God, the English navy took 300 of the French king's ships, well-laden with wheat, wine, meal, flesh, armor, and other such materials for the war; and burnt 100 within the harbor, taking the spoils with them. In the meantime the priests within England had provided them a false prophet, called Peter Wakefield of Poiz, who was an idle wanderer and talkative fellow. They made this Peter prophesy lies, rumoring his prophesies abroad, to bring the king out of all credit with his people. This knavish fellow prophesied about King John, that he would reign no longer than Ascension-day (A.D. 1213), and this, he said, he had by revelation. Then it was demanded of him whether John would be slain, or expelled, or resign the crown? He answered that he could not tell. But he was sure of this, that neither John, nor any of his stock or lineage, would reign after that day. The king, hearing of this, laughed much at it. "Tush, (he said), it is but an idiot knave, and one out of his wits." But while this foolish prophet had escaped the king's displeasure, he talked so much that those who loved the king apprehended that this man was a malefactor; and so he was thrown into prison without the king knowing it.

Soon after, the fame of this prophet went all over the realm. His name was known everywhere, especially because he was imprisoned for the matter. From there old gossips' tales went abroad; new tales were invented; fables were added to fables; and lies grew upon lies; so that every day new slanders were raised against the king, rumors arose, blasphemies were spread, the enemies rejoiced, and treasons were maintained by the priests.

When Ascension-day had come, because of what was prophesied before, King John commanded his regal tent to be spread abroad in the open field, passing that day with his noble council and men of honor, in the greatest solemnity he had ever done, solacing himself with musical instruments and songs, and always in sight among his trusty friends. When that day was passed in all prosperity and mirth, his enemies turned it all to an allegorical understanding, to make the prophesy good. They said, "He is no longer king, for the pope reigns, and not he." Then the king was persuaded by his council, that this false prophet had troubled the realm, perverted the hearts of the people, and excited the commons against him. The king therefore commanded that he should be hanged and drawn like a traitor.

King John Resigns His Crown to the Pope.

Then the popish prelates, monks, canons, priests, etc., began to practice with Pope Innocent and the French king abroad, the treasons which they wrought within the realm. Besides this, they blinded the nobility and commons by their confessionals. The king was thus surrounded with enemies. He knew the conspiracies that were being worked against him by the pope, as well as by Philip the French king. He was also aware that his lords and barons were rebelliously incited against him. He saw the effects of the pope's curses and interdicts against those who took his part, and the pope's absolutions and dispensations for all those who would rebel against him — commanding them to keep from himself such homage, service, duties, debts, and all other allegiance that godly subjects owe and are bound to yield and give to their liege lord and prince. The king, I say, in the thirteenth year of his reign, seeing all this, and that the French king was planning an invasion of his realm, sent ambassadors to the pope, the fountain of all this mischief. He promised to do whatever the pope might command him in the reformation of himself, and restitution of all wrongs done to holy church.

Then the pope sent back into England his legate Pandulph, with others. The king awaited their coming at Canterbury, where on the thirteenth day of May, the king received them. He made an oath that of and for all things in which he stood accursed, he would make ample restitution and satisfaction. All the lords and barons of England (so many as were there with the king) swore in like manner, that if the king would not accomplish everything the oath which he had taken required, they would compel him to hold and confirm the same.

Then the king submitted himself to the court of Rome, and resigned his dominions and realms of England and Ireland, for himself and for his heirs forever, with this condition: that the king and his heirs would take back these two dominions of the pope, in order to farm, paying 1000 marks of silver yearly to the court of Rome. Then the king took the crown from his head, and kneeling in the presence of all his lords and barons of England, he gave it to Pandulph, saying, "Here I resign the crown of the realm of England into the hands of the pope, Innocent III, and place myself wholly at his mercy." Then Pandulph took the crown,

and kept it for five days as a possession and seizin-taking¹⁸⁶ of these two realms of England and Ireland, confirming also all things promised by John's charter obligatory, as follows: —

Copy of the Letter Obligatory that King John made to the Pope, concerning the yielding up of the Crown and Realm of England into the Pope's hands, for a certain sum of money to be paid yearly.

“To all Christian people throughout the world, John, by the grace of God, king of England, greeting. Be it known to you all, that as we have grieved and offended God, and our mother church of Rome, and as we have need of the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we can offer nothing so worthy, or make so competent satisfaction to God and to holy church, as with our realms of England and of Ireland, then by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we desire to humble ourselves, for the love of Him who humbled himself to death upon the cross. And through counsel of the nobles, earls, and barons, we offer and freely grant to God, and to the apostles St. Peter and Paul, and to our mother church of Rome, and to our holy father Pope Innocent III, and to all the popes who come after him, all the realm, patronages of churches of England and of Ireland, with all the appurtenances, for remission of sins, and help and health of our kings' souls, and of all Christian souls. So that from this time afterward, we will receive and hold of our mother church of Rome, as in farm, doing fealty to our holy father the pope, Innocent III, and to all the popes who come after him, in the manner above said. And in the presence of the wise Pandulph, the pope's legate, we make liege homage, as if it were in the pope's presence; and we bind us to it, and all who come after us, and our heirs forever, without any dispute to the pope. And in token of this, we will confirm, and ordain, that he be our special renter of the aforesaid realms, saving St. Peter-pence, in all things. To the mother church of Rome, paying by the year 1000 marks of silver, at two periods of the year, for all customs that we should do for the said realms, that is to say, at Michaelmas, and at Easter; that is, for England 700 marks, and 300 marks for Ireland, saving to us and to our heirs, our justices and our other franchises. And all these things, we will so that they are firm and stable without end, and to that obligation, we and all our successors, and our heirs in this manner are bound, that if we or any of our heirs through any presumption fail in any of these things, and he being warned and not amending, he shall then lose the aforesaid realms forever; and this charter of obligation and our warrant forever, shall be firm and stable without dispute. We shall from this day afterward be true to God, and to the mother church of Rome, and to you, Innocent III, and to all who come after you, and the realms of England and of Ireland we shall maintain against all manner of men, by our power through God's help.”

Upon this obligation, the king was discharged on July 2nd, from that tyrannical interdict under which he had continued for five years and three months. But before the release, he was thus miserably compelled to give over both his crown and scepter to that antichrist of Rome, for five days, and as his client, vassal, feudary, and tenant, to receive it back from him at the hands of another cardinal, being bound both for himself and for his successors, to pay yearly (as an acknowledgment of it) 1000 marks for England and Ireland.

[157] A.D. 1210-1216.

In (A.D. 1215), as Paulus Aemilius and other historians witness, Pope Innocent III held a general synod at Rome, called the **COUNCIL OF LATERAN**. The chief causes of that council were these: in the days of Innocent III, heresy (as he calls the truth of God), or the doctrine that rebukes sin, began to spread out its branches. Many princes were excommunicated, such as Otto the emperor, John king of England, Peter king of Arragon, Raimund the earl of

¹⁸⁶ *Seizin* (or *seisin*): a legal concept that denotes the right to legal possession of a thing, usually a fiefdom, fee, or an estate in land. It is similar, but legally separate from the idea of ownership.

Toulouse, Aquitaine, Sataloni, and others. Therefore this council was proclaimed, and prelates from all nations were called to it. The pope published that his intent was only to have the church universally reformed, and the Holy Land recovered from the Turks. But all this was craft and falsehood, as the sequel proved. For his purpose was to subdue all princes, and to make himself rich and wealthy. For there he made this antichristian act, and established it by public decree — that the pope should have from then on, the correction of all Christian princes, and that no emperor should be admitted, unless he was sworn before, and also crowned by him. He ordained, too, that whoever spoke evil of the pope, should be punished in hell with eternal damnation (*Conradus, Urspergensis, Hieronymus, Marius.*)

Transubstantiation was first codified in this Lateran Council. John Scot (*Duns Scotus*) mentions this in his fourth book, writing these words:

“The words of the Scripture might be expounded more easily, and more plainly, without transubstantiation. But the church chose this sense, which is harder, being moved to it, as it seems, chiefly because men ought to hold about the sacraments, as the holy church of Rome holds,” etc.

King John Poisoned by a Monk.

Now let us return to King John again, and mark how the priests and their adherents were plagued for their treatment of his majesty’s will. In this Fourth Council of Lateran (1215), Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, was excommunicated,¹⁸⁷ along with all those bishops, prelates, priests, barons, and commons who in the former rebellion had been with him. When the archbishop sued to be absolved, the pope answered with great indignation, “I swear by St. Peter, you shall not so soon at my hand obtain the benefit of absolution.” The pope, shortly before, had been so deeply offended and angered with the barons of England, that he rent and destroyed the great charter of the liberties of England (that is, the Magna Carta, granted by king John that year). By the pope’s sentence he condemned it forever, and cursed all the other rebels with bell, book, and candle.

About the same time, such treasons and conspiracies were wrought by the bishops, priests, and monks throughout all the realm, that the king did not know where to find trusty friends. He was compelled to travel from place to place, but not without a great army of men, looking every day when his barons and their confederates would cruelly set upon him. For the space of three months he remained in the Isle of Wight, in the open air, to quiet himself for a time from all tumults. He led a solitary life among the rivers and watermen there. He coveted to die rather than to live, being so traitorously handled by his bishops and barons, and not knowing how to be avenged. Therefore, he took upon himself “the cross,” *i.e.*, a crusade against the Turks for the recovery of Jerusalem — influenced by the doubts which he had about his people, rather than by any devotion. He said to his familiar servants, “Since I submitted myself and my lands (England and Ireland) to the church of Rome, nothing has ever prospered with me, but all has gone against me.”

In this year (A.D. 1216), Pope Innocent III died. After him succeeded Cintius, called Honorius III, a man of very great age. Yet he lived ten and a half years more in the papacy.

¹⁸⁷ Stephen Langton was not excommunicated but suspended when Langton refused to enforce the pope's orders to excommunicate them as disturbers of the peace. Langton left England soon after the issuance of the Magna Carta, to attend the Fourth Lateran Council, where the sentence of suspension was confirmed by Innocent III.

In the same year, King John came to Swinstead abbey (not far from Lincoln), and rested there for two days. This is where (as most writers testify) he was most traitorously poisoned by a monk of that abbey.

Among other peculiar traits belonging to this king, there was one which is not to be reprehended, but rather commended in him: for being above the superstition which kings at that time were commonly subject to. He did not regard the popish mass. I find it testified of him, that one time in his hunting, coming where a very fat stag was cut up and opened, the king beheld the fatness of the stag, and liking it he said: "See how easily and happily he has lived, and yet for all that he never heard a mass."

It is recorded in the chronicle of William Caxton, that the Monk Simon being much offended with the king, cast it in his wicked heart as to how he might most speedily bring John to his end. First of all he counselled with his abbot, showing him the whole affair, and what he designed to do. He alleged the prophesy of Caiaphas, "It is expedient for us that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish," Joh 11.50. "I am well contented," he says, "to lose my life, and so become a martyr, that I may utterly destroy this tyrant." The abbot wept for gladness, and greatly commended his fervent zeal. The monk then being absolved by his abbot beforehand for doing this act, put poison into a cup of wine, and with a smiling and flattering countenance, said to the king, "If it pleases your princely majesty, here is such a cup of wine as you never drank better in all your lifetime. I trust this wassail will make all England glad." And with that, he drank a great draught of it himself, with the king toasting him. The monk died. From then on, three monks would sing mass for his soul, confirmed by their general chapter! What became of King John, you shall now learn. I would have you mark well the wholesome proceedings of these holy votaries — how virtuously they obey their king, whom God has appointed, and how religiously they bestow their confessions, absolutions, and masses!

The king a short while later (feeling great pain in his body) asked for Simon the monk. The answer was that he was dead. "Then God have mercy upon me," he said, "I suspected as much, after he said that all England would be glad of it." With that he commanded his chariot to be prepared, for he was not able to ride. So he went from there to Sleaford castle, and from there to Newark on Trent. And there, in less than three days, he died. Upon his deathbed he much repented of his former life, and forgave all those who had done him injury. He desired that his elder son Henry might be admonished by his example, and learn by his misfortunes to be natural, favorable, gentle, and loving to his people. His soldiers, both Englishmen and strangers, were still about him, and followed his body in their armor, till they came to the cathedral church of Worcester. There he was honorably buried by Silvester the bishop, between St. Oswald and St. Wolstan, two bishops of that church. He died October 19, 1216, after he had reigned in such calamity, eighteen years, six months, and odd days.

There are many opinions among the chroniclers of the death of King John. Some of them write that he died of sorrow and heaviness of heart, such as Polydore; some of surfeiting in the night, such as Radulph Niger; some of a bloody flux, such as Roger Hoveden; some of a burning fever; some of a cold sweat, some of eating apples, some of eating pears, some of plums, etc. Thus you see what variety there is among the writers concerning the death of King John. Of these writers, although most of them agree that he was poisoned by the monk, Matthew Paris writes this,

"That going to Lincolnshire, and there hearing of the loss of his carriage and of his treasures upon the washes, he fell into great heaviness of mind, so much that he thereby fell into a

burning fever at the abbey of Swinsted. This ague was increased through evil surfeiting and improper diet, by eating peaches and drinking of new ciser, or as we call it, *cider*. Thus being sick, he was carried from there to the castle of Sleaford, and from there to the castle of Newark. There, calling for his son Henry, he gave him the succession of his crown and kingdom, writing to all his lords and nobles to receive him as their king. Shortly after, on St. Lucy's eve, he departed this life, being buried at Worcester," etc.

In the reign of King John, the citizens of London first obtained the right to yearly choose a mayor. It was also in his time that the London bridge was first built of stone; it was made of wood before.

Progeny of King John. After he had reigned seventeen years, he died. He left behind him four sons and three daughters. First was Henry, the second Richard earl of Cornwall, the third William of Valentia, the fourth Guido Disenaie. He had also another son, who afterwards was made bishop. Of his daughters, the first was Isabel, married to the emperor Frederick, the second Elenor, married to William earl marshal,¹⁸⁸ the third to Mountford the earl of Leicester, etc. Another history says that he had but two daughters, Isabel and Elenor, or as another calls her, *Joan*, who was later queen of Scotland.

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King Henry III – reigned 1216-1272.

Henry the eldest son was then nine years of age, when the majority of the barons of England adhered to Louis the French king's son, whom they had previously invited to come to England. In their opposition to King John, who was then under the pope's curse, they proposed to elect Louis as their king, and had sworn their allegiance to him. Then William, earl marshal, a nobleman of great authority, and a grave and sound counsellor, in a friendly and quiet way called together several earls and barons. And taking this Henry the young prince, he sets him before them, using these words,

“Behold, right honorable and well beloved. Although we have persecuted the father of this young prince for his evil demeanor, and worthily so, yet this young child whom you see here before you, as he is tender in years, so is he pure and innocent from his father's doings. Therefore in as much as every man is charged only with the burden of his own works and transgressions, neither shall the child (as the Scripture teaches us) bear the iniquity of his father. We should therefore, out of duty and conscience, pardon this young and tender prince, and have compassion for his age. And now, because he is the king's eldest son and must be our sovereign and king and successor of this kingdom, come and let us appoint him our king and governor. And let us remove from us Louis, the French king's son, for it is a shame to our nation. And let us cast off the yoke of our servitude from our shoulders.”

To these words the earl of Gloucester answered; “And by what reason or right,” he said, “can we do so, seeing that we have called him here, and have sworn our fealty to him?”

The earl marshal replied,

“Good right and reason we have, and out of duty we ought to do no less. For contrary to our mind and calling, he has abused our affiance and fealties. It is true, we invited him, and meant to prefer him to be our chieftain and governor. But he has scorned and despised us. And if we suffer him to do so, he will subvert and overthrow both us and our nation, and so we will remain a spectacle of shame to all men, and as outcasts of the whole world.”

¹⁸⁸ *Earl marshal*: a hereditary royal official responsible for organizing major ceremonial events and maintaining the College of Arms (responsible for heraldry and the regulation of coats of arms).

At these words they all cried with one voice, "Be it so! *Henry* shall be our king." And so the day was appointed for his coronation. Notwithstanding this, Louis did not forego his claim, but laid siege to the castle of Dover. When he could not succeed there, he took the castle of Berkhamstead, and also the castle of Hertford, doing much harm in the countryside, in pillaging and robbing the people where he went. So that the lords and commons, who held with the king, assembled together to drive Louis out of the land, and battle him. In conclusion, Louis lost the field and fled to London, which was in the hands of his friends. There he had the gates shut, and waited there for more succor from France. In the meantime, Eustace, a French lord, came with a grand army and a hundred ships to assist Louis. But before they arrived, they were encountered on the seas by Richard, King John's natural son. Having no more than eighteen ships to keep the cinque ports,¹⁸⁹ he set eagerly upon them, and through God's grace he overcame them and struck off the head of Eustace. The rest of the French lords, numbering ten, he brought ashore with him. There he imprisoned them in the castle of Dover. He slew almost all their men, and sunk their ships in the sea, so that only fifteen ships escaped. Louis, hearing of this loss of his ships and men, proposed terms, and left the kingdom.

The life and acts of Pope Innocent III were partly described before.

- How he intruded Stephen Langston into the archbishopric of Canterbury, against the king's will, stirring up 64 monks of the church of Canterbury to secretly work against the king.
- How he excommunicated the king as a public enemy of the church, putting him and his whole kingdom under interdict for five years and three months, and at length deposed and deprived him of his scepter, keeping it in his own hands for five days.
- How he absolved his subjects from their due obedience and subjection to the king.
- How he gave away the king's kingdoms and possessions to Louis, the French king's son, commanding Louis to spoil him of both lands and life.
- Whereupon the king, being forsaken by his nobles, prelates, and commons, was forced against his will to submit and swear obedience to the pope, paying a yearly tribute of one thousand marks a year, for receiving his kingdom back. By this, both he and his successors after him were vassals to the pope.

These were the apostolical acts of this holy vicar of Jesus Christ in the realm of England!

Moreover,

- He condemned Almeric, a learned man and a bishop, as a heretic, for teaching and holding against the use of images.
- This pope first brought into the church the paying of private tithes.
- He ordained receiving the communion once a year at Easter.
- To the papal decretals he added the decree which declares every human creature to be subject to the pope.
- Also, reserving the sacrament (in a locked cabinet), and going with the bell and light before the sacrament, was appointed by him.
- In the COUNCIL OF LATERAN he ordained that the canon of the mass should be received with equal authority, as though it had proceeded from the apostles themselves.
- And in this council, it was he who first formally established *transubstantiation* as the doctrine of the church of Rome.

¹⁸⁹ *The Cinque Ports*: a group of coastal towns in southeast England, primarily in Kent and Sussex, with one in Essex. The name means "five harbors" in Old French, originally Hastings, New Romney, Hythe, Dover, and Sandwich.

In this Council of Lateran, there were 61 archbishops and primates present, with 400 bishops, 12 abbots, 800 priors and conventuals, besides other innumerable ambassadors and legates, doctors and lawyers, etc.

In the history of Herman Mutius, we read how in A.D. 1212, in this pope's time, several noblemen and others in the country of Alsatia, held contrary to the tradition of the Romish popes, that *every* day was free for eating flesh, if done in moderation. They held also that it was wicked to restrain priests and ministers from their wives. For these opinions, pope Innocent and his bishops caused 100 of them to be burned and martyred in one day!

Origin of the Dominicans and Franciscans.

In the days of Pope Innocent III (r. 1198-1216), the two orders of friars began — one called “The Preachers’ Order, and the Black Friars of St. Dominic;” the other called “The Minorites of St. Francis.”

The preachers of the black friars order began with Dominic, a Spaniard, near Toulouse. After he labored ten years in preaching against the Albigenses, and others who held doctrines contrary to the church of Rome, he came to the Council of Lateran, and desired of Innocent, to have his order of preaching friars confirmed. The pope refused to grant this for a great while. At length he had a dream that the church of Lateran was ready to fall; and that this Dominic propped up the church with his shoulders, and so preserved the building from falling, etc. And this dream may right well seem verified, for the friars have always been the chief pillars and upholders of the pope's church. Upon this, the pope, waking out of his dream, called Dominic to him, and granted his petition. And so arose this order of the Dominicans!

The order of the minors or Minorite friars, was descended from Francis of Assisi, an Italian. Hearing how Christ sent forth his disciples to preach, he thought to imitate this in himself and in his disciples. And so he took off his shoes, and had but one coat, made of coarse cloth. Instead of a latchet to his shoe, and a girdle, he tied a cord of hemp around himself, and so he apparelled his disciples. He taught them to fulfil (for so he speaks) the perfection of the gospel, to embrace poverty, and to walk in the way of holy simplicity. He left to his disciples and followers, his rule, which he called “The Rule of the Gospel,” as if the gospel of Christ were not a sufficient rule to all Christian men, but it must take its perfection from Francis!

[159] A.D. 1220.

Just as this Francis was superstitious in all things; so by way of penitential deception he covered his body in the winter season with ice and snow! These Franciscan or *begging* friars (mendicants), although they are all under one rule of St. Francis, they are yet divided into many orders. Some go about on treen shoes (wooden), or pattens (clogs or sandals), some barefooted. Some are called *Regular Franciscans* or *Observants*, some *Minors* or *Minorites*, others *Minimi*, others *Gospelers*, others *De Caputio*. They differ in many things, but agree in their superstition and hypocrisy. As we have here entered into the matter of these two orders of friars, I thought to digress from our history a little, in reciting the whole catalogue or rabblement of monks, friars, and nuns of all sects, rules, and orders, set up and confirmed by the pope. The names are as follow:

The Rabblement of Religious Orders.¹⁹⁰

- Ambrosians, two sorts; 409
 Ammonites and Moabites.
 Antony's Hermits 324
 Armenians.
 Augustinians, the first order. A.D.
 Austin's Hermits 498
 Austin's Observants 490
 Barefooted Friars 1222
 Basiliu's Order 384
 Beghearts or White Spirits 1399
 Benedict's Order 524
 Bernardus' Order 1120
 Brethren of Jerusalem 1103
 Brethren of St. John de Civitate, Black Friars
 1220
 Brethren of Willful Poverty.
 Bridget's Order 1370
 Camaldulensi's Order 950
 Canons of St. Augustine 1080
 Carmelites, or White Friars 1212
 Celestine's Order 1297
 Chapter-Monks.
 Charter-house Order 1086
 Cistercian Order 1098
 Clare's Order 1225
 Cluny, Order of 913
 Constantinopolitan Order.
 Cross-bearers, or Crossed Friars 1216
 Cross-bearers.
 Cross-starred Brethren.
 Dominican Black Friars 1220
 Dutch Order 1216
 Franciscans 1224
 Galilei, or Galileans.
 George's Order 1407
 Gerundinensis Order.
 Grandmountain Order 1076
 Gregory's Order 594
 Gulielmites (Williamites) 1246
 Helen's Brethren. Humiliati 1166
 Hermits.
 Holy Spirit Order.
 Hospital Brethren.
 Indian's Order.
 Injesuati 1365
 James' Brethren Order.
 James' Brethren with the Sword.
 Janu's Order.
 Jerome's Hermits 490
 Jerome's Orders, two sorts 1412
 John's Hermits.
 John's Order, Joannites 380
 Joseph's Order.
 Justin's Order 1432
 Katharine of Sienna Order 1455
 Keyed-monks. Knights of Rhodes.
 Knights of Rhodes 1308
 Lazarites of Mary Magdalene's, our Lady
 Brethren 1034
 Lords of Hungary.
 Malay's Servants 1304
 Marovinies.
 Menelaish and Jasonish Sect.
 Minors or Minorites 1224
 Minorites are divided into:
 Conventuals. Observants. Reformed.
 Collectane. De Caputio. De Evangelio. Amedet.
 Clarini, and others.
 Monachi and Monachae.
 Monks of Mount Olivet 1046
 Morbonei and Meresti.
 Nalheart Brethren.
 Nazareans.
 Nestorini.
 New Canons of St. Austin 1430
 New Order of our Lady.
 Paul's Hermits 345
 Peter the Apostle's Order 1409
 Praemonstre Order 1119
 Preacher-Order or Black Friars.
 Purgatorean Brethren.
 Rechabites.
 Sambouites 1199
 Sarrabites.
 Sclavonian Order.
 Scopenits or St. Salvator's Order 1367
 Scottish Brethren Order.
 Scourgers, the first Sect 1266
 Scourgers, the second Sect, called Ninevites.
 Sheer Order.
 Sicarii.
 Soldiers of Jesus Christ 1323
 Specularii, or the Glass Order.
 St. Sepulcher's Order.

¹⁹⁰ This list is very far from satisfactory. The various orders of monks and nuns were far more numerous than given here. Eraillianne specifies half as many more, while he omits some that are specified here by Foxe. "The Lords of Hungary," or Teutonic Knights, "The Templars," etc. as inserted here, are a very small portion of the military orders. It is not easy to explain the insertion of such names as Galileans, Rechabites, Waldenses, etc. They seem to have been taken without correction from some list which confounded sects and orders without distinction — an error very natural to writers before the Reformation, and not infrequently committed. [Ed.]

Bk. IV. Wm. the Conqueror to Wycliffe (1066-1364)

St. Sophia's Order.
Starred Friars.
Starred Monks.
Stool Brethren.
Sword's Order.
Templar Lords 1110
Templar Knights 1120

The Valley of Jehoshaphat's Order.
Vallis Umbrosa 1400
Waldenses Sect.
Wentzelaus Order.
Wilhelmer Order.
White Monks of Mount Olivet 1406
Zelote's Order.

The reader sees what orders and what sects of religion have been set up by the pope — the catalogue and number of them all (101), so far as we could search them out.

Now, as I have reckoned up the names and varieties of these prodigious sects, I will add the words of Hildegardis (a celebrated nun in 1146) against the Romish prelates, and especially against the friars. Hildegardis is held among the papists themselves as a great prophetess, and therefore let us hear her opinion about these men, long before the Reformation.

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The Prophecy Of Hildegardis, A Nun. ¹⁹¹

“In those days a senseless people shall arise, proud, greedy, without faith, and subtle, who shall eat the sins of the people, holding a certain order of foolish devotion under the feigned cloak of being “mendicants,” preferring themselves above all others by their “feigned devotion; arrogant in understanding, and pretending holiness, walking without shame or the fear of God, in inventing many new strong and stout mischiefs. But this order shall be accursed by all wise men and faithful Christians. They shall cease from all labor, and give themselves over to idleness, choosing rather to live through flattery and begging. Moreover, they shall together study how they may perversely resist the teachers of the truth, and slay them together with the noblemen; how to seduce and deceive the nobility, for the necessity of their living and pleasures of this world. For the devil will graft in them four principal vices — that is to say, flattery, envy, hypocrisy, and slander. *Flattery*, that they may have large gifts given to them; *envy*, when they see gifts given to others, and not to them; *Hypocrisy*, that by false dissimulation they may please men; *Backbiting*, that they may extol and commend themselves, and backbite others, for the praise of men, and seducing the simple. Also they shall instantly preach, but without the devotion, or following the example of the martyrs, and shall speak evil of the secular princes, taking away the sacraments of the church from the true pastors, receiving alms from the poor, diseased, and miserable, and also associating themselves with the common people; instructing women how they shall deceive their husbands and friends by their flattery and deceitful words, and to rob their husbands in order to give to them. For these mendicants will take all these stolen and evil-gotten goods and say, ‘Give it to us, and we will pray for you;’ so that being eager to hide other men’s faults, they utterly forget their own. And alas, they will receive all things from rovers, pickers, spoilers, thieves, and robbers, from sacrilegious persons, usurers, and adulterers, heretics, schismatics, apostates, noblemen, perjurers, merchants, false judges, soldiers, tyrants, princes, from those who live contrary to the law, and from many perverse and wicked men — following the persuasion of the devil, the sweetness of sin, a delicate and transitory life, and fulness even unto eternal damnation.

¹⁹¹ This prophecy was given over 60 years before the founding of the Franciscans and Dominicans, but long after the Benedictines (c. 530) and Cluniacs (c. 910). They were all major players in the political intrigues of the pope. They drained the nations financially, while funding the papal machinations that toppled kings, queens, and emperors. They charged for their “services” at births, deaths, weddings, masses, hearing confessions, preaching, and even praying!

“All these things shall manifestly appear in them to all people, and (day by day) they shall grow more wicked and hard-hearted. And when their wickedness and deceits are found out, then their gifts shall cease, and then they shall go about their houses hungry, and like mad dogs looking down upon the earth, and drawing in their necks like doves, that they might be satisfied with bread. Then the people shall cry out upon them,

‘Woe unto you, you miserable children of sorrow! The world has seduced you, and the devil has bridled your mouths; your flesh is frail, and your hearts without savor; your minds have been unsteadfast, and your eyes delighted in much vanity and folly; your dainty appetites desire delicate meats, your feet are swift to run into mischief.

‘Remember when you were apparently blessed, yet envious; poor in sight, but rich; simple to see to, but mighty flatterers — unfaithful betrayers, perverse detractors, holy hypocrites, subverters of the truth, overly righteous, proud, unashamed, and unsteadfast teachers, delicate martyrs, confessors for gain — meek, but slanderers; religious, but covetous; humble, but proud; pitiful, but hard-hearted liars — pleasant flatterers, persecutors, oppressors of the poor, bringing in new sects newly invented by yourselves.

‘You were thought merciful, but found wicked; lovers of the world, sellers of pardons, spoilers of benefices, unprofitable orators, seditious conspirators, drunkards, desirers of honors, maintainers of mischief, robbers of the world, insatiable preachers, men-pleasers, seducers, and sowers of discord. You have built up on high, and when you could ascend no higher, then you fell even as Simon Magus fell, whom God overthrew, and struck with a cruel plague. So you likewise through your false doctrine, naughtiness, lies, detractions, and wickedness have come to ruin.’

And the people shall say to them,

‘Go, you teachers of wickedness, subverters of the truth, brethren of the Shunamite, fathers of heresies, false apostles, who have feigned to follow the life of the apostles, and yet have not followed it in any part. You sons of iniquity! You will not follow the knowledge of your ways, for pride and presumption have deceived you, and insatiable covetousness has subverted your erroneous hearts. And when you would ascend higher than was fit or attractive for you, by the just judgment of God, you have fallen back into perpetual opprobrium and shame.’”

About the same time that these Franciscans and Dominican friars began, the Cross-Bearers, or Crutched Friars, also sprang up (1216). Innocent III raised an army, signed with a cross on the breast, to fight against the Albigenses in the neighborhood of Toulouse, whom the pope accounted as heretics. What these Albigenses were, cannot be well gathered from the old popish histories. For if anyone held, taught, or maintained anything against the pope or his papal pride, or withstood and challenged his traditions, rites, and religions, etc., the historians of that time so depraved and misrepresented them, that they paint them as worse than Turks and infidels. And it was that, I suppose, which caused the popish historians to write about them as they did. I find in some records that the opinions of the Albigenses were sound enough, holding and professing nothing but what was against the wanton wealth, pride, and tyranny of the prelates; and denying that the pope’s authority had any ground in the Scriptures. Nor could they bear with the ceremonies and traditions, images, pardons, and purgatory of the Romish church, calling them (as some say) blasphemous occupancies, etc. These Albigenses were slain and burned in great multitudes by means of the pope, Simon de Montfort, and others.

As mention is made of these superstitious sects of friars, and other such mendicant orders, it might not seem out of place, as I did with Hildegardis, to annex another ancient treatise

compiled by Geoffery Chaucer (1343-1400), by way of a dialogue or questions, moved in the person of a certain uplandish and simple ploughman of the country.¹⁹²

The author titled it "Jack Upland." In it, Chaucer shows to the world the blind ignorance and discord of these irreligious monks. By this it may be seen that it is nothing new, but their blasphemous doings have been detected by various good men in olden times.

A Treatise of Geoffrey Chaucer, entitled Jack Upland.

I, Jack Upland, moan to God, and to all who are true in Christ, that antichrist and his disciples (by color of holiness) are walking and deceiving Christ's church by many false figures, where many virtues have been transposed to vices (by antichrist and his).

But the most fallen folk that antichrist ever found, have been at last brought into the church and in a wonderful way; for they are from diverse sects of antichrist, sown by diverse countries and kindreds.¹⁹³ And all men have known well, that they are not obedient to bishops, nor are they liegemen to kings. They neither till nor sow, weed nor reap, neither tree, corn, nor grass, nothing that might help man, but only help themselves to sustain their lives. And these men have all manner of power from God, as they have seen in heaven and on earth, to sell heaven and hell to whomever they like, and to where these wretches have never been themselves.

And therefore (Friar), in your orders and rules grounded on God's law, tell me, says Jack Upland, what I ask of you. And if you are, or think you are on Christ's side, keep your patience.

Saint Paul taught that all our deeds should be done in charity, otherwise it is worth nothing, but is displeasing to God and a harm to our own souls. And because friars claim to be the greatest clerics of the church, and next following Christ in living, men should for charity ask them some questions, and pray them to ground their answers in reason and holy writ, for otherwise their answer would be worth nothing, however embellished and fair it may be, and as I think men might skillfully ask thus of a friar.

1. Friar, how many orders are on earth, and which is the most perfect order? Of what order are you? Who made your order? What is your rule? Is there any more perfect rule than Christ himself made? If Christ's rule is most perfect, why do you not rule yourself after it?

[161] A D. 1220.

Without more, why should a friar be more punished if he breaks the rule that his patron made, than if he breaks the behests that God himself made?

2. Does Christ approve any more religions than the one that St. James speaks of? If he approves no more, then why have you left his rule and taken another? Why is a friar apostate who leaves his order and joins another sect, if there is but one religion of Christ?

3. Why are you wedded tighter to your habits than a man is to his wife? For a man may leave his wife for a year or two, as many men have done; but if you leave your habit a quarter of a year, you would be held apostate.

4. Do you men make your habit of religion or not? If you do, then as often as it is worn, your religion is worn; and as your habit is better, your religion is better; and when you have laid it aside, you lay aside your religion, and have become apostates. Why do you have such precious clothes? since, as St. Gregory says, no man seeks these but for vain glory.

What does your great hood, your scalperly, your knotted girdle, and your wide cloak signify?

¹⁹² We have two printed copies of this. The earliest is dated 1536. The other is this one in Foxe's 2nd edition. It is unlikely that Chaucer wrote it; more likely a Lollard (a follower of Wycliffe), as a "sequel" to *Piers Plowman*.

¹⁹³ They are "sown" into the church by Satan, like tares sown into the wheat field of the Lord, Mat 13.25-40.

Bk. IV. Wm. the Conqueror to Wycliffe (1066-1364)

5. Why do you all use one color more than other Christian men do? What does it signify that you are all clothed in one manner of clothing?

If you say, it signifies love and charity, then certainly you are often hypocrites when any of you hates another, and yet you are said to be holy by your clothing.

Why may a friar not wear clothing of another sect of friars, if holiness does not stand in the clothes?

6. Why do you keep silence in one house more than another, since men should speak the good over all and leave the evil?

Why do you eat flesh in one house more than another, if your rule and your order are perfect, and also the patron who made it?

7. Why do you get your dispensations, to have it easier? Certainly, either it seems that you are imperfect, or he that made it so hard that you may not keep the rule of your patrons, and be assured, if you do not keep it, you are not then their friars, and so you lie about yourselves.

8. Why do you act like dead men when you are professed, and yet you are not dead, but livelier beggars than you were before? It seems evil for a dead man to go about begging.

9. Why will you not allow your novices to hear your councils in your chapter-house before they have been professed, if your councils are true and follow God's law?

10. Why do you make such costly houses to dwell in, if Christ did not do so? Dead men should have but graves, as suits dead men. Yet you have more courts than many lords of England. For you now travel throughout the realm, and each night will live in your own courts, as but few actual lords may do.

11. Why do you hire limiters (begging friars) to farm, giving each year a certain rent, and will not permit one in another's limitation (precinct), as if you were yourselves lords of countries?

Why are you not under your bishops' supervision, and liegemen to our king?

Why do you not ask for letters from other brotherhoods, of men's prayers, as you desire that other men might ask for letters from you? If your letters are good, why do you not grant them generally, to all manner of men, for more charity?

12. May you make any man a more perfect brother for your prayers, than God has by our belief, by our baptism, and by his own grant? If you may, then you are certainly above God.

Why do you make men believe that your golden trental song, for which you therefore take ten shillings, or at least five shillings, will bring souls out of hell, or out of purgatory? If this is true, then certainly you might bring all souls out of pain; and that you will not do, for then you would be out of charity.

13. Why do you make men believe that whoever is buried in your habit shall never go to hell, and yet you do not know of yourself whether you will go to hell or not? And if this were true, you should sell your high houses to make many habits to save many men's souls.

14. Why do you steal men's children to make them of your sect, if that theft is against God's behests, and if your sect is not perfect? You do not know whether the rule that you bind him to, is best for him or worst.

15. Why do you not confront your brethren for their trespass against the law of the gospel, if that confrontation is the best possibility? But you often put them in prison when they follow God's law, and live by St. Augustine's rule. If any do amiss and would not amend himself, then you should put him away from you.

16. Why do you covet shrifts (confessions) and burying other men's parishioners, yet no other sacrament that falls to Christian folk?

Bk. IV. Wm. the Conqueror to Wycliffe (1066-1364)

Why do you not busy yourself to hear the confessions of poor folk as well as those of rich lords and ladies, since the rich may have plenty more fathers to confess to, than poor folk may.

Why do you not say the gospel in houses of bed-ridden men, as you do in rich men's houses, who may go to church and hear the gospel?

Why do you covet not to bury poor folk among you? since they have been most holy (as you say that you are for your poverty?)

17. Why will you not be at his dirges as you have been at rich men's? since God praises him more then he does other men.

What is your prayer worth? If you would therefore take, of all chapmen (peddlers) you need to be most wise, for dread of simony.

What cause do you have not to preach the gospel, as God says that you should? since it is the best story and also our belief.

Why do you satisfy evil, that secular priests might preach the gospel? since God himself has called them.

18. Why do you hate the gospel to be preached, if you are so firmly held to it? For you win more by year with *in principio*, than with all the rules that your patrons ever made; and in this, even minstrels have been better off than you, for they do not contradict the mirth that they make, but you contradict the gospel in both word and deed.

19. Friar, when you receive a penny to say a mass, whether you sell God's body for that penny, or your prayer, or else your travel? If you say you would not travel to say the mass, except for the penny, then certainly, if this is true, you love too little a reward for your soul: and if you sell God's body, or your prayer, then it is simony, and you have become a chapman worse then Judas, who sold it for thirty pence.

20. Why do you write their names in your tables who give you money? since God knows all things. For it seems by your writing, that God would not reward him, unless you write in your tables; otherwise God would forget.

Why do you bear God in hand, and yet slander Christ by saying that he begged for his food? If he was Lord over all, then he would have been unwise to beg, having no need for it.

Friar, by what law do you rule yourself? Where do you find in God's law that you should beg?

21. What manner of men need to beg? For whom do such men owe, that they beg?

Why do you beg so for your brethren?

If you say, because they have needs, then you do it for more perfection, or else for the least, or else for the mean (average). If it is for the most perfection of all, then all your brethren should do so, and then no man needs to beg except for himself; for no man should beg unless he needs to. And if it is the least perfection, then why do you love other men more then yourself? For so you are not well in charity, since you should seek more perfection in your power, living most after God. And thus leaving behind that imperfection, you should not so beg for them. And if it is a good mean to beg as you do, then no man should do so, except those who are in this good mean; and yet, such a mean granted to you may never be grounded on God's law. For then both servant and vassal, who have been in a mean degree of this world, should go about and beg as you do. And if all should do so, then certainly nearly all the world should go about and beg as you have done, and so there would ever be ten beggars to one.

Why do you procure men to give you their alms, and say it is so needful, and yet you will not win that reward yourself?

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22. Why will not you beg for poor bed-ridden men who have been poorer than any of your sect? Who have lain around and may not go about to help themselves? since we are all brethren in God, and that brotherhood surpasses any other that you or any man could make.

And where there is most need, there is most perfection, otherwise you do not hold them as your pure brethren, but worse; and then would you not be imperfect in your begging?

Why do you make so many masters among you? since it is against the teaching of Christ and his apostles?

23. Whose are all your rich courts that you are in, and all your rich jewels? since you say that you have nothing, not in proper, nor in common. If you say they are the pope's, then why do you gather from poor men and lords — that much out of the king's hand — to make your pope rich? And since you say that it is great perfection to have nothing in proper, nor in common, why are you so quick to make the pope rich. who is your father, and put imperfection on him? since you say that your goods are all his, and he should by reason be the most perfect man, it seems obvious that you are cursed children to so slander your father and make him imperfect. And if you say that the goods are yours, then you act against your rule, and if it is not against your rule, then you might have both plough and cart, and labor as other good men do, and not beg so in laxness and idleness as you do. If you say that it is more perfection to beg, than to travel or to wash with your hand, then why do not preach that openly and teach all men to do so? since it is the best and most perfect life to the help of their souls, as you make children beg who might have been rich heirs.

Why make you not your feasts to poor men and give him gifts, as you do to the rich? since a poor man has more need than the rich.

What does it signify that you go two and two together? If it is not out of charity, then you are not in accord in soul.

Why do you beg and take salaries for it more than other priests? since he that takes most, has most charge.

24. Why do you not hold to St. Francis' rule and his testament? since Francis says that God showed him this living and this rule: and certainly if it were God's will, the pope might not forgo it; or else Francis was a liar who said all this. And either this testament that he made accords with God's will, or else he erred as a liar who was without charity. And as the law says, he is accursed who hinders the rightful last will of a dead man. And this testament is the last will of Francis who is a dead man; it seems therefore that all his friars are cursed.

25. Why will you not touch any coined money with the cross, nor with the king's head, as you do other jewels both of gold and silver? Certainly if you despise the cross or the king's head, then you are worthy to be despised by God and the king. And since you will receive money in your hearts, and not with your hands, it seems that you hold more holiness in your hands than in your hearts, and then you are false to God.

26. Why have you exempted yourselves from our king's laws and from visiting our bishops more than other Christian men who live in this realm, if you are not guilty of being traitors to our realm, or trespassers to our bishops? But you would have the king's laws for the trespass done to you, and you would have power of other bishops more than other priests, and also have leave to imprison your brethren, and lords in your courts, more than other folks who have been the king's liegemen.

27. Why should some sect of your friars pay each a year a certain amount to their general provincial or minister, or else to their sovereigns? But if he steals a certain number of children (as some men say) and certainly if this is true, then you are constrained upon a certain pain to commit theft against God's commandment, *Non furtum facies* (You shall not steal).

28. Why are you so eager to grant letters of fraternity to men and women, so they will have part and merit in all your good deeds, and you never know whether God is repaid with your deeds because of your sin? Also you never know whether that man or woman is in a state to be saved or damned; then he will have no merit in heaven for his own deeds; no, for no other

man's. And if it were so, that he would have part of your good deeds, yet he would have no more than God would give him if he was worthy; and so much will each man have of God's gift without your limitation. But if you will say that you are God's fellows, and that he may not do anything without your assent, then you are blasphemers to God.

29. What does it signify when you ordain, but that when such a person has been made your brother or sister, and has a letter with your seal on it, that letter might be brought to your holy chapter and read there — or else you will not pray for them. But if you will not specially pray for all others who were not made your brothers or sisters, then you would not be in right charity, for that ought to be common, and namely in *spiritual* things.

30. Friar, What charity is this, to overcharge the people by mightily begging under the color of preaching or praying, or of singing masses? since holy writ does not bid this, but even bids the contrary; for all such spiritual deeds should be done freely, as God gives them freely?

31. Friar, What charity is this, to beguile children or those of common discretion, and to bind them to your orders, which are not grounded in God's law, against their friends' will? since by this folly many apostates, both in will and deed, during their whole life, would gladly be discharged if they knew how; and so many have been apostates who in other states would have been true men.

32. Friar, What charity is this, to make so many friars in every country to take charge of the people? since parsons and vicars alone — yes secular priests alone, yes monks and canons alone, with bishops above them — would be enough for the church, to perform the priest's office. And to add more than enough is a foul error, and a great cost to the people. And this is openly against God's will, who ordained all things to be done in weight, number, and measure. Christ himself was accompanied with twelve apostles and a few disciples, to preach and do the priest's office to the whole world. Then it was done better than it is now by a thousand more. Just as four fingers with a thumb on a man's hand help a man to work, and double the number of fingers on one hand would hinder him more; and so the more in number there are that exceed the measure of God's ordinance, the more a man is hindered from working. Just so (it seems) it is with these new orders that have been added to the church, without the ground of holy writ and God's ordinance.

33. Friar, What charity is this, to lie to the people, and say that you follow Christ in poverty more than other men are doing? And yet in ornate and costly housing, and fine and precious clothing, and delicious and pleasant feeding, and in treasure and jewels, and rich ornaments, friars surpass lords and other rich worldly men, and they would bring about their cause the quickest (however costly), even if God's law is set aside.

34. Friar, What charity is this, to gather up the books of holy writ, and put them in treasury, and so imprison them from secular priests and curates, and by this to hinder them from preaching the gospel freely to the people without worldly reward, and also to defame good priests with heresy, and bind them openly to keep them from showing God's law by the holy gospel to the Christian people?

35. Friar, What charity is this, to feign so much holiness in your bodily clothing (which you call your habit) that many blind fools desire to die in that, more than in another? And also that a friar who leaves his habit, later found by men, may not be absolved till he takes it back, but is apostate (as you say), and cursed by God and man alike? The friar believes in truth, and chastity, meekness and sobriety, yet failing in these for the greater part of his life, he may soon be absolved by his prior; and if he brings home to his house many goods for the year (however falsely begged and swindled from the poor and needy people in the surrounding countryside) he will be held a noble friar. O Lord, can this be charity?

[163] A.D. 1220.

36. Friar, “What charity is this, to prey upon a rich man, and entice him to be buried among you from his parish-church, and give letters of fraternity to such rich men, confirmed by your general seal, and thereby convey to him that he will have a part in all your masses, mattens, preachings, fastings, wakings, and all other good deeds done by your brethren of your order (both while he lives, and after he is dead). And yet you never know whether your deeds are acceptable to God, nor whether that man who has that letter is able by good living to receive any part of your deeds. And yet a poor man (whom you know well, or suppose in certainty to have no gain from) you give no such letters, even if he is a better man to God than such a rich man. Nevertheless, this poor man is not revolted by this. For men suppose such letters, and many others that friars give to men, are false deceits of friars — beyond all reason, and God’s law, and Christian men’s faith.

37. Friar, What charity is this, to be confessors of lords and ladies, and of other mighty men, and not amend them in their living? But rather, it seems, to be even bolder to pillage their poor tenants, and to live in riot, and there to dwell in your office of confessor for winning worldly goods, and to be considered great by the color of such spiritual offices? This seems rather the pride of friars, than the charity of God.

38. Friar, What charity is this, to say that whoever lives according to your order, lives more perfectly, next after the state of apostles, in poverty and penance. And yet the wisest and greatest of your clerics wend or send, or solicit the court of Rome, to be made cardinals or bishops of the pope’s chaplains, and to be absolved of the vow of poverty and obedience to your ministers — in which (as you say) stands more perfection and merit for your orders. And thus you act like Pharisees who say one thing and do another to the contrary.

Why do you name the patron of your order in your *confiteor*¹⁹⁴ when you begin mass, more than other saints, apostles, or martyrs (which holy church holds more glorious than them), and call them your patrons and your protectors?

Friar, Was St. Francis. in making his rule that he set your order in, a fool and a liar, or else wise and true? If you say that he was not a fool, but wise; not a liar but true; then why do you show the contrary by what you do, when by your suggestion to the pope you said that your rule which Francis made was so hard, that you may not live to hold it without a declaration and a dispensation from the pope, and so by your deed? No, let your patron be a fool who made a rule so hard that no man may well keep it; and thus your deed proves him a liar, where he says in his rule, that “he took and learned it from the Holy Spirit.” For how might you, for shame, ask the pope to undo what the Holy Spirit bid, as when you asked him to dispense with the hardness of your order?

Friar, Which of the four orders of friars is best to a man who does not know which is the best, but would gladly enter into the best and no other? If you say that *yours* is the best, then you are saying that none of the others is as good as yours. And in this, each friar in the other three orders would say that you lie, for in the self-same manner each other friar will say that his order is best. And thus to each of the four orders, the other three are contrary in this point, in which if any of them spoke truly, there is one alone; for only one may be the best of the four. So it follows that if each of these orders answered this question as you do, three would be false, and only one true; and yet no man would know who it is. And thus it seems that most friars are or would be liars in this point, and they would answer to it. If you say that another order of the friars is better than yours, or as good, why did you not join the better one when you might

¹⁹⁴ *Confiteor*: a form of prayer in which public confession of sins is made.

have chosen it at the beginning? And else, why would you be an apostate to leave your order and join the one that is better, and so why do you *not* go from your order to that one?

Friar, Is there any more perfect rule of religion than Christ God's Son gave in his gospel to his brethren? Or than that religion that St. James mentions in his epistle? If you say yes, there is, then you put on Christ (who is the wisdom of God the Father) ignorance, impotence, or an evil will. For he could not make his rule as good as another had made his. And so he was ignorant in not making his rule as good as another man might; and so too he was impotent, and not God, because he could not make his rule as perfect as another had made his; and so he would have been evil-willed, namely to himself.

For if he might, and could, and would have made a perfect rule without fault, and yet he did not, then he was not God's Son Almighty. For if any other rule is more perfect than Christ's, then Christ's rule must lack that perfection by as much as the other was more perfect; and so it was faulty, and Christ had failed in making his rule. But to put any fault or failing on God is blasphemy. If you say that Christ's rule, and that religion which St. James mentions, is perfect, then why do you not hold that rule without more? And why do you call it St. Francis' rule, or St. Dominick's rule, or religion, or order, rather than *Christ's* rule, or *Christ's* order?

Friar, Can you assign any fault to Christ's rule of the gospel (with which he taught all corrupt men to be saved) if they kept it to their end? If you say it was too hard, then you say Christ lied; for he said of his rule, "My yoke is easy, and my burden light." ^{Mat 11.30} If you say Christ's rule was too light, that may not be assigned as a fault, for the better it may be kept. If you say that there is no fault in Christ's rule of the gospel, since Christ himself says "It is light and easy," then what need was there for the patrons of friars to add more to it, and so make it a harder religion to save friars than the religion that Christ's apostles and disciples held and were saved by. But if they would have their friars sit above the apostles in heaven, for the harder religion they keep here, they would sit above Christ himself, for their larger and stricter observations — and then they would be better than Christ himself by accident.

Now go forth and train your clerics, and ground yourselves in God's law, and give Jack an answer. And when you have absolved me, that what I have said sadly is truth, I will convict you of your orders, and save you to heaven.

If friars cannot or may not excuse themselves from these questions asked of them, it seems that they are horribly guilty against God, and even being Christian. For these guilts and faults, it would be worthy that the order which they call their order should be done away with. And it is a wonder that men sustain them or allow their living in such a manner. For holy writ bids that you "do good to the meek, and do not give to the wicked, but forbid to give them bread, lest thereby they be made mightier through you." ¹⁹⁵

After these digressions, we may now return to the course of our history again.

Council Held at London, 1221 — The Pope's Exactions Refused.

After England had been subjected by King John, and made tributary to the pope, it is incredible how the insatiable avarice of the Romans oppressed and wrung the commons and all estates of the realm, especially beneficed men, and those who had anything of the church. They were brought into such slavery and penury that, although the king dared not remedy their wrongs by himself, yet by his advice, Simon Montfort and the Earl of Leicester, with other noblemen, thought to bridle and restrain the insatiable ravaging of these greedy wolves. They devised a letter, giving command to the ecclesiastics, and to those who had

¹⁹⁵ There is no such text in the Bible, nor in the apocrypha, though Psa 37.1-3 is akin.

churches to farm, so that they would not pay the Romans such farms (fees) and rents anymore. The letter is as follows:

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*“A complaint of the nobles of England against the intolerable
covetousness of the Pope and Prelates of Rome.”*

“To such and such a bishop, and such a chapter; all the university and company of those who would rather die than be confounded by the Romans, wishes health. How the Romans and their legates have up to now behaved themselves toward you and other ecclesiastical persons of this realm of England is not unknown to your discretion, in disposing and giving away the benefices of the realm according to their own fancies, to the intolerable prejudice and grievance of both you and all other Englishmen. For whereas the collation of benefices should and does properly belong to you and your fellow bishops (ecclesiastical persons), they thunder against you the sentence of excommunication, and ordain that you should not bestow them upon any person of this realm, until in every diocese and cathedral church within the realm, five Romans, whom the pope shall name, are provided for, to the sum of a hundred pounds a year for every man. Besides these, the Romanists inflict on the laity and nobles of the realm many other grievances for the patronages and alms bestowed by them and their ancestors, for the support of the poor of the realm, and also for the clergy and ecclesiastical persons of the realm regarding their livings and benefices. And yet the Romans, not content with these, also take from the clergy of this realm the benefices which they have to bestow on men of their own country, etc.

“Therefore, we consider the rigorous austerity of these aforesaid Romans, who once came here as mere strangers, but now take it upon themselves not only to judge, but also to condemn us, laying upon us insupportable burdens, to which they will not put one of their own fingers to move. And putting our heads together, upon a general and full advice had among ourselves concerning these things, we have thought it good, although very late, to withstand them, rather than be subject to their intolerable oppressions, and greater slavery to be looked for hereafter. For this cause we straitly charge and command you (as your friends going about to deliver you, the church, the king, and the kingdom from that miserable yoke of servitude) that you do not intermeddle, or take any part concerning such exactions or rents to be required or given to these Romans. We are leaving you to understand for a truth, that in case you are (God forbid) found culpable in this, not only your goods and possessions shall be in danger of burning, but you also in your persons shall incur the same peril and punishment as the Romish oppressors themselves. Thus fare you well.”

In the reign of Henry III, cardinal Otto was sent from the pope with letters to the king, as other letters also were sent to other places for exactions of money.

The king, opening the letters and perceiving the contents, answered that, “He alone could say nothing in the matter which concerned all the clergy and commons of the whole realm.” Not long after, a council was called at Westminster (A.D. 1221), where the letters were opened. The form was this:

“We require to be given to us, first, from all cathedral churches, two prebends,¹⁹⁶ one for the bishops’ part, the other for the chapter; and likewise from monasteries where there are diverse portions, one for the abbot, another for the convent; from the convent so much as pertains to one monk, the portion of the goods being proportionally divided; from the abbot likewise as much,” etc.

¹⁹⁶ *Prebend*: The stipend assigned by a cathedral to a canon.

When those proposals of the legate were propounded in the assembly on the pope's behalf, answer was given that the matter concerned especially the king; but in general it touched all the archbishops, with their suffragans, the bishops, and all the prelates of the realm. Seeing that the king was absent because of his sickness, and the archbishop of Canterbury, with other bishops, also were not there, in their absence, therefore, they had nothing to say in the matter, nor could they do so without the prejudice of those who were absent. And so the assembly broke up.

Not long after, Cardinal Otto, coming again from Rome, called another council at London, and caused all prelates, archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, and others of the clergy, to be summoned to the council, to be held in the church of St. Paul's, at London. The pretense of this council was for the redress of matters concerning benefices and religion. But the chief and principal object was to hunt for money, and to put them in fear and in hope, some to lose, some to obtain spiritual promotions at his hand. He thought some gain would rise thereby, and so it did. For in the meantime, precious gifts were offered to him in palfreys, in rich plate and jewels, in costly and sumptuous garments, richly furred; in coin, in victuals, and similar things of value, well worthy of acceptance. In this, one endeavored to exceed another in munificence.

The time of the council drawing near, the cardinal commanded that at the west end of St. Paul's church, a high and solemn throne be prepared, rising up with a glorious scaffold upon substantial stages strongly built, and of great height. Thus, on the day assigned, the archbishops, bishops, abbots, and others of the prelacy, assembled both far and near throughout all England, wearied and vexed with the winter's journey, bringing their letters procuratory. Being assembled together, the cardinal was about to begin his sermon, when a great dispute broke out between the two archbishops of Canterbury and York, about sitting at the right hand and left hand of the glorious cardinal, for which the one appealed against the other. The cardinal, to pacify the strife between them, brought out a bull of the pope; in the midst of this bull, was pictured the figure of the cross. On the right side of the cross stood the image of St. Paul, and on the left side St. Peter.

“Lo!” said the cardinal, holding open the bull with the cross, “here you see St. Peter on the left hand of the cross, and St. Paul on the right, and yet there is between these two no contention, for both are of equal glory. And yet St. Peter, for the prerogative of his keys, and for the preeminence of his apostleship and cathedral dignity, seems most worthy to be placed on the right side. Yet because St. Paul believed in Christ when he had not seen him, he therefore has the right hand of the cross; for ‘blessed are those,’ says Christ, ‘who do not see, and yet have believed.’” Joh 20.29

And from that time forth, the archbishop of Canterbury enjoyed the right hand, and the archbishop of York the left. The reason why the pope was so greedy and needy of money, was this. He had mortal hatred and had waged continual battle against the good emperor Frederick II, who had married Isabel, the sister of King Henry.

Therefore, because the pope's war could not be sustained without charges, it made the pope more importunate to take money in all places, but especially in England. So that he was not ashamed to require one fifth of every ecclesiastical man's living, as Matthew Paris writes. And he bargained with the citizens of Rome that if they would join with him in vanquishing Frederick, he would grant to them, that all the benefices in England, which might be vacant, would be bestowed at their own will to their children and kinsfolk! Upon this, it follows thus Paris's history:

“The pope sent commandment to the archbishop of Canterbury and four other bishops, that provision should be made for 300 Romans in the chief and best benefices in all England at the next vacancies, so that the archbishop and bishops should be suspended in the meantime from all collation or gift of benefices, until the foresaid 300 were provided for.”

At length the bishops, abbots, and archdeacons came to the king, lamentably complaining of the exactions of the pope. Seeing that the matter did not affect them alone but the whole church, and seeing that the valuation of churches was better known to their archdeacons than to themselves, they desired of the king that there might therefore be a general calling and conference on the matter. During the octaves of St. John the Baptist, the day and place was assigned where they would confer. At that day and place the prelates of England, assembling together, dared not give any direct denial of that contribution, but in a modest way they insinuated certain exceptions against it.¹⁹⁷

[165] A.D. 1226.

At length the ambassadors who were at Rome came home, bringing word that the pope, hearing what was done in the Council of Westminster, and by the king, was greatly displeased with him and the realm, denouncing the king and his people as half schismatics. The king was incredibly incensed at this, and commanded by general proclamation throughout his realm, that no man should hereafter consent to any tax or subsidy of money for the court of Rome. But afterwards, for fear of the pope, and partly through the persuasions of the bishop of Worcester and other prelates, the king gave in.

Insolent Conduct of the Pope’s Legate at Oxford.

¹⁹⁷ Not long after, followed a general council at Lyons (A.D. 1245) called by pope Innocent IV. in which the English nation exhibited the following articles of their grievances.

I. The kingdom of England is grieved that the pope, not being content with his Peter-pence, requires and extorts from the clergy great exactions, without the consent of the king, and against the customs of the realm.

II. The church and kingdom of England is grieved, that the patrons of the same cannot present as they were accustomed, to their churches because of the pope’s letters; but the churches are given to Romans, who know neither the realm nor the language, both to the great peril of souls and robbing away the money out of the realm.

III. It is grieved, because the pope having agreed by his letters, that in requiring pensions and provisions in the realm of England he would require only twelve benefices; now, contrary to his agreement and letter, many more benefices and provisions are given away by him.

IV. The realm is grieved and complains that in the benefices in England, one Italian succeeds another, the Englishmen not only being excluded, but also compelled for determining their matters, to seek to Rome, contrary both to the customs of the realm, and also to the privileges granted by the pope’s predecessors to the king and kingdom of England.

V. The fifth grievance is for the frequent recourse of that infamous legate, by whom both faith and fidelity, the ancient customs of the realm, the authorities of old grants, statutes, laws, and privileges, are annulled and abrogated, whereby an infinite number in England are grievously afflicted and oppressed.

VI. The realm is also grieved in general taxings, collections and assessments made without the king’s consent, the appeal and contradiction of the king’s proctors to the contrary notwithstanding.

VII. The realm complains and is grieved, that in the benefices given to Italians, neither the old ordinances, nor relief of the poor, nor hospitality, nor any preaching of God’s word, nor care of men’s souls, nor service in the church, nor yet the walls of the churches are kept up and maintained, as the manner and custom of the realm requires.

Over and above these grievances, other letters also came from the pope, charging and commanding the prelates of England to find at their own costs and charges for one whole year, some ten armed soldiers, some five, some fifteen, to be ready at the pope’s command wherever he should appoint.

After these and other grievances and enormities of Rome, the states of England, consulting together, direct their letters to the pope, for their reformation. First the abbots and priors, then the bishops and suffragans, afterward the nobles and barons, last of all the king himself. [ED.]

At this time it is said of the legate Otto, that as he left no place unsought where any advantage might be gotten. So among others, he came to Oxford, where he was received with great honor. The scholars presented him honorably with such dishes and rewards as they had, thinking to gratify the cardinal in the best manner. This being done before dinner, and the dinner being ended, they came reverently to see and welcome him, supposing that they also might be entertained with like courtesy. As they came to the gate, the porter (an Italian) asks what they wanted. They said they came to see the lord legate. But the porter holding the door half open, with proud and insolent language thrust them out, and would not allow them to enter. The scholars seeing this, thrust open the gate by force and came in. And when the Romans who were within tried to repel them with their fists, and such staffs as they had in their hands, they fell to much heaving and pushing, and many blows were given on both sides. In the meantime, while some of the scholars ran home for their weapons, a poor scholar (an Irishman) happened to stand at the gate waiting for his alms. When the master-cook saw him at the gate, he took hot scalding water and cast it in his face. One of the scholars, a Welshman, who came with his bow and shafts, seeing this, let fly an arrow, and shot this master of cooks clean through the body, and slew him at once. When the cook fell dead, there was a mighty uproar and a great clamor throughout the house. The cardinal, hearing the tumult and great noise about him, like a valiant Roman, he ran as fast as he could into the steeple, and there locked the doors tight, where he remained till midnight. The scholars in the meanwhile, not yet pacified, sought all about for the legate, exclaiming and crying out, "Where is that usurer, that simonist, that pilferer and taxer of our livings, that prowler and extortioner of our money, who perverts our king, and subverts his kingdom, enriching himself with our spoils:" etc. The cardinal heard all this and held his peace. When the night approaching had broken up the field, the cardinal coming out of his fort, and taking his horse in the silence of night, was privately conveyed over the river to the king.

Mention was made a little earlier of the Albigenses living around the city of Toulouse. These Albigenses, because they began to expose the pope, and control the inordinate proceedings and discipline of the See of Rome, the pope therefore considered them a heretical people. He excited Louis, the young French king, through the example of Philip his father, to lay siege against Toulouse in order to eradicate and extinguish these Albigenses. Whereupon Louis reared a mighty army to beset the city. But after he had long wearied himself and his men, there fell upon the French host such famine and pestilence of both men and horses, besides the daily slaughter of the soldiers, that Louis was forced to retire and return to France. In the slaughter, besides many others. Earl Simon de Montfort was slain. He was general of the army, to whom the lands of the earl of Toulouse were given by the pope.

In the year 1226, Pope Honorius III died, a great adversary against the Emperor Frederick. He was succeeded by Gregory IX (r. 1227-1241). In this same year, Louis, the perjured French king, died at the siege of Avignon. The pope had set him up for the second or third time to fight against Reymond the good earl of Toulouse, and against the Albigenses of that country. The origin of the conflict was this. In the days of Philip the French king, Reymond (earl of Toulouse) was disdained by the pope for siding with the Albigenses. And therefore, by the instigation of the pope, the lands of the earl were taken from him and given to Simon Montfort. But when Earl Reymond would not be removed from the right of his possessions, the pope had Philip make war against him. Whereupon Louis VIII (his son) was sent, as declared above, to besiege the city of Toulouse. But being repulsed, he returned home after he had lost most of his army by pestilence and other calamity. And thus the good earl

continued in quiet possession till this present time (A.D. 1226). Then the pope — not forgetting his old malice against the earl, and no less inflamed with insatiable avarice — sent his legate Romanus to France for two purposes: one was to extirpate the earl, the other was to enlarge his own revenues. Thus the legate summoned a council, requiring the French king, along with the archbishops, bishops, and clergy of France, to appear before him at Bitures. The council being set, and the pope's letters read, Reymond earl of Toulouse appears before them on the one part, and Simon Montfort on the other. Simon demanded the lands and possessions of Reymond, which the pope and Philip the French king had given to him and to his father before him, as confirmed by the donation of the pope and of the king. Moreover, Earl Reymond was deprived and disinherited in the general council at Rome for the heresy. This is called *the heresy of the Albigenses*.

Earl Reymond responded to this, offering himself as ready to perform all duty and office both towards the French king and to the church of Rome, whatever duly pertained to him.

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As to the heresy with which he was charged, in that council he not only offered himself before the legate, but most humbly entreated him, that he might take the pains to come into every city within his precinct, to inquire of every person what were the articles of his belief. And if he found any person or persons holding to what was not catholic, he would see that person corrected and amended according to the censure of holy church, to the uttermost. Or if he should find any city rebelling against him, he would to the uttermost of his might, compel the inhabitants to make satisfaction. As to himself, if he had committed or erred in anything, he offered to make full satisfaction to God and the church, as became any faithful Christian man to do, etc. But the legate despised all this, nor could the catholic earl find any grace there, unless he would give up his heritage, both for himself and his heirs forever.

After much altercation on both sides about the matter, the legate required every archbishop to call aside his suffragans to deliberate with them on the case, and to give in writing what was concluded. This being done accordingly, the legate denounced excommunication against anyone who would reveal any part of what was concluded there, before the pope and the king had intelligence of it.

Siege of Avignon, A.D. 1226 — Perjury of the Pope's Legate.

In the meantime, certain preaching friars were directed by the legate, throughout France, to incite and stir up the French to take up the cross, and to war against the earl and the people of Toulouse, whom they accounted as heretics. He did not cease to prosecute the pope's fury against the earl and his subjects, stirring up the king and the French, under pain of excommunication, to war against them. Louis thus being forced by the legate, answered that for his own safety he would not achieve that expedition, nor venture against the earl, unless the pope first wrote to the king of England, commanding him that, during the time of that expedition, he would invade and molest no piece of his lands and possessions. All this being done and accomplished, the French king and the legate, crossing themselves to the field, appointed a day for the French army to meet together at Lyons to set upon the Toulousians with horse and armor, under pain of the pope's excommunication.

When the day had come, the French king marched forward with a mighty host. After him came the legate with his bishops and prelates. The number of fighting-men in his army, besides the victuallers and waggoners, were fifty thousand men. The legate openly excommunicated the earl of Toulouse, and all who took his part, and interdicted his whole land. Thus the king came marching forward till he came into the province of Toulouse. The

first city of the earl's which he came to was Avignon, which they thought first to besiege, and then to destroy and waste the whole province belonging to the earl. First the king demanded that they give him passage through the city, pretending peace, saying that he desired only to pass through. The citizens, consulting with themselves as to what was to be done, answered that they, "mistrusted their coming, and supposed it was by deceit that they required entrance into their city, and not for the necessity of their journey."

The king being much offended at this, swore an oath that he would not depart till he had taken the city, and immediately he began to make assaults. The citizens manfully defended themselves, and casting stone for stone, shooting shot for shot, they slew and wounded many of the French. Thus when the French had long besieged the city, and could not win it, at length provisions began to fail in the French camp, and many of the French army died for hunger. The earl of Toulouse, as a wise man of war, hearing of their coming, had taken into the town all the provision that was abroad, and left nothing outside to serve for the defense and succor of the French. He ploughed up the fields so there would be no pasture to serve their horses; he put all the old people and young children out of the town before the French arrived. He sent them far away, lest those who kept the town would lack provisions; so that within the town they had plenty, and without they died of famine. Besides this, in seeking forage, many of the French fell into the hands of those who kept the city, who secretly lay in wait for them abroad, and slew many of them. A great number of cattle and horses died for lack of forage; and poor soldiers, who had no great store of money, died for lack of victuals. Because of this mortality a pestilence broke out among them, so that the king and also the legate were greatly dismayed, thinking it would be no little disgrace to the realm of France, as well as also to Rome, that they should depart and break up their siege. And the soldiers also thought that it was much better for them to end their lives in battle, than to starve and die like dogs. Therefore, with one consent, they determined to make a new assault at the bridge that goes over the river Rhone into the town. They came to this place in such numbers, that either by the weakness of the bridge, or by the subtlety of the soldiers who kept the town, the bridge broke, and three thousand men, with bridge and all, fell armed into the violent stream, and were drowned. There was nothing then but joy and gladness among the citizens of Avignon, and much lamentation and heaviness among the others. Shortly after, the citizens suddenly came upon the French (when they saw a convenient time for it), and slew two thousand of them, then safely returned to the town. Louis the king, to avoid the pestilence that was in the camp, went into an abbey not far off, where he died shortly after. There are various opinions about his death, some saying that he was poisoned; some that he died of dysentery.

The legate thought to keep Louis' death secret till the town surrendered; for he thought he would be disgraced forever if he departed before the town was taken. So he considered how he might betray them by falsehood. He sent certain heralds to ask the citizens to consult among themselves about articles of peace, and bring them to the French camp. They faithfully promised the safe conduct of the messengers, both in coming and going. And when they had given their pledges, the messengers from the citizens talked with the legate, who promised them that if they would deliver up their city, they would have their lives, goods, and possessions in as ample a manner as they now enjoyed them. But the citizens and soldiers refused. After much talk on both sides, the legate requested that he and his prelates might come into their city to examine what faith and belief they were of. He said that he neither sought nor meant any other thing, but their own safety of body as well as of soul, which he faithfully swore to. "For," he says, "the report of your great infidelity has come to the lord pope's ear, and therefore he desired us to truly certify it." The citizens, not

mistrusting his oath and promise, granted entrance to him and the clergy. But the soldiers of the camp, as privately arranged by the legate, made themselves ready. So that at the entrance of the prelates at the gate, disregarding their oath and fidelity, the soldiers suddenly and with violence rushed in, slew the porter and warders, and at length won the city and destroyed it. Thus, when they had taken this noble city by falsehood and policy, they carried the king's corpse to Paris, where they buried it. Of the whole number of the French soldiers who were destroyed in this siege by famine, pestilence, and drowning, there were 22,000.

In the former part of this history, it was stated how the church and commons of England were miserably afflicted by the intolerable oppression of the pope, who, through his violent extortion, had procured the best benefices to be given to his Romans, and the chief fruits of them to be reserved to his own coffers. You heard before what complaints had been made, yet no redress could be had. Such was the insatiable avarice of these Roman exactors, prowling and taking wherever they came, with their provisions and exactions beyond measure, and never satisfied. These importunate exactions and contributions to these Italian harpies, besides the Peter-pence, besides the common tribute, increased daily more and more, to the great grievance of the realm. So that the wealth of this land was almost sucked out, and transferred to the court of Rome.

[167] A.D. 1226-1232.

The king was not ignorant of this, but he could not help the matter. Therefore it was devised by some of the nobles (A.D. 1231), that certain letters, under the pretended authority of the king, should be sent abroad, commanding that whatever corn and grain, with other revenues, were taken up for the pope, should be stayed until a certain day appointed in the letters.

At that time, (about A.D. 1232), there was a great consistory of abbots, priors, archdeacons, with several both of the nobility and clergy at St. Albans. As this consistory was breaking up, a certain cleric named Cincius, a Roman, was carried away by the soldiers; and John, archdeacon of Norwich, a Florentine, barely escaped and got to London, where he hid himself. Cincius, after being kept five weeks, when they had well emptied his bags, was safely sent back to London without any more injury.

Not long after this, the barns of a beneficed man, a Roman, being full of corn, were broke up by a similar company of armed soldiers, and the corn was brought out to be sold and given away to the poor people.

The same year, about Easter, all the barns in England which were in the hands of any Roman or Italian, were likewise pillaged, and the corn sold to the best advantage for the poor commoners. Great alms of these were distributed, and many times money together with corn was scattered for the poor people to gather up. Nor was there anyone who would or dared stand against them. As for the Romans and Italians themselves, they were struck with such fear, that they hid themselves in monasteries and cells, not daring to complain of their injuries, but thought it better to lose their goods, than to lose their lives. The authors and workers of this feat numbered eighty armed soldiers, of whom the principal captain was someone calling himself William Withers, surnamed Twing.

This coming to the pope's knowledge, he sent his letters immediately to the king, with sharp threats and imperious commands, charging him for allowing such villainy within his realm,

strictly enjoining him, under pain of excommunication, to search out the perpetrators with all diligence, and to so punish them, that all others might take example from them.

Thus, after an inquisition was made of all parties, and witnesses were sworn and examined, many were found culpable in the matter, some who were actors, some who were consenters, of whom some were bishops and chaplains to the king; some were archdeacons and deans, with soldiers and laymen. Among them was the Robert Twing mentioned above, a handsome young man, and a tall soldier. Of his own accord, with five other servitors whom he took with him abroad to work that feat, he came to the king, openly admitting that he was the author of that deed. He said he did it for hatred of the pope and the Romans, because by the sentence of the bishop of Rome, and the fraudulent circumvention of the Italians, he was bereaved of the patronage of his benefice, having no more to give but that one. Therefore, to be revenged of that injury, he enterprised what was done, preferring to be justly excommunicated for a season, rather than be spoiled of his benefice forever. Then the king, and other executors of the pope's commandment, counselled him, that seeing he had so incurred the danger of the pope's sentence, he should offer himself to the pope to be absolved by him, and there make his declaration to him, that he was justly and canonically possessed of that church. Moreover, the king sent with him his letters testimonial to the pope, urgently desiring the pope that he might be heard with favor. At this request, Pope Gregory both released him of the sentence, and restored to him his patronage, writing to the archbishop of York, that he might again enjoy the right of his benefice, in as ample a manner as he did before it was taken from him.

Variance between Pope Gregory IX and the Romans.

At this time, dissension and variance began in Rome, between the pope and the citizens. The citizens claimed by old custom and law, that the bishop of Rome might not excommunicate any citizen of the city, nor suspend the city with any interdict for any manner of excess.

To this the pope answered, "That although he was less than God, yet he was greater than any man — and therefore, greater than any citizen, even greater than king or emperor." And as he is their spiritual father, he both should, and lawfully may chastise his children when they offend, as being subject to him in the faith of Christ.

The citizens alleged again for themselves that the authorities of the city, and the senators, received a yearly tribute from the church of Rome, which the bishops of Rome were bound to pay to them, both by new and also ancient laws. They had ever been in possession of this yearly tribute prior to Pope Gregory IX.

To this the pope answered that although the church of Rome in time of persecution, for defense and peace, usually respected the rulers of the city with gentle rewards, yet that should not be taken as a custom; for only that custom should stand, which does not consist in examples, but upon right and reason.

By these and such other controversies rising between the pope and the Romans, such dissension was kindled that the pope with the cardinals, leaving the city of Rome, removed themselves to Perusium (Perugia), there to remain and to plant themselves. But the Romans overthrew several of his houses in the city, for which he excommunicated them. The Romans then fled to the emperor, desiring his aid and succor. But to please the pope, he gathered an army and went rather against the Romans. Then the pope's army, whose captains were Reymond the earl of Toulouse (to purchase the pope's favor), and Peter the bishop of Winchester, whom the pope had sent for — partly for his treasure, partly for his skill in feats of war — and the emperor's army, joined together. Going about the city of

Rome (A.D. 1228), they tore down eighteen of the castles or mansions belonging to the citizens round about the suburbs, and destroyed all their vines and vineyards about the city. The Romans not a little enraged, broke out of the city with more heat than order, numbering 100.000, to destroy Viterbium (Viterbo), the pope's city, with sword and fire. But the multitude being in disorder, and out of battle-array, and unprepared for contingencies, fell into the hands of their enemies who laid in wait for them, destroying a great number. On both sides, 30.000 were slain; but the greater portion was of the citizens. And this dissension thus begun, was not soon ended, but continued long after.

By these and other such histories, who does not see how far the church of Rome has degenerated from the true image of the right church of Christ? By the rule and example of the gospel, the Church ought to be a daughter of peace, not a mother of debate, not a revenger of herself, nor a seeker of wars; but a forgiver of injuries, humbly and patiently referring all revenge to the Lord; not a raker for riches, but a winner of souls; not contending for worldly mastership, but humbling themselves as servants; and not vicars of the Lord, but jointly serving together like brethren, bishops with bishops, ministers with ministers, deacons with deacons; and not as masters separating themselves by superiority one from another, but briefly communicating together in doctrine and counsel, one particular church with another; not as a mother, one over another, but rather as a sister, one church with another, seeking together the glory of Christ, and not their own. And such was the church of Rome at first, in the beginning of her primitive state, especially while the cross of persecution kept the bishops and ministers in humility of heart, fervently calling upon the Lord for help. So that, happy was that Christian then, who with liberty of conscience might only hold onto his life, however meagerly he lived. And as for the pride and pomp of the world, such as striving for patrimonies, buying bishoprics, grasping for benefices, this was so far off from them, that they had little leisure then, and less desire to so much as once think of them. Nor did the bishops of Rome then fight to be consuls of the city, but sought how to bring the consuls to Christ, being glad if the consuls would permit them to dwell with them in the city.

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Nor did they then presume so high as to bring the emperors' necks under their yoke, but were glad to save their own necks in any corner, from the sword of the emperors. Then they lacked outward peace, but they abounded with inward consolation — God's holy Spirit mightily working in their hearts. Then there was one catholic unity of truth and doctrine among all churches, against errors and sects. Neither did the east and west, nor distance of place divide the church; but both the eastern church and western church, the Greeks and Latins, made all one church. And although there were then five patriarchal sees appointed for order's sake, differing one from another in regions, and perhaps also in some rites, yet all these consented together in one unity of catholic doctrine, having one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one faith, one baptism, one head. They were linked together in one bond of charity, and in one equality of honor. They made altogether one body, one church, one communion, called one Catholic, Universal, and Apostolic Church. And so long as this knot of charity and equality joined them in one unity together, so long the church of Christ flourished and increased. One was ready to help and harbor another in time of distress, such as Agapetus and Vigilius fleeing to Constantinople, where they were aided by the patriarch, etc. So that all this while, no foreign enemy, nor Saracen, nor Suldan, nor Sultan, nor Calipha, nor Corasmine, nor Turk, had any power to greatly harm it.

Separation of Eastern and Western Churches – 1230.

But through the malice of the enemy, this catholic unity did not long continue. It was all because the bishop of Rome, not content to be like his brethren, began to extend himself, and to claim superiority above the other four patriarchal sees, and all other churches in the world. And thus, just as equality among Christian bishops was oppressed by pride, so unity began to be dissolved little by little; and the Lord's vesture, which the soldiers left whole, began to be divided. ^{Joh 19.24} This vesture of Christian unity, though for a long time it was torn asunder by the aforesaid occasion, it held together in part by some mean agreement, under subjection to the See of Rome, till the time of Pope Gregory IX (A.D. 1230). At that time this rupture and schism of the church broke out into obvious division, utterly dissevering the eastern church from the western church, on the following occasion.

There was a certain archbishop elected to an archbishopric among the Grecians. Coming to Rome to be confirmed, he could not be admitted unless he promised a great sum of money. When he refused to do this, and detested the execrable simony of the court of Rome, he returned home again to his own country, unconfirmed. He declaring there, to the whole nobility of that land, how the case stood. There were others also, who having come recently from Rome, and having experienced the same or worse treatment, came in and gave testimony to the truth of what he said. Upon which all the churches of the Grecians, hearing this, departed utterly from the church of Rome — in the days of Pope Gregory IX.

It happened shortly after this separation of the Grecians from Pope Gregory (A.D. 1237), that Germanus, patriarch of Constantinople, wrote to the pope, humbly desiring him to study and seek some means of unity, so that the seamless coat of the Lord Jesus, thus lamentably rent, not with the hands of soldiers, but by the discord of prelates, might be healed again. Besides this, he offered that if he would take the pains to do so, he for his part, notwithstanding his old age and feeble body, would not refuse to meet Gregory mid-way — so that the truth on both sides being debated by the Scriptures, the wrong may be reduced, the slander stopped, and unity reformed between them.

This request of the patriarch, as it was both godly and reasonable, so it should have been the pope's part, with like humility, to have yielded and agreed to it, and to have been glad with all his might to help forward the reformation of Christian unity in the church of Christ. Thus he would have shown himself to be the son of peace. But the proud bishop of Rome, more like the son of discord and dissension, still standing upon his majesty, refused. He wrote an answer to Germanus' letters, with great disdain, seeking nothing else, but how to advance his see above all other churches. And not only that, but shortly after, he sent forth his preaching friars, to move all Christians to take up the sign of the cross, and to fight against the Grecians, no less than against the Turks and Saracens. So that in the isle of Cyprus, many good men and martyrs were slain, as seen by the letters of Germanus, patriarch of Constantinople.

Shortly after, pope Gregory prepared to send men-of-war (ships) signed with the cross, to fight against the Grecians. Whereupon the archbishop of Antioch, with Germanus, solemnly excommunicated the pope, after he had first excommunicated them. In the meantime, by the tenor of the letters of the patriarch sent to the pope and to the cardinals, the following is evident to all men.

First, that the whole universal church of Christ from the east to the west, in ancient times, was altogether united in one consent of doctrine, and linked together in brotherly charity, one church brotherly helping another with both temporal aid and spiritual counsel, as the case required. Nor was there any one mother-church above other churches, but the whole universal

church was the mother church and spouse of the Lord to every faithful believer. Under the universal church in general, were comprehended all other particular churches in particular, as sister churches together, not one greater than another, but all in like equality, as God gave his gifts so serving one another, ever holding together the unity of faith and sisterly love. And it was so long, it might rightly be called "the catholic church," having in it true unity, universality and free consent. Unity in doctrine, universality in communicating and joining together of voices, consent in spirit and judgment. For whatever was taught at Rome touching faith and salvation, was none other than what was taught at Antioch, Syria, etc.

Secondly, how over time, through the occasion of the tyranny and violent oppression of the bishops of Rome, this ring of equality being broken, all flew into pieces, the eastern church from the western, the Greeks from the Latins, and that which was one before, was now made two; unity turned to division, universality to singularity, and free consent to dissension.

Thirdly, here it is also to be noted following this piteous breach of equality, how many and what great nations departed from the communion of the church of Rome, and especially about this time (A.D. 1230), so that both before and after that time, many councils were held, and many things were concluded in the western church, to which one half of Christendom in the east never agreed. On the other hand, many councils were held with them, which were not received in the Latin church. So that the church now, just as she lost the benefit of universal consent, so too she lost the name *catholic*. Upon which, this question is to be asked: When the Fourth Council of Lateran (A.D. 1215) under pope Innocent III ordained the doctrine of transubstantiation, and auricular confession here in the western church, without the free consent of the eastern church, is that doctrine to be considered catholic or not?

Fourthly, in the departing of these churches from the bishop of Rome, there is also to be noted that the churches of the Greeks, although they separated themselves from the church of Rome, and justly so, yet they still kept their unity with their God, and still received the true and sincere doctrine of faith, ready to discuss and try the truth of their religion by the Scriptures. Therefore the church of Rome has done them open wrong. For when the Greeks offered so gently, to try and to be tried by the truth of God's word, Rome not only would stand no trial, nor abide any conference, but even excommunicated as heretics, those who appear to have been more orthodox Christians than they were themselves.

Fifthly, these things being so, we have to conclude that the church of Rome falsely pretends to be catholic, for if the name *catholic* must import a universal consent of the whole, how can that be catholic where the consent of so many famous and true Christian churches has been lacking, and further, where the consent that existed among themselves, has been constrained rather than being any true or free consent.

[169] A.D. 1232-1237.

And this is easily proved. For let the fires and faggots (kindling) cease; let kings and princes leave off pressing their subjects with obedience to the pope; let the Scripture and the bishops alone, every one in his own diocese, to govern their flock according to the rule of God's word, and how few there are in this western world, who would not do the same that these Grecians, Ethiopians, and Syrians have done before us.

When I consider the acts of Gregory IX, and then the conduct of the Greek church, I cannot but commend their wisdom, and judge their state happy and blessed in shaking off from their necks the miserable yoke of the pope's tyranny. And on the other side, considering the wretched thralldom of these our churches here in the western part of the world under the bishop of Rome, I cannot tell whether I am more to marvel at or to lament their pitiful state. They were brought into such oppression and slavery under him, that they could neither

abide him, nor dare to cast him off. So intolerable were his exactions, so terrible was his tyranny, his suspensions and excommunications — like a madman's dagger, drawn at every trifle — that no Christian patience could suffer it, nor nation abide it. Again, so deep did he sit in their consciences, that they falsely believed him to have the authority of St. Peter, and that for conscience' sake neither king nor emperor dared withstand him, much less their poor subjects. Although his takings and spoilings in this realm of England were such that neither the laity nor spirituality (clergy) could bear them, yet there was no remedy. They must bear them, or else the pope's sentence was upon them, to curse them as black as pitch.

In reading the histories of these times, any good heart would lament and rue to see the miserable captivity of the people suffered under this thralldom of the bishop of Rome.

A brief Table or Declaration of the Pope's unreasonable gatherings, exactions, and oppressions in the realm of England.

First, to begin with the elections of the bishops, abbots, deans, and priors within this realm, it cannot be told what mass of money flowed to the popes by them in this king's time. For no election happened either of archbishop, bishop, abbot, or any dignity, but that the convent or chapter had chosen one, and the king would set up another. In that case, when the other appealed to Rome, no small rivers of English money went flowing into the pope's sea. And even if the election was ever so clear, the new elect must respect the Holy Father with some gentle reward. A number of examples follow.

A contention happened between the king and the monks of Winchester, about the election of William Rale, whom the monks had chosen, but the king refused. And therefore he sent to Rome, with no small sum of money to evacuate the election of William Rale. He also commanded that the gates of Winchester should be shut against him; and that no man should be so hardy as to receive him into the house. Upon this, William being excluded, after he had laid his curse upon the whole city of Winchester, repaired to Rome, where for promising eight hundred marks to the pope, his bishopric (in spite of the king) was confirmed (Ex. Mat. Paris, fol. 164 and 240).

After the death of Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, the monks had elected Walter, a monk of Canterbury. But to stop that election, the king sent to the pope to annul it. Perceiving at first how hard and unwilling the pope and cardinals were to do this, and considering how all things might be bought for money, rather than have the king fail in his purpose, his proctors promised to the pope on the king's behalf, a tenth of all the movables in the realm of England and Ireland. At the contemplation of this money, the pope soon began to pick quarrels with Walter for not rightly answering his questions about Christ's descending to hell; the making of Christ's body on the altar; the weeping of Rachel for her children, she being dead beforehand; about the sentence of excommunication, and certain causes of matrimony. Walter was therefore put aside, and the king's man preferred, which cost the whole realm of England and Ireland a tenth of their moveable goods. (Ex. Mat. Paris, fol. 71.)

There was also a similar dissension between the king and the convent of Durham for not choosing Master Lucas the king's chaplain, whom the king offered to be their bishop, after much money had been bestowed on both sides. The pope defeated them both. He admitted neither Master William (the monks' choice), nor Master Lucas, but ordained the bishop of Sarum to be their bishop (A.D. 1228).

Between the monks of Coventry, and the canons of Lichfield there arose another quarrel, as to which of them should have the superior voice in choosing their bishop. In this suit, after

much money was bestowed in the court of Rome, the pope (to requite each for their money) gave this order: that each by course would have the choosing of the bishop. (A.D. 1228)

What business likewise arose between Edmund archbishop of Canterbury, and the monks of Rochester, about the election of Richard Wendour to be their bishop? And what was the end? First, the archbishop was obliged to travel to the pope, and the convent also sent their proctors. Being better monied, they weighed down the cause, so that the good archbishop was condemned by the pope to pay 1000 marks, of which the greatest part (no doubt) redounded to the pope's coffers. (A.D. 1233) After Edmund archbishop of Canterbury returned from Rome, the monks of Canterbury had elected their prior without his assent; for which he excommunicated the monks, and evacuated their election.

Not long after this, the pope's exactors went about extorting from the churchmen a fifth of their goods for the service of the pope, who was then fighting against the emperor. This cruel exaction being resisted a great while by the prelates and clergy, at length the archbishop, thinking thereby to get the victory against the monks, was content to grant the exaction, adding moreover of his own, for an overplus, 800 marks; whereupon the rest of the clergy were obliged to follow suit, and contribute to the pope's exactors. (A.D. 1240)

In the church of Lincoln there arose a contention between Robert Grosthead, then bishop, and the canons of the cathedral church, about their visitation — whether the bishop should visit them, or the dean; the bishop and the chapter both went to Rome. After they had well wasted their purses, they received at length their answer, but paid dearly for it. (A.D. 1239)

Robert Grosthead, bishop of Lincoln, having a great anxiety to bring the privileged orders of religious houses within his precinct, under his subjection and discipline, went to Rome, and there with great labor and much money procured from the pope a mandate, by which all such religious orders were commanded to be under his power and obedience. Not long after this, the monks (who could soon weigh down the bishop with money) sent to the pope, and with their golden eloquence they so persuaded him, and stirred his affections, that they soon purchased for themselves freedom from their ordinary bishop. Robert Grosthead having intelligence of this, again went up to Rome, and there he complained to the pope. He declared how he was disappointed and confounded in his purpose, contrary to the promises and assurance made to him before. Pope Innocent IV (r. 1243-1254) looking with a stern countenance, gave this answer, "Brother what is that to you? You have delivered and discharged your own soul. It has pleased us to show favor to them. Is your eye bad, because I am good?" And thus the bishop was sent away, murmuring to himself, yet not so softly, but that the pope heard him say these words: "O money, money! what can you not do in the court of Rome?" With this, the pope being somewhat pinched, gave this reply, "O you Englishmen, Englishmen! Of all men most wretched, for all your seeking, is how you may consume and devour one another," etc. (A.D. 1250).

It also happened the same year, that Robert Grosthead excommunicated and deprived one Ranulph, a beneficed person in his diocese. He was accused of immorality. After the term of forty days, Ranulph refusing to submit himself, the bishop wrote to the sheriff of Rutland to apprehend him as willfully rebellious. The sheriff, because he deferred or refused to do so (having favor toward the party), was therefore solemnly excommunicated by the bishop. The sheriff uttered his complaint to the king.

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The king taking great displeasure with the bishop for excommunicating his sheriff, and not first making his complaint to him, sends immediately to pope Innocent, a substantial

messenger, by virtue of whose words the pope, easily entreated, sends a proviso to the abbot of Westminster, charging that no prelate nor bishop in the realm of England, should molest or enter action against any of the king's bailiffs or officers, in such matters as to which the king's jurisdiction pertained. And thus the strife was ended, but not without some help and a heap of English money. So that, no wind of any controversy stirred here in England, however small, that it did not blow some profit for the pope's advantage.

We come now likewise to touch only briefly on some of the pope's dispensations, provisions, exactions, contributions and extortions in England in the days of king Henry III. For if I were to tell of it all, not one book would contain it.

Simon Montfort, earl of Leicester, had married Elenor, the king's sister, who had taken the mantle and ring of a nun. This is why the king, and his brother Richard, earl of Exeter, were greatly offended by the marriage. Earl Simon had taken a large sum of money and posted over to Rome. After speaking a few words in Pope Innocent's ear, the marriage was found good enough. Letters were sent to Otto, the pope's legate here, to give sentence solemnly with the earl. Notwithstanding this, the Dominican friars, and others of the religious fraternity, stoutly withstood the sentence of the pope, saying that the pope's holiness was deceived, and souls were in danger; that Christ was jealous over His wife; and that it could not in any way be possible that a woman who had vowed marriage with Christ, could afterward marry with any other, etc. (A.D. 1238).

As there was nothing too hard in the wide world, for which the pope would not dispense for money, so by these dispensations much mischief was wrought abroad. For the people trusting upon the pope's dispensation, little regarded what they did, what they promised, or what they swore. This as well appeared by King Henry. Being a great exactor¹⁹⁸ of the poor commoners, and thinking to win the people to his devotion, he most faithfully promised them once or twice — and bound himself to this with a solemn oath, both before the clergy and laity — to grant them the old liberties and customs of *Magna Carta*, as well as *Charta de Foresta*,¹⁹⁹ to be perpetually observed. Whereupon a fifteenth of the revenue was granted to the king. But after the payment was sure, the king, confident of the pope's dispensation discharging him from his oath and covenant (in return for a little money), departed from what he had promised and sworn before.

Another time, in like manner, the king was in need of money. He signed himself with the cross, pretending and swearing deeply in the face of the whole parliament, that he would himself personally fight in the Holy Land against the Saracens. But as soon as the money was received, small care was taken for performing his oath — for the pope, for a hundred pounds or two, would quickly discharge him from it.

Out of the same corrupt spring of these popish dispensations, have proceeded many other foul absurdities. For there were many young men in those days who enjoyed benefices, and yet were not priests. And when by the procurement of Robert Grossthead, bishop of Lincoln, these young men were forced to enter orders, whether they would or not, they laid their purses together, sent to Rome, and obtained from the pope a dispensation to remain as they were. That is, they were to have the fruits of these benefices to keep them at school or at university, and yet they were neither ministers to take charge, nor would they yield any

¹⁹⁸ *Exactor*: one who demands or enforces payment, especially with excessive severity.

¹⁹⁹ The Charter of the Forest of 1217, re-established rights of access for free men to the royal forest that had been eroded by King William the Conqueror and his heirs. Many of its provisions were in force for centuries afterwards.

service for the profits taken. Besides these, other innumerable heaps of enormities proceeded from the pope's dispensations: such as allowing one man to have several bishoprics; holding multiple benefices; making children parsons; legitimizing natural (illegitimate) children; and other such acts. For brevity's sake, I omit the particulars of these till further opportunity.

The intolerable oppression of the Realm of England by the Pope's exactions and contributions, and other sleights used in the time of King Henry III.

These emoluments entering the pope's purse daily by simony and bribery, by elections and dispensations, might seem sufficient to satisfy his greedy appetite. Yet the avarice of that see was so insatiable that the pope, not yet content, continually sent some legate or other into this realm, forcibly exacting and extorting continual provisions, contributions, and sums of money to be levied out of cells, abbeys, priories, fruits of benefices, and bishoprics, and also laymen's purses, to the miserable impoverishment of both the clergy and temporality.

Next after Pandulph, Cardinal Otto was sent into this realm. Great preparation was made for receiving him. Many rich and precious gifts in scarlet, in plate, jewels, money and palfreys were given to him. The king himself also went as far as the seaside to receive him, bowing down his head in low courtesy to the cardinal's knees. The bishop of Winchester for his part also gave towards the keeping of his house, fifty fat oxen, a hundred bushels of wheat, and eight great vessels of pure wine. At his first coming, this legate began to bestow those benefices which he found vacant, upon those whom he brought with him, without respect to whether they were fit or unfit for the office.

After this, the pope — hearing how the nobles and commons of the realm began to dislike the cardinal for his excessive procurations and exactions — sent for him to come home. But as the king stood in fear of his nobles, and thought to have some support from the cardinal against all occurrences, he entreated him to stay while he wrote to the pope to obtain further license for him to tarry. And so he did, not without some English money you may be sure.

In the meantime, Otto, thinking to lose no time gathering some crumbs in Scotland also, made as though he would set things in order there. And so he came to the king of Scots, Alexander II, who was then in York with King Henry, to gain leave to enter. The king answered that he never, to his remembrance, saw any pope's legate in his land, nor was there any need for such (God be praised). Matters there were well enough, and needed no help of his. And as he could not discover, either in the days of his father, or any of his predecessors, that any such entrance was granted to any legate, he for his part would not begin now.

“But as I hear (he said) that you are a good man, I tell you this beforehand, that if you venture in, do it warily, and take care of yourself, lest it happen to you otherwise than I would wish. For they are a savage and unruly people, given much to murder and shedding blood. I myself am scarcely able to bridle them. So that if they fall upon you, I will not be able to help you. You recently heard how they also invaded me, and sought to expel me from my kingdom. And therefore I warn you beforehand, take heed in time what you think best to do.”

After the cardinal heard the king speak these words, he drew in his horns, and dared proceed no further, but kept by the side of King Henry. Shortly after, however, coming to the borders of Scotland, he called the bishops to him, and when he had well filled his bags, he came back again.

Not long after, license came from Pope Gregory IX to his legate Otto, for his longer stay here, also with new authority to proceed in the pope's affairs. After showing to the bishops

and the clergy his letters to tarry there longer, he required of them — as no man (he said) wars at his own expense ^{1Cor 9.7} — to be supported with new procurations. He was to have four marks from every able church; and where one church was not able to reach this, other churches should join with it to make up the money. Notwithstanding, the bishops stood in denial of this a great while. Besides this, the cardinal assembled together all the black monks of St. Benedict's order, giving them strict orders, which shortly after (for money) he released them from.

[171] A.D. 1238-1244.

Moreover, a collation of benefices taken from the hands of their patrons, were given to light and vile runagates,²⁰⁰ coming from Italy and other places, such as the pope and his legate pleased to give them to. This was to the great prejudice of the ancient liberty and right of the true patrons. Upon this the earls, and barons, and nobles of the realm, addressed letters to Pope Gregory by Sir Robert Twing, a knight, for the redress of such wrongs and injuries. Otherwise they would be forced (they said) to invoke the succor of their king, who they trusted was both able and no less willing, according to his duty, to reform such enormities, and to defend the liberties of his realm. The tenor of their writing may be read in Matthew Paris's history (fol. 128, a).

Not long after (A.D. 1240), a new precept came from Pope Gregory, by Peter Rubeus, the pope's *nuncio* (ambassador), that all beneficed clergy in England as well as in France, should pay to the pope a fifth of their revenues. Upon this, when the clergy made their complaint to the king, seeking to be relieved by him, the king answered that he neither would nor dared stand against the pope. And so he sent them away without any hope of assistance. Then the archbishops, bishops, abbots, and prelates of the church were commanded to assemble together at Reading to hear the pope's pleasure concerning the payment of this fifth part, where in the end, the matter thus concluded. The prelates desired a further time to be given them to advise upon the matter; and for that season, the assembly broke up. Notwithstanding, many excuses had been made by the clergy. First, because the money was gathered to fight against the emperor, they should not contribute their money, being contrary to the liberties of the church. Also, because they had paid a tenth not long before to the pope, on condition that no more such payments would be required of them, much less the fifth part should now be exacted from them, because an action twice done, makes a custom. Also, seeing that they had oftentimes repaired to the court of Rome, if they were to give this money against the emperor, it would become dangerous for them to come through his land. Also, seeing that their king had many enemies, against whom they must relieve the king with their money, they could not do so if the realm were thus impoverished, etc. They were compelled at length, however, to conform to the pope's good pleasure, through the example given by Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury. To obtain his purpose against the monks of Canterbury (with whom he was then in strife) he first yielded to the legates 800 marks for his part, by which the rest were also obliged to follow.

The same year, the pope agreed with the people of Rome, that if they would aid him against the Emperor Frederick, whatever benefices were vacant in England would be bestowed on their children. Whereupon a commandment was sent to Edmund, archbishop, and to the bishops of Lincoln and Sarum, that all the collations of benefices within the realm were to be suspended, till provision was first made for 300 children of the citizens of Rome!

²⁰⁰ *Runagates*: people who behave in a disreputable or unprincipled manner.

This done, Peter Rubeus (the pope's nuncio) and Ruffin went into Scotland, from where they brought out with them 3000 pounds for the pope's use, about All-Hallows the same year. At this time also, another harpy came from the pope to England, named Mumeilius, who brought with him into the realm twenty-three Romans to be benefited. Thus, with the king on one side, and Cardinal Otto, Peter Rubeus, Ruffin, and Mumelius on the other side, poor England was in a wretched case.

Another pretty practice of the pope to prowl for money was this: Peter Rubeus, coming into religious houses, and into their chapters, caused them to contribute to the pope's holiness, by the example of this bishop and that abbot, pretending that of their own voluntary devotion, they had given so much and so much, and so he seduced them. Also the pope craftily suborned certain friars, authorized with full indulgence, that whoever had vowed to fight in the Holy Land, and was disposed to be released from his vow, need not repair to Rome for absolution, but paying as much money as it would cost to go there, by resorting to the friars, they might be absolved at home.

Thus passed A.D. 1240. Now all these troubles laid together, were enough to vex the meekest prince in the world. The king also had much ado with the prelates and clergy, who were always tampering with his title, especially in their assemblies and councils. He sent Geoffry Langley to the archbishop of York, and to other bishops who purposed to meet at Oxford, to appeal for him lest in the council they should presume to ordain anything against his crown and dignity. This was done in A.D. 1241. In this year, an apostolical command also came to the house of Peterborough, that they must grant the pope some benefice, the fruits of which were worth at least a hundred pounds; and if it were more, it would be better welcomed — so that they would be the farmers, and he would receive the profits. In brief, the convent excused themselves by the abbot not then being at home. When the abbot came home, he excused himself by the king being the patron and founder of the house. The king being grieved with the unreasonable ravening of these Romanists, utterly forbade any such example to be given.

In the time of the Council of Lyons, Pope Innocent IV (because the written instrument by which the realm of England stood tributary to the pope was thought to be burned in the pope's chamber a little earlier) brought out either the same or another charter like it, to which he straitly charged and commanded every English bishop present at the council to set his hand and seal. This unreasonable demand of the pope, although it went sorely against the hearts of the bishops, none of them dared but accomplish the pope's request, both to their own shame, and to the prejudice of the public freedom of the realm. You can see in what miserable subjection the pope had all the bishops under him. When the king and the nobility understood this act, they were mightily and worthily offended by it (A.D. 1245).

When Cardinal Otto was sent for by Pope Gregory to come to the general council in all haste, two others remained there in his place. Their names were Peter Rubeus (see above), and Peter de Supino. The one made himself out to be the pope's kinsman. He brought out his bills and bulls under the pope's authority, to such an abbot, or such a prior, or to such and such a bishop; and so he extorted from them a great quantity of gold and silver. The other, Peter de Supino, sailed to Ireland, from where he brought back with him 1500 marks for the pope's use (A.D. 1241). All of this money, however, fell into the hands of Frederick the emperor, who had it restored, as near as he could, to those from whom it was taken.

Pope Innocent IV - 1244.

After these men, Master Martin came from the new pope, Innocent IV (A.D. 1244), armed with full power to suspend all prelates in England from giving benefices, till the pope's

kinsmen were first preferred. Nor would he accept the fruits of any benefice, unless it were above the value of thirty marks. At his first coming, he required prelates, and especially religious houses, to furnish him with horses and palfreys, such as were convenient for the pope's special chaplain and legate to sit upon. He also required plate, raiment, provision for his kitchen and cellar, etc. And those who denied or excused these, he suspended, such as the abbot of Malmesbury, and the prior of Merton. All prebends (stipends) that were void, he sought out and reserved for the pope. Among these was the golden prebend of Sarum, belonging to the chancellor of the choir, whom he preferred to the bishopric at Bath. And so he seized upon the prebend being void, against the wills of both the bishop and the chapter. He brought with him blank paper and parchment, signed in the pope's chamber with his stamp and seal, in which he might afterward write to whom, and what amount he would. Moreover, he required of the king, in the pope's behalf, to help his holiness with a contribution to be taxed among his clergy, at least 10,000 marks.

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And to the end that the pope might win the king sooner to his devotion, he wrote to the nobles and commons of the realm, that they should not fail, upon pain of his great curse, to grant whatever subsidy of money to the support of the king, as he then demanded of them. But they stood firm in not granting it to him.

There was no end to the insatiable avarice of the pope in gathering riches and goods together in England. The nobles and barons, with the community of the clergy as well as the laity, weighed the miserable state of the realm, and especially of the church. They now had no liberty left to choose their own ministers, nor could they enjoy their own livings. They put their heads together, and exhibited an earnest intimation to the king, beseeching him to consider the pitiful affliction of his subjects under the pope's extortion. They were living in more thralldom than the people of Israel under Pharaoh. Whereupon the king, at last beginning to look up and to consider the injuries and wrongs received in this realm through the avarice of the court of Rome, directed the following letter to Pope Innocent IV. Its tenor is as follows:

The king's letter to Pope Innocent IV.

“To the most holy father in Christ, and lord Innocent IV, by the grace of God, chief bishop, Henry, by the same grace, king of England, etc. Greeting and kissings of his blessed feet. The more devout and obsequious the son shows himself in obeying the father's will, the more favor and support he deserves to find at his father's hands in return. I therefore write this because both we and our realm have ever and in all things up to now, been at the devotion and commandment of your fatherhood. And although in some certain affairs of ours and of our kingdom, we have found your fatherly favor and grace sometimes propitious to us, yet in some things again, such as in provisions given and granted to your clerics from foreign nations, both we and our kingdom have felt no small detriment. Because of these provisions, the church of England is so sorely charged and burdened, so that not only the patrons of churches to whom the donations pertain, are defrauded of their right, but also many other good works of charity thereby decay. For such benefices which have been mercifully bestowed upon religious houses, as to their sustenance, are now wasted and consumed by your provisions.

“Therefore as your apostolic see ought to be favorable to all who are petitioners to it, so that no person is wronged in that which is his right, we thought to be suitors to your fatherhood, most humbly beseeching your holiness, that you will desist and cease for a time from such provisions. In the meantime, it may please your fatherhood, we beseech you that our laws and liberties (which you may rightly repute are none other but your own), you will receive to your

tuition, to be conserved whole and sound, nor allowed to be violated and infringed by any sinister suggestion in your court. Nor let your holiness be any whit moved with us, therefore, if in some such cases as these, we do or shall hereafter resist the tenor of your commandments. For because the complaints of those who daily call upon us, necessarily compel us, who should by the charge of our office and the kingly dignity committed to us by Almighty God, foresee that no man is injured in that which is their right, but that we would truly minister justice to every one, in that which duly pertains to him.”

This letter was sent the 28th year of the king’s reign. (*Ex Parisiensi*, fol. 172.)

A man would think that this very gentle and obedient letter of the king to the pope would have wrought some good effect in the apostolical breast. But the sequel well declares how little all this prevailed to stop the pope’s insatiable greediness and intolerable extortions and oppressions,. Shortly after, the pope sent Master Martin with blanks, being bulled for a contribution of 10,000 marks, to be paid in all haste, even immediately upon receiving this letter. And after all this great submission of the king, and such manifold benefits and payments received yearly out of his realm, the pope was not ashamed to take from David, prince of North Wales, 500 marks a-year, to set him against the king of England, and to exempt him from his fealty and obedience due to his own liege lord and king, to whom both he and all other Welshmen had sworn their subjection before. (*Matth. Parisiensi*, fol. 172.)

Nor did Master Martin in the meanwhile slip his business, in making up his market for the pope’s money of 10,000 marks, but still was calling upon the prelates and clergy who, first excusing themselves by the absence of the king and the archbishop of Canterbury, afterward being summoned again by new letters, gave their answer by the dean of St. Paul’s, their prolocutor (spokesman): —

That the poverty of the realm would not allow them to consent to it.

That, whereas they had given before a contribution to Cardinal Otto, for paying the pope’s debts, and knew the money was not employed to the end for which it was demanded, they had more cause to doubt now, lest this contribution in his hands (who was a much inferior messenger than the cardinal) would come to the same or worse effect.

That, if they were now to agree to a new contribution, they feared lest it grow into a custom, seeing that one action, twice done, makes a custom.

That, because a general council was shortly looked for, where every prelate of the realm must bestow both his travel and expenses, and also his gift to the pope, if the prelates were now bound to this tax, they would not be able to abide this burden.

That, seeing it is alleged that the mother church of Rome is so far in debt, it would be reason and right that the mother so oppressed should be sustained by *all* her devout children meeting together in the general council; for by the help of many, more relief might come than by one nation alone.

And, last of all, they alleged,

That for fear of the emperor and his threatenings, they dared not consent to the contribution.

While these things were thus discussed between the pope’s priests and the clergy of England, in comes John Mariscal and other messengers from the king, commanding in the king’s name, that no bishop who held his baronage from the king, should enfeoff²⁰¹ his lay fee to the court of Rome, which they owed only to him, etc.

²⁰¹ *Enfeoff*: in feudal society, to put in possession of land in exchange for a pledge of service.

Not long after this (in A.D. 1245), the whole nobility of the realm, by general consent, and also not without the king's knowledge, caused all the ports by the seaside to be watched, so that no messenger with the pope's letters and bulls from Rome would be permitted to enter the realm; some were taken at Dover, and stayed there. But notwithstanding, when a complaint was brought to the king by Martin, the pope's legate, there was no remedy, but the king must cause these letters to be restored again, and executed to their full effect.

Then the king, on advice, caused a review to be made through every shire in England, to discover what sum the whole revenues of the Romans and Italians amounted to, which by the pope's authority, left England. The whole sum was found to be yearly 60,000 marks. Even the revenues of the whole crown of England did not amount to this sum (Ex Matt. Parisiensi, fol. 185. a.)

The nobles then understanding the miserable oppression of the realm, being assembled together at Dunstable for certain causes, sent a man named Fulco, in the name of the whole nobility, to Martin, the pope's legate, with this message: that immediately upon receipt of this warning, he should prepare to leave the realm, under pain of being cut to pieces. The legate being sorely aghast at this, went straight to the king, to know whether he consented to it or not. When he found little comfort from the king, he took his leave of him, who bade him adieu in the devil's name, says Matthew Paris, and thus the realm was rid of Master Martin (A.D. 1245).

[173] A.D. 1245-1246.

As soon as Pope Innocent had intelligence of this by the legate's complaint, he was in a mighty rage. Remembering how the French king, and the king of Arragon, not long before had denied him entrance into their land, and therefore being likewise displeased with the English, he began in great anger to knit his brows. He said,

“It is best that we fall in agreement with our prince, by which we may sooner bring these little petty kings under our control; and so the great dragon being pacified, we will handle these little serpents at our own pleasure, as we please.”

After this, the general COUNCIL OF LYONS immediately followed, to which the lords and states of the realm, with the consent of the commonalty, sent two bills. One contained a general supplication to the pope and the council, and the other contained the articles of those grievances which they desired to be redressed, as related above. The other bill of the supplication, because it was not described earlier, I thought to exhibit here for two reasons.

First, so that men these days may see the pitiful blindness of those ignorant days in which our English nation so blindly humbled itself and submitted to the pope's courtesy, whom they should rather have shaken off as the Grecians did.

Secondly, so that the pride of the pope might better appear in his true colors, who so disdainfully rejected the humble suit of our lords and nobles, when they had much more cause to rather disdain and stamp him under their feet.

The tenor of their supplication was this:

Copy of the supplication written in the names of all the nobles and commons of England, to Pope Innocent IV, in the general council at Lyons (A.D. 1245).

“To the reverend father in Christ, Pope Innocent, chief bishop, the nobles, with the whole commonalty of the realm of England, sends commendation with kissing of his blessed feet.

“Our mother, the church of Rome, we love with all our hearts, as is our duty, and covet the increase of her honor with so much affection as we may, as to whom we should always fly for refuge, whereby grief lying upon the child, it may find comfort at the mother’s hand. The mother is bound to succor her child as much as she finds he has been kind and beneficial in relieving her necessity. Nor is it unknown to our mother how beneficial and bountiful a giver the realm of England has been for a long time now, for further amplifying her exaltation, as appeared by your yearly subsidy, which we call Peter-pence. Now the said church, not content with this yearly subsidy from us, has sent various legates seeking other contributions, at diverse and sundry times, to be taxed and levied out of the same realm. All these contributions and taxes notwithstanding have been lovingly and liberally granted.

“Furthermore, neither is it unknown to your fatherhood, how our forefathers, like good catholics, both loving and fearing their Maker, for the soul’s health of themselves, as well as of their progenitors and successors, have founded monasteries, and have largely endowed them both with their own proper lands, and also patronages of benefices. By this, such religious persons professing the first and greatest perfection of holy religion in their monasteries, might with greater peace and tranquility occupy themselves devoutly in God’s service, as pertained to the order. And also the clerics presented by them into their benefices might sustain the other exterior labors for them in that second order of religion, and so discharge and defend them from all hazards. So that, these religious monasteries cannot be defrauded of their patronages and collations of benefices, without touching us very near, and working intolerable griefs into our hearts.

“And now see, we beseech you, what is lamentable to behold, and what injuries we sustain by you and your predecessors who, not considering our subsidies and contributions remembered above, also suffer your Italians and foreigners beyond number to be possessed of our churches and benefices in England, pertaining to the right and patronage of those monasteries. These foreigners, neither defending the said religious persons whom they ought to see to, nor having the language by which they may instruct the flock, take no regard of their souls, but utterly leave them to be devoured by wild wolves. Therefore it may truly be said of them, that they are not good shepherds, for they neither know their sheep, nor do the sheep know the voice of their shepherds, nor do they keep any hospitality. But they only collect the rents of those benefices, carrying them out of the realm, by which our brethren, our nephews, and our kinsfolks might be sustained, who could and would dwell upon them, and employ such exercises of mercy and hospitality as their duty required. A great number of these now, for mere necessity, are laymen and obliged to flee from the realm.

“And now with the intent to more fully certify you of the truth, you will understand that the Italians and strangers receiving yearly rents out of England, not so little as 60,000 marks per year, besides other avails and excises deducted, reap in our kingdom of England more emoluments of mere rents than the king himself, being both tutor of the church, and governor of the land.

“Furthermore, whereas at the first creation of your papacy we were in good hope, and still are, that by means of your fatherly goodness we would enjoy our franchises, and free collation of our benefices and donatives, to be reduced again to the former state. Now comes another grievance which we cannot but signify to you, pressing us above measure, which we receive by Master Martin, who, entering recently into our land without leave of our king, with greater power than was ever seen before in any legate. Although he does not bear the state and appearance of a legate, yet he has doubled the acts of a legate, charging us every day with new mandates; and so he has most extremely oppressed us.

“First, in bestowing and giving away our benefices if any were above thirty marks, as soon as they were vacant, to Italian persons.

“Secondly, after the decease of those Italians, unknown to the patrons, he has intruded other Italians, whereby the true patrons have been spoiled and defrauded of their right.

“Thirdly, Master Martin does not cease to assign and confer such benefices still to the same persons; and some he reserves to the donation of the apostolic see; moreover, he extorts from religious houses immoderate pensions, excommunicating and interdicting whoever dares withstand him.

“Therefore, because Master Martin has so far extended his jurisdiction to the great perturbation of the whole realm, and no less derogation to our king’s privilege, to whom it has been fully granted by the apostolic see that no legate should have dealings in his land, except those whom he sent for by special letters — with most humble devotion we beseech you, that as a good father will always be ready to support his child, so your fatherhood will reach out your hand of compassion to relieve us, your humble children from these grievous oppressions.

“And although our lord and king, being a catholic prince, and wholly given to his devotions and service of Christ Jesus our Lord, so that he does not regard the health of his own body, will fear and reverence the apostolic see. And as a devout son of the church of Rome, he desires nothing more than to advance the estate and honor of the same. Yet we who labor in his affairs, bearing the heat and burden of the day, and whose duty, together with him, is to tender the preservation of the public wealth, neither can patiently suffer such oppressions so detestable to God and man, and intolerable grievances, nor by God’s grace will suffer them, through means of your godly remedy, which we well hope and trust to speedily obtain from you. And thus may it please your fatherhood, we beseech you to accept this our supplication. In so doing we will worthily deserve from all the lords and nobles, with the whole commonalty of the realm of England, fitting and special thanks accordingly.”

A.D. 1245. (Ex Mat. Paris, fol. 188.)

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This supplication was sent by the hands of Sir R. Bigot, knight, W. de Powick, esq., and Henry de la Mare, with other knights and gentlemen. After it was opened and read there, Pope Innocent, first keeping silent, delayed giving an answer, making haste to proceed in his detestable excommunication and curse against the good emperor Frederick. This curse being done, and the English ambassadors still waiting for their answer, the pope told them flatly that they would not have their request fulfilled. At this, the Englishmen departed in great anger, and swore with terrible oaths that they would never more suffer any tribute or fruits of any benefices of which the noblemen were patrons, to be paid to that insatiable and greedy court of Rome, who was worthy to be detested in all worlds.

The pope hearing these words, although not replying then, thought to bide his time, and he did so. During the Council, he caused every bishop of England to put his hand and seal to the obligation made by King John for the pope’s tribute. He threatened, moreover, that once he had brought down the emperor Frederick, he would bridle the insolent pride of England.

But here, on the occasion of this council at Lyons — so that the reader may see what slippery uncertainty and variableness the state of the king depended on — it is material to introduce a letter sent by Henry III to the prelates of his land, before they were transported over the sea to Lyons. In this letter it may be gathered that the king suspected they would be pushing and heaving against his royalty, and therefore he directed these letters to them, to prepare their affections otherwise. The tenor of it follows: —

A Letter of Charge to the Prelates of England, purposed to assemble in the Council at Lyons, that they should ordain nothing to their King’s prejudice.

“The king to the archbishops, bishops, and to all other prelates of his land of England, appointed to meet at a council at Lyons, greeting: you are (as you know) bound to us by oath, by which you ought to keep all the fealty that you can to us, in all things concerning our royal dignity and crown. Therefore we command you, upon the fealty and allegiance in which you are firmly bound to us, enjoining that you endeavor to your uttermost to get, as well as to keep, and also to defend our rights and our kingdom. And that neither to the prejudice of us, nor of this kingdom, nor yet against us or our rights which our predecessors and we by ancient and approved custom have used, you presume to procure or attempt anything in your council at Lyons; nor that you give assent to anyone who would procure or ordain anything in this case, upon your aforesaid oath, and the loss of your temporalities which you hold from us. Therefore, in this behalf so behave yourselves, that for your good dealing and virtue of thankfulness, we may specially commend you, rather than reprove your unthankfulness for attempting the contrary (which God forbid), and reserve vengeance for you in due time. Witness myself, etc., the twenty-ninth year of our reign.”

In the same way, he wrote to the archbishops and bishops, etc. of Ireland and Gascony.

In the beginning of the following year (A.D. 1246), Pope Innocent came to Cluny, where a secret meeting was then appointed between the pope and Louis the French king (who was then preparing his voyage to Jerusalem). The pope sought by all means to persuade the French king, in revenge for his injury, to war against the weak and feeble king of England, as he called him, either to drive him utterly from his kingdom, or else to damnify him. By this, Henry would be constrained, whether he would or not, to stoop to the pope's will and obedience. Also, the pope would assist Louis with all the authority he could. Nevertheless, the French king would not agree to this.

Straight upon this followed the exaction²⁰² of Boniface, archbishop of Canterbury, which he had bought from the pope. This was to have the first year's fruits from all benefices and spiritual livings in England for the space of seven years, until the sum came to 10,000 marks. The king was at first greatly grieved at this. But he was obliged at last to agree with the archbishop, and so the money was gathered.

Over and above all other exactions with which the pope miserably oppressed the church of England, what is not to be passed over in silence is how the pope, sending down his letters from the apostolic see, charged and commanded the prelates to find him some ten, some five, and some fifteen able men, well-furnished with horse and armor for one whole year, to fight in the pope's wars. And lest the king know of it, they were enjoined, under pain of excommunication, that they reveal it to no one, but keep it secret to themselves only.

Pope Innocent IV learned of certain rich clerics leaving a great substance of money, who died intestate — such as Robert Hailes, archdeacon of Lincoln, who died leaving thousands of marks and much plate behind him. All of this, because no will was made, came into the hands of temporal men. Also Almarike, archdeacon of Bedford, was found worth a great substance when he died; and likewise another, John Hotosp, archdeacon of Northampton, who died suddenly intestate, leaving behind him 5000 marks, and 30 standing pieces of plate, with other infinite jewels besides. The pope sent out a statute to be proclaimed in England, that whatever ecclesiastical person thereafter deceased in England intestate, that is, without making his will, all his goods would redound to the pope's use.

The pope, not yet satisfied with all this, addressed new letters to the bishop of Winchester, and to William bishop of Norwich, for gathering up among the clergy, and religious houses

²⁰² *Exaction*: a severe tribute; a fee, reward, or contribution, demanded or levied with severity or injustice.

in England, 6000 marks for the holy mother church, without any excuse or delay, by virtue of obedience. The king, being greatly grudged by the clergy, when this came to his ear, he directed contrary letters to all the prelates, commanding them, upon forfeiting their temporalities to the king, that no such subsidy-money should be gathered or transported out of the realm. But the pope then hearing of this, wrote in great anger to the prelates of England, that this collection of money, upon pain of excommunication and suspension, would be provided, and brought to the new Temple in London, by the feast of the Assumption, next ensuing.

And as he perceived the king would oppose his proceedings, and taking great disdain at this, he was about to interdict the whole land. Then one of his cardinals, called John Anglicus, an Englishman, speaking to him for the realm of England, desired his fatherhood, for God's cause, to mitigate his moody ire, and with the bridle of temperance, to assuage the passion of his mind:

“Which to tell you plain, is here stirred up too much without cause. Your fatherhood may consider that these days are evil. First, the Holy Land lies in great perils to be lost. All the Greek church has departed from us. Frederick the emperor is against us, who is the mightiest prince this day in all Christendom. Both you and we, who are the peers of the church, are banished from the papal see, thrust out of Rome, yes, excluded from Italy. Hungary, with all its coastal borders about it, looks for nothing but utter subversion by the Tartars. Germany is wasted and afflicted with inward wars and tumults. Spain is fierce and cruel against us, even to cutting out the bishops' tongues. France is so impoverished by us that it is brought to beggary, which also conspires against us. Miserable England, being so often plagued by our manifold injuries, even much like Balaam's ass, beaten and bounced with spurs and staffs, begins at length to speak and to complain of her intolerable griefs and burdens — being so wearied and damnified, that she may seem past all recovery. And we, in the manner of Ishmael, hating all men, provoke all men to hate us.”

[175] A.D. 1246.

Despite all these words of John Anglicus, his cardinal, the pope's passion could not yet be appeased. But immediately he sent a commandment to the bishop of Worcester, with full authority, that in case the king would not speedily cease his rebellion against his apostolical proceedings he would interdict his land. So that in conclusion, the king, for all his stout enterprise, was obliged to relent at last, and the pope had his money, (A.D. 1246).

What man having eyes, is so blind he does not see that these execrable dealings of the pope are such that they would cause any nation in the world to do as the wise Grecians did, and perpetually renounce the pope, and well consider that the usurped authority of that see is not of God? But such was the rude dullness then of miserable England, for lack of learning and godly knowledge, that feeling what burdens were laid upon them, they would yet play the ass of Balaam, ^{Num 22.23-32} or else the horse of Aesop's fable (*The Horse and the Stag*), which upon receiving the bridle in his mouth, could afterward neither abide its own misery, nor recover its liberty. And so it fared with England under the pope's thralldom.

And so it follows in the history of Matthew Paris, how the pope, taking more courage by his former abusive boldness, and perceiving what a tame ass he had to ride upon, did not cease in this, but directed a new precept that same year (A.D. 1246), to the prelates of England. He commanded them by his apostolic authority, that all beneficed men in the realm of England, who were resident in their benefices, should yield to the pope a third of their goods. And those who were not resident should give one-half of their goods, and do it for the space of three years, with terrible threatenings to all those who might resist; and ever with this

clause, *non obstante*,²⁰³ which was like a key that opened all locks. The sum total amounted to 60,000 pounds. This sum of money could scarcely be found in all of England to pay for King Richard's ransom. (Paris, fol. 207.) The execution of this precept was committed to the bishop of London, who conferred about the matter with his brethren in the church of St. Paul's, as they were busily consulting together. Bewailing the insupportable burden of this contribution, which was impossible for them to sustain, certain messengers from the king suddenly came in. Sir John Lexinton, knight, and Master Lawrence Martin, the king's chaplain, strictly forbade them, in the king's name, to consent in any case to this contribution, which would be greatly to the prejudice and desolation of the whole realm.

And thus much up to now about these matters, with the intent that all who read these histories, and see the doings of this western bishop, may consider what just cause the Grecians had to separate from his subjection and communion. For what Christian communion can be held with someone who, so contrary to Christ and his gospel, seeks worldly dominion; who so cruelly persecutes his brethren; who is so given to avarice, so greedy in getting, so injurious in oppressing, so insatiable in his exactions, so malicious in revenging; who stirs up wars, deprives kings, and deposes emperors, playing the monarch in the church of Christ; who is so erroneous in doctrine, so abominable in abusing excommunication, so false in promise, so corrupt in life, so void of God's fear; and briefly, is so far from all the qualifications of a true evangelical bishop? For what does he seem to care for the souls of men, who would place boys and outlandish Italians in the benefices; and who further appoints one Italian to succeed another, those who neither know the language of the flock, nor can bear to see their faces? And who can blame the Grecians, then, for dissevering themselves from such an oppressor against Christ?

If this realm had followed their wise example, as it might have, then our predecessors would have been rid of an infinite number of troubles, injuries, oppressions, wars, commotions, long journeys and charges, besides saving thousands of pounds, which this bishop of Rome falsely raked and transported out of this realm. But as I must not exceed the bounds of my history, my purpose not being to stand upon declamations, nor to dilate on common places, I will pass by this, and leave the judgment of it to the further examination of the reader. For if I wished to prosecute this argument so far as the matter would lead me, and as truth perhaps requires me to say, then I might not only say, but I could well prove that the pope and court of Rome are the fountain and principal cause, not only of much misery here in England, but of all the public calamities and notorious mischiefs which have happened these many years, through all these western parts of Christendom. And especially the cause of the lamentable ruin of the church, which not only we, but the Grecians also this day, suffer by the Turks and Saracens. Whoever well considers by reading histories, and by viewing the doings and acts passed by the bishop of Rome, will see good cause to think as I do. I am disposed to set only one narrative touching this argument before the readers. It happened about this present time of King Henry's reign (A.D. 1244).

Sickness and Supposed Miraculous Recovery of the French King.

It happened that Louis IX the French king, son to Queen Blanch, fell very sick, lying in a trance for some days. He was in such a way that few thought he would live, and some said he was gone already. Among others, his mother was with him. She sorrowed bitterly for her son, and was given somewhat to superstition. She went and brought out a piece of the holy

²⁰³ *Non obstante*: notwithstanding anything to the contrary, whether statute, custom, or circumstance.

cross, with the crown and the spear; and blessing him with them, she laid the crown and spear against his body, making a vow in the person of her son, that if the Lord would visit him with health, and release him from that infirmity, he would be crossed or marked with the cross. And he would visit the holy sepulcher, and solemnly render thanks in the land which Christ had sanctified with his blood. Then as she, with the bishop of Paris and others present there, were praying, the king, who was supposed by some to be dead, began with a sigh to move his arms and legs. Stretching himself, he began to speak, giving thanks to God, who from on high had visited him, and called him from the danger of death. The king's mother, with others, took this as a great miracle wrought by virtue of the holy cross. So too the king, amending more and more, as soon as he was well recovered, solemnly received the badge of the cross.

After this, there was great preparation and much ado in France toward setting out to the Holy Land. For after the king was first crossed, most of the nobles of France, with several archbishops and bishops, with earls, and barons, and gentlemen to a mighty number, also received the cross upon their sleeves. A.D. 1246. (*Ex Matt. Parisiensi*, fol. 204. 6.)

The next year, the French king still persevered in his purposed journey. Lady Blanch, his mother, and the bishop of Paris, his brother, with the lords of his council and other nobles, and his special friends, all advised him with great persuasions to alter his mind as to that adventurous and dangerous journey. For his vow, they said, was unadvisedly made, and in time of sickness when his mind was not perfectly established. What dangers might happen at home was uncertain, with the king of England on one side, the emperor on the other, and the Pictavians in the midst, so fugitive and unstable. As to his vow, the pope would dispense with it, considering the necessity of his realm, and the weakness of his body.

To this the king answered, "As you say, I took this vow in the feebleness of my senses. Behold, as you wish of me, I lay down the cross that I took up." And putting his hand to his shoulder, he tore off the badges of the cross, saying to the bishop, "Here I resign to you the cross with which I was signed." At the sight of this, there was no small rejoicing among all who were present. The king then, altering his countenance and his speech, thus spoke to them: "My friends, whatever I was in my sickness, I now thank God that I am of perfect sense and sound reason, and now I require my cross to be restored to me again." He said moreover, "He would eat no food until he was recognized again with the same cross, as he was before." At this all present were astonished, supposing that God had some great matter to work, and so they proposed no more questions to him.

Upon this, the feast of John Baptist drew near, which was the time appointed for setting out. Being in readiness, the king would enter upon his journey a few days later; yet one thing was lacking. The king, perceiving the mortal variance between the pope and good Frederick the emperor, thought it best before going, to have that matter appeased. By this means, his way might be safer through the emperor's countries, and there would also be less danger at home after his departure.

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Therefore, he first went to Lyons, where the pope was, partly to take his leave, but especially to make reconciliation between the emperor and the pope.

Here it may be noted by the way, that there was no difficulty or hindrance with the good emperor. He rather sought all means by which to compass the pope's favor, but never could obtain it. So that, before he was excommunicated in the Council of Lyons, he not only answered sufficiently by his attorney, discharging himself against whatever crimes or

objections could be brought against him, but he so far humbled himself to the pope and the council, that for all detriments, damages, losses, or wrongs done on his part, whatever amends the pope might require, he would recompence it to the uttermost. But this the pope would not take.

He then offered that if the pope could not abide his remaining in his own dominions and empire, he would go and fight against the Saracens and Turks, never to return into Europe again. He offered there to recover the lands and kingdoms that at any time belonged to Christendom, provided that the pope would be contented that Henry, his son, who was nephew to King Henry here in England, should be emperor after him. Nor would this be accepted by the pope.

Then he offered for the security of his promise, to put in the French king and the king of England to be his sureties, or else for the trial of his cause, to stand by their award and arbitration. Nor would that be granted by the pope.

At last he desired that he might come himself and answer before the council. But the proud pope in no case would abide that, saying, "He did not yet find himself so ready and fit for martyrdom, to have him to come to the council; for if he did, he would depart himself," etc.

Such was the obstinate rancor and devilish malice of Pope Innocent IV and his predecessor, against that valiant emperor, and against the Grecians. What disturbance and mischief it wrought for the whole church; what strength it gave to the Saracens and Tartars; how it impaired Christian concord, and weakened all Christian lands — not only the army of the French King, found shortly after, but Christendom even to this day may and does feel and rue it. Nor can there be found in history any greater cause that made the Turks so strong, and to gain so much ground over Christendom as they have, than the pestilent working of this pope, in deposing and excommunicating this worthy emperor.

In the meantime, when the French king came thus to the pope at Lyons to entreat for the emperor, he could find no favor. He took his leave, and departed with great heaviness, setting forward on his journey.

Contests Between the French and the Saracens – 1249.

About the beginning of October 1249, the French took Damietta (Heliopolis), the principal fort or hold of the Saracens in Egypt (Seventh Crusade, 1248-54). After winning Damietta, the Saracens, being terrified at the loss, offered to the Christians great ground and possessions — more than ever belonged to Christendom before — on the condition that they might have Damietta restored to them again. But the pride of the earl of Artois, the king's brother, would not accept the offers of the Saracens. He required both Damietta and Alexandria, the chief metropolitan city of all Egypt, to be surrendered. The Saracens, seeing the pride and greediness of the Frenchmen, would not abide that. This afterwards turned to the great loss of the Christians. At length, after long conferences between them, the Sultan proposed to have the city of Damietta resigned to him, with everything they found in it, and the French would have in return all the country around Jerusalem, with all the captive Christians restored to them. The Christians, he said, ought to be contented with this, and seek no more, but only to possess the land of Jerusalem. This being granted to them, they should not encroach into lands and kingdoms to which they had no right. This form of peace well pleased the lower sort of the poor soldiers, and many of the council and nobility. But the proud earl of Artois, the king's brother, would not assent to it, but still required the city of Alexandria to be yielded to him, which the Egyptians would by no means agree to.

From that time, the French army, being surrounded by sea and by land, began every day more and more to be distressed for provisions, and with famine, being driven to such misery that they were obliged to eat their own horses in Lent time, which should have served them for other uses. Nor could any Christian power, nor emperor Frederick (being deposed by the pope) send them any succor. The more misery the Christians were in, the more fiercely the Saracens pressed upon them on every side, detesting their froward willfulness. Many of the Christian soldiers deserted. Not able to abide the affliction, they secretly went over to the Saracens, who gladly received and relieved them. Some were permitted to keep their faith; some married wives among them, and apostatized for hope of honor. The Sultan, being perfectly informed by these fugitives of everything in the king's army, sent to the king, derisively asking where were all his picks, forks, and rakes, scythes, ploughs, and harrows, which he brought over with him? Or why he did not employ them, but let them lie beside him to rust and canker? The king with his Frenchmen were obliged to bear with all this and much more.

The French king, with his army, seeing himself distressed, and that nothing was done against the Sultan of Egypt after he had fortified the city of Damietta with an able garrison, he left it with the duke of Burgundy. He then moved his camp from there to go eastward. In his army followed William Longspath. He came from England to fight in the Holy Land, accompanied by a number of select English warriors. But such was the hatred of the French against William Longspath, and the English, that they could not abide them, but flouted them in an insulting manner — calling them “English tails” — insomuch that the good king himself had much ado to keep peace between them.

The original cause of this grudge between the French and English began thus. There was, not far from Alexandria in Egypt, a strong fort or castle, filled with noble ladies, and rich treasure from the Saracens. It happened that William Longspath, with his company of English soldiers, got possession of this stronghold, more by good luck and political dexterity, than by open force of arm. He and his followers were greatly enriched by this. When the French learned of this, they began to conceive a heartburn against the English soldiers, and could not speak well of them after that. It happened again, not long after, that William Longspath had intelligence of a company of rich Saracen merchants going to a fair around the parts of Alexandria. Their camels, asses, and mules, were richly laden with silks, precious jewels, spices, gold and silver, with cartloads of other wares, besides victuals and other furniture of which the soldiers then stood in great need. Having secret knowledge of this, Longspath gathered all the English, and so falling upon the merchants by night, some he slew, some he took, and some he put to flight. He took and brought with him the carts with their drivers and oxen, and the camels, asses, and mules, with the whole carriage and provisions. He lost in the whole skirmish but one soldier, and eight of his servitors.

This being known in the camp, out came the French, who all this while loitered in their pavilions. Meeting the carriages along the way, they took all the spoils wholly to themselves, berating Longspath and the English for adventuring and issuing outside of the camp without leave or knowledge of their general, contrary to the discipline of war. William Longspath said he had done nothing but what he would answer for, and that his purpose was to have the spoil divided among the whole army. When this would not serve, being grieved in mind at being spoiled in so cowardly a way, of that for which he had so adventurously travelled, he went to the king to complain. But when no reason nor complaint would serve — owing to the proud earl of Artois disliking him — he bid the king farewell, and said he would serve him no longer. And so William Longspath, with his followers, breaking from the French host, went to Acre. Upon their departure, the earl of Artois said,

“Now the army of the French is well rid of these tailed people.” These words, spoken in great spite, were badly taken by many good men who heard him.

[177] A.D. 1246-1250.

Overthrow of the French Army by the Saracens.

The king, setting out from Damietta, directed his journey towards Cairo. The Sultan in the meantime, hearing of the coming of the French host, in great hopes of conquering all, sent to the king, offering to the Christians the quiet and full possession of the Holy Land, with all the kingdom of Jerusalem, and more — besides other infinite treasures of gold and silver, or whatever else might please them, only on this condition: that they would return Damietta, with the captives there, and so they would join together in mutual peace and amity. Also, they would have all their Christian captives delivered home. And so both countries might freely pass, one to another, with their wares and traffic, such as they chose to venture. It was also firmly asserted that the Sultan, with most of his nobles, were willing to leave the filthy law of Mahomet, and receive the faith of Christ, so that they might quietly enjoy their lands and possessions. Then great quietness would no doubt have pervaded in all Christendom, with the end of bloodshed and misery, had it not been for the pope and his legate, who (having a command from the pope, that if any such offers came, he should not take them) would in no way receive the conditions offered. (Paris, fol. 233).

After this, everything was prepared on both sides for war. The king came to the great river Nile, thinking to pass over on a bridge of boats. On the other side the Sultan pitched himself to oppose his passage. In the meantime a certain festival occurred among the Saracens, in which the Sultan was absent, leaving his tents by the waterside. This was observed by a Saracen recently converted to Christ, serving with Earl Robert, the king's brother, who pointed out a shallow ford in the river, where they might more easily pass over. The earl and the master of the Templars, with a great force of about a third of the army, passed over the river, followed by William Longspath with his band of English soldiers. Being joined together on the other side of the water, they encountered the Saracens remaining in the tents, and put them to flight. After this victory, the French earl was elated with pride and triumph, as if he had conquered the whole earth. He would press forward, dividing himself from the main host, thinking to win the conflict alone. Some wise men among the Templars advised him not to do so, but rather to return and take their whole strength with them, so that they would be more sure against all deceits and dangers. They said they knew well the practice of that people, and had more experience with them than he had. They also alleged their wearied bodies, tired horses, famished soldiers, and the insufficiency of their number to withstand the multitude of their enemies, with other similar words of persuasion.

When the proud earl heard them, being inflamed with no less arrogance than ignorance, he reviled them, called them cowardly dastards and betrayers of the whole country, objecting to them the common report which said that the land of the holy cross might be won to Christendom, if it were not for the rebellious Templars, with the Hospitallers and their fellows, etc.

To these disrespectful rebukes, the master of the Templars answered for himself and for his companions, bidding the earl to display his ensign whenever he would, and wherever he dared. They were quite as ready to follow him, as he was ready to go before them. Then William Longspath the worthy knight began to speak, desiring the earl to give ear to those men of experience, who had better knowledge of those countries and people than he had, commending their counsel as discreet and wholesome. And so, turning to the master of the

temple, he began with gentle words to soften and appease him. The knight had not half ended his talk, when the earl, taking the words out of his mouth, began to fume and swear, crying out about these cowardly Englishmen with tails. He said, "What a pure army we would have here, if these tails, and tailed people were purged from it!" with other like words of great villainy and much hatred. The English knight answered "Well, Earl Robert, wherever you dare to set your foot, my step will go as far as yours; and I believe we go this day where you will not dare to come near the tail of my horse." In the event, it proved true.

Now, seeing that Earl Robert would set off to get all the glory for himself, he attacked a place called Mansor. Then the Sultan immediately came with all his main power. Seeing the Christian army was divided, and brother separated from brother, he had that which he had long wished for. And so enclosing round about them, so that none should escape, he fell on them and there was a cruel fight. Then the earl began to repent of his rashness, but it was too late. Then seeing William Longspath the English knight gallantly fighting in the chief brunt of the enemies, he cried out to him in a most cowardly way to flee, seeing that God (he said) fights against us. The knight answered "God forbid that my father's son should run away from the face of a Saracen." The earl then turning his horse fled away, thinking to escape by the swiftness of his horse. And so taking to the river of Thafnis, but pressed down with his armor, he sunk and was drowned. Thus the earl being gone, the French began to despair and scatter. Then William Longspath, bearing all the force of the enemy, stood against them as long as he could, wounding and slaying many a Saracen, until at length his horse being killed, and his legs maimed, he could no longer stand, yet as he was down, he mangled their feet and legs, and did the Saracens much sorrow, till at last, after many blows and wounds, being stoned by the Saracens, he yielded his life. After his death, the Saracens set upon the rest of the army, whom they had compassed on every side. They destroyed them all, so that scarcely one man escaped alive, except for two Templars, one Hospitaller, and one poor soldier, who brought tidings of it to the French king.

These things being known in the French camp to the king and his soldiers, there was no little sorrow and heaviness on every side, with great fear and doubt in themselves as to what was best to do. At last, when they saw no remedy, but to stand manfully to revenge the blood of their brethren, then the king with his host passed over the Nile. Coming to the place where the battle had been, there they beheld their fellows and brethren, pitifully lying with their heads and hands cut off. For the Saracens, being promised a reward by the Sultan, to those who could bring the head or hand of any Christian, had mangled the Christians, leaving their bodies to the wild beasts. Thus as they were sorrowing and lamenting the rueful case of their Christian fellows, suddenly there appeared the coming of the Sultan, with a multitude of innumerable thousands. The Frenchmen quickly prepared to encounter them. And so the battle being struck up, the armies began to join. But alack for pity, what could the French do, their number was so lessened, their hearts wounded with fear and sorrow, their bodies consumed with penury and famine, their horses not able to serve them for feebleness? In conclusion, the Frenchmen were overthrown, slain, and dispatched. And seeing that there was no fleeing, happy was the man who first could yield himself. In this miserable conflict, the king with his two brethren, and a few that clung to him, were taken captives, to the confusion of all Christian realms, and presented to the Sultan. All the rest were put to the sword, or else stood to the mercy of the Saracens, whether to be slain or to remain in woeful captivity. And this was the end of that sorrowful battle, in which almost all the nobility of France was slain. There was scarcely one man in the multitude who escaped free, but was either slain, or taken prisoner.

The Sultan, after taking the French king, deceitfully disguised an array of Saracens to the number of the French army, with the arms and ensigns of those who were slain, and made toward Damietta, where the duke of Burgundy, with the French queen, and Otto, the pope's legate, and other bishops, and their garrisons were remaining. They supposed that under the show of Frenchmen they would be let in. But the captains mistrusting their hasty coming, and doubting their visages, unlike Frenchmen, shut the gates against them.

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As the Sultan missed his purpose, he thought by advice of his council, to use the king's life for his own advantage in recovering the city of Damietta, as in the end it came to pass. For although the king at first was greatly unwilling, and would rather die than surrender Damietta back to the Saracens, yet the conclusion fell out, that the king was ransomed, and the city of Damietta was also resigned — having been twice won, and twice lost by the Christians. The Sultan (or Soladine) afterward caused it to be utterly razed to the ground. The ransom of the king, on condition that the Sultan would see him safely conducted to Acre, came to 60,000 marks. The number of French and others who died in that war by water and by land, came to 80,000 persons.

And thus you have a brief narration of this lamentable pilgrimage of Louis the French king, all occasioned by the pope and Otto his legate; by whose sinister means and pestilent pride, not only were the lives of so many Christians lost, but also the loss of other cities and Christian regions bordering the same quarters is to be ascribed to them. For by the occasion of all this, the hearts of the Saracens on the one side were so encouraged, and the courage of the Christians on the other side were so discomfited, that a short while later, both the dominion of Antioch, and of Acre, with all other possessions belonging to the Christians, were lost, to the great diminishing of Christ's church.

Another reason, too, why the ruin of this French army is deservedly imputed to the pope, is this: when Louis the French king perceived what a necessary friend and helper Frederick the emperor might be to him against the Saracens, and therefore was an earnest suitor for him to the pope, to have him released, yet neither he nor the king of England could obtain it by any means. Through this, not only the French king's army went to wreck, but also such a fire of mischief was kindled against Christendom, that to this day it cannot be quenched. For the Saracens, and after them the Turks, got such a hand over Christendom, that to this day we all have great cause to rue and lament.²⁰⁴

The Tragic History of Emperor Frederick II – r. 1220-1250.

The chief and greatest cause of all this was that the emperor, who could have done the most, was deposed by the pope's tyranny, by which all those churches in Asia were left desolate. As for Emperor Frederick, whom we frequently mentioned before, just as his history is strange, his acts are wonderous, and his conflicts are tragic which he sustained against four or five popes, one after another, I thought it good to lay out his history here, backtracking a bit. Thus, the reader may know what is to be thought of this See of Rome, which wrought such abominable mischief in the world, as may be seen in the sequel of the following history.

*The whole tragic history of the Emperor Frederick II,
translated out of the Latin book of Nicholas Cisnerus
(1193 to 1250).*

²⁰⁴ [The Turks did not suffer a single naval defeat until 1571, at the battle of Lepanto.](#)

Frederick II was of the noblest lineage, being grandson to Frederick Barbarossa, and son to the Emperor Henry VI, and Constantia, daughter of the king of Sicily.

The Emperor Henry VI, when he died, which was shortly after the birth of Frederick II, committed his protection to Constantia his wife, to Philip his brother, governor of Etruria, and to the bishop of Rome, then Innocent III.

Constantia, not long after the death of Henry her husband, being sickly and growing old, resigned, and willed by her testament the safety both of her son Frederick, and also of his dominions, to the protection and government of Innocent III.

This Pope, as soon as he had the protection of the young emperor, became instead of a patron and protector to him and his dominions, both an enemy and conspirator. The examples are many; he persuaded Sibylla, the wife of Tancred (whom Henry put out of the kingdom of Sicily), to recover it again. "Whereupon Walter, who was married to the daughter of Tancred, by the instigation, counsel, and aid of the French king, with the pope, invaded Campania and Apulia. At this time also, the same worthy protector, Innocent III, sent his legates with letters of excommunication against all who would not take Walter as their king.

Again, when the princes, electors, and other nobles, had promised by their oath to Henry, that they would make Frederick his son emperor after his decease, the pope absolved them all from the oath which they had taken and given for the election of Frederick. He then went about to procure that Otto, the son of Henry Leo, should be made emperor. He deprived all those bishops whom he knew were favorable to Philip, who ruled the empire during the minority of his nephew Frederick. But Philip, by God's help, defeated the other. His cause was better, and his skill in martial affairs was greater, and he was stronger in power after many and great conflicts, and the fearful disturbance and desolation of the whole empire. All of these calamities and mischiefs, Conrad Lichtenau, living at that time, most pitifully complains of in his annals, and accuses the bishop of Rome and his adherents to be the chief authors and devisers of this great and lamentable mischief.

Thus you may see how it was by the counsel and consent of Pope Innocent, and by his instigation (besides his secret conspiracies) that this good Frederick and his dominions were hurt and damaged.

At this time Frederick had come to the age of twenty. By the provision of Constantia, his mother, he was so well instructed in letters, and so accomplished with other arts and virtues, that at this time there appeared and shone in him excellent gifts both of wisdom and knowledge. He was excellently well-versed in the Latin and Greek languages, although at that time his learning began to decay, and his barbarousness to increase. He also knew the German tongue, the Italian tongue, and the Saracen tongue. He daily exercised and put into practice those virtues which nature had planted in him, such as piety, wisdom, justice, and fortitude. So that he might well be compared to and counted among the worthiest and most renowned emperors, his predecessors.

When Frederick had gathered his armies, he was crowned. And after that, he set the empire at rest and in order, and appeased the whole of Germany. Then he returned to Rome with all his nobles and princes. He was consecrated with great solemnity by Pope Honorius III, and called Augustus. This Honorius succeeded Innocent in the papal see.

After the consecration of Frederick was finished with great solemnity, he departed from Rome, to set in order and settle the cities and great towns of Italy, for the better tranquility

of himself, and the safety of his subjects. There he heard of some who began to raise and make new factions against him. Among them were Thomas and Richard, the brothers of Innocent III, who kept some castles from him by force. He besieged those castles and beat them down. He captured Richard and sent him as a prisoner to Sicilia; but Thomas escaped to Rome. Certain bishops and others who were conspirators against Frederick also repaired there, and were maintained and defended by this bishop of Rome (Innocent). Frederick began to expostulate with the pope, who on the other side, was so chafed and vexed that immediately, without further delay, he thunders out against Frederick his curses and excommunications.

Thomas Fazel declares in a different manner the detestation or defiance that broke out between them. There were, he says, among those who were found to be traitors to the emperor, certain bishops who, flying to the pope, requested his aid. Upon which the pope sent his legates to the emperor, and requested him to admit and receive to favor those bishops whom he had banished and put from their offices, and that Frederick should not intermeddle with any ecclesiastical charge which he had nothing to do with. And he said further, that the correction and punishment of such matters pertained to the bishop of Rome, and not to him. Moreover, the oversight of those churches in that kingdom, from which he had expelled the bishops, pertained and belonged to the pope.

[179] A.D. 1195-1250.

To this Frederick replied, "In so much that 400 years and more had passed (from the time of Charlemagne), all emperors and kings in their dominions might lawfully commit to meet and fit men for these, such ecclesiastical functions and charges as were within their territories and kingdoms. He also looked to have the like privilege and authority which his predecessors had before him." Being chafed and moved with these demands of the pope, he breaks forth and says, "How long will the bishop of Rome abuse my patience? When will his covetous heart be satisfied? To where will his ambitious desire grow?" With such words, he repeated certain injuries and conspiracies, both against him and his dominions, plotted by Honorius as well as by Innocent. "What man, (he says), can suffer and bear this incredible boldness and intolerable insolence of so proud a bishop? Go," he says, to the legates, "and tell Honorius, that I will risk both the dominion of my empire, and the crown of my kingdom, rather than suffer the pope to thus diminish the authority of our majesty."

While Frederick was in Sicilia, his wife Constantia died. In the meantime the Christians sailed into Egypt with a great navy, and took the city Heliopolis, commonly called Damietta. Although in good hope of driving the Sultan out of Egypt, they experienced a great and marvellous overthrow by the water of the Nile (which overflowed their camp). They were obliged to agree to a truce with the Sultan for some years, and to surrender the city again. Upon this, John surnamed Brennus, king of Jerusalem, arrived in Italy, and prayed the aid of the emperor, in whom he had great hopes of finding a remedy for these calamities. From there he went to Rome to the pope, describing to him the great discomfiture, and also the present peril and calamity they were in. By his means, the emperor was reconciled again to the pope, and promised that he would prepare an army for the recovery of Jerusalem, and go there himself. In the meantime, pope Honorius, to whom he was recently reconciled, purposed to make some great and secret attempt against him — had the pope not been prevented by death.

After him succeeded Gregory IX (r. 1227-1241), who was just as great an enemy of Frederick. Gregory was scarcely settled in his papacy, when he threatened the emperor with excommunication unless he proceeded into Asia according to his promise. You will hear

shortly the reason why the pope so hastened the journey of Frederick. For he could not well bring to pass what he had devised in his mischievous mind, unless the emperor were farther from him. However, Frederick it would seem smelled a rat, or mistrusting somewhat (as well he might), alleged different excuses for delay.

Fazell, a Sicilian writer, says that the special cause of the emperor's stay was the oath of truce and peace during certain years, which was made between the Saracens and Christians, and that time was not yet expired. The same historian also writes of King John of Jerusalem, that when his daughter was brought to Rome, the emperor and the pope were reconciled. And being called up to Rome to celebrate the marriage of the emperor with Joella, the daughter of John, Pope Gregory (as is the manner of those proud prelates) offered his right foot to the emperor to kiss. But the emperor, not stooping so low, scarcely touched the upper part of his knee with his lip, and would not kiss his foot — which the pope took very badly, and was shockingly offended. But no opportunity at that time served to revenge his malice. So he dissembled then, thinking to recompence it to the full as time would serve.

After this, the emperor hearing how the Christians were oppressed by the Sultan in Syria, and that there came a great army against the Christian princes, he made more haste; and with more desire, he was encouraged to set forth on his journey into Asia.

With all his power, he made speedy preparation for the wars (the Sixth Crusade, 1228-29). He rigged and manned a powerful navy; he had the most select men and the best soldiers that were in every country, and made warlike provision for everything pertaining to such a voyage and expedition. Great bands assembled and mustered, of both German soldiers and others. Appointed under their captains, they set forth and marched to Brundusium. Because the emperor was delayed by sickness, they encamped a long time waiting for him. A great pestilence broke out among them, through the great heat of that country; and many a soldier there lost his life; among them died Thuringus, one of their generals. The emperor, when he had somewhat recovered his health, launched with all his navy, and set forward to Brundusium. When he came to the straits of Peloponnesus and Crete, he suddenly fell sick, his diseases returning upon him again. And so, he sent before him all or most of his bands and ships into Palestine, promising to follow them as soon as he recovered whatever health he could. He himself with a few ships returned to Brundusium; and from there, for lack of health, he went into Apulia.

When tidings of this came to the pope's ear, he sent out his thundering curses and excommunications against the emperor. The pretended cause of this, I find noted and mentioned in the pope's own letters: how when Frederick had robbed and taken from Brundusius, prince of Thuring, his horses, money, and other rich furniture from his house at the time of his death, Frederick sailed into Italy — not to make war against the Turk, but to lure his prey away from Brundusius. And so, neglecting his oath and promise which he had made, and feigning his sickness, he came home again. By his default, Damietta was lost, and the host of the Christians were sorely afflicted (or so the pope wrote in his letters). But then Frederick, to repel and refute this slander, sent the bishop of Brundis and other legates to Rome. But the pope would not permit them to come to his presence, nor to the councils of the cardinals, to make Frederick's vindication. Therefore the emperor, to purge himself of the crimes which the pope so falsely accused him of — both to all Christian kings, and especially to the princes of Germany, and to all the nobles of the empire — writes his own letters that those things were both false, feigned, and invented by the pope's own head. And he shows how his ambassadors, with his vindication, were not permitted to come into the pope's presence. Historian Matthew Paris writes,

“Among other catholic princes, he also wrote letters to the king of England, embossed with gold. He declared in them, that the bishop of Rome was so inflamed with the fire of avarice and manifest covetousness, that he was not content with the goods of the church, which were innumerable, but also that he was not ashamed to bring princes, kings, and emperors to be subjects and contributors to him, and thus to disinherit them, and put them away from their kingly dignities; and that the king of England himself had good experience of this. His father, King John, was so long excommunicated by the popes, till they had brought both him and his dominions under servitude, in order to pay tribute to the pope. Behold the manners and conditions of our Roman bishops! Behold the snares with which these prelates seek to entangle men; to wipe their noses with their money; to make their children bondmen; to disquiet those who seek to live in peace — being clothed with sheep’s clothing, when indeed they are but ravening wolves. They send their legates hither and thither to excommunicate and suspend; as having power to punish whomever they please — not sowing the seed, that is, the word of God, to fructify, but so that they may bribe and tax men’s persons, and reap what they never sowed. Thus it comes to pass, that they spoil the holy churches and houses of God, which should be the refuge for the poor, and the mansion houses of saints, which our devout and simple parents built for that purpose, and ordained for the relief of poor men and pilgrims, and for the sustenance of those who were well disposed and religious. But these degenerate scoundrels, whom letters have only made both mad and impudent, strive and gape to be both kings and emperors.

“Doubtless the primitive church was built and laid in poverty and simplicity of life. And then, as a fruitful mother, she begat her holy children, whom the catalogue of saints now mentions; and truly no other foundation can be laid by any other church, than that which is laid by Jesus Christ. But *this* church, just as it swims and wallows in all superfluity of riches, and builds and raises the frame in all superfluous wealth and glory, so is it to be feared, lest its walls fall into decay; and when the walls are down, utter ruin and subversion follow after,” etc.

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But now, so that Frederick might indeed stop the mouth of the cruel pope, who persisted in his excommunication against him after he had prepared all things for the war, and levied a great army, Frederick departed, and came by sea to Cyprus with his army.

From Cyprus the emperor sailed to Joppa, which he fortified; but it came to pass, that in a short time they lacked provisions, and were afflicted with famine. Then they made their humble supplication to God, and the great tempest and foul weather ceased. The seas now being calm, they had provisions and all other necessary things brought to them.

Immediately the emperor and his army, as also the inhabitants of Joppa, were greatly refreshed and animated. On the other side, their enemies being disappointed of their purpose, were greatly discouraged. So that the king of Egypt, who had encamped with a great army, within one day’s journey of Joppa, thinking to besiege it, was now content to treat for peace. Whereupon ambassadors were sent with the emperor’s demands, and the Saracens immediately granted them. A ten-year peace was concluded, and confirmed by solemn oath on behalf of both princes, according to their several usages and manner. The form and condition of these articles of peace, briefly collected, are these: —

“First, That Frederick the emperor should be crowned and anointed king of Jerusalem, according to the manner of the kings of Jerusalem before him.

“Secondly, That all the lands and possessions which were situated between Jerusalem and Ptolemais, and the greatest part of Palestine, and the cities of Tyre and Sidon, which were in Syria, and all other territories which Baldwin IV at any time had and did occupy there, should be delivered to him, only certain castles being reserved.

“Thirdly, That he might fortify and build whatever fortresses and castles, cities and towns, he thought good in all of Syria and Palestine.

“Fourthly, That all the prisoners which were in the Saracens’ hands, would be ransomed freely and sent home. And again, that the Saracens might have leave, without armor, to come into the temple where the Lord’s sepulcher is, to pray; and that they should still hold and keep Chratum and the king’s mount.”

As Frederick thought the conclusion of this peace to be both necessary, and also profitable for all Christians, and as he had gotten as much by it as if the wars had continued, he sent his legates with letters to all Christian kings, princes, and potentates, as also to the bishop of Rome, declaring the circumstance and success of his journey and wars, as you have partly heard. He requested that they also would praise and give God thanks for his good success and the profitable peace concluded. And he desired of the pope, that as he had now accomplished his promise, and there was no cause why he should be displeased with him, he might be reconciled and obtain his favor.

In the meantime the emperor with all his army marched to Jerusalem, where on Easter day (A.D. 1229) he was solemnly crowned king, with great triumph and to the joy of all his nobles, and also the magistrates of that kingdom.

After this he rebuilt the city and its walls, which were beaten down by the Saracens. He supplied it with munitions; he built up the churches and temples that were in ruins; he fortified Nazareth and Joppa with strong garrisons, provisions, and all other necessary things.

Now see and behold, I pray you, that while Frederick was thus occupied, the pope was about his nefarious practices in Italy. He was not at all careful in the affairs of the Christian commonwealth, but was studying and laboring to see what mischief he might work against the emperor. First, he caused the soldiers whom the emperor sent for out of Germany for maintaining the holy wars, to be stopped as they passed through Italy, preventing their journey, and despoiling them of all the provisions they had. Not only this, but he secretly sent letters into Asia, to the patriarch of Jerusalem, and to the soldiers who kept the temple and the hospital, enticing and inciting them to rebel against the emperor. And furthermore, he dissuaded the princes of the Saracens, that they should make no league or truce with Frederick, nor deliver up to him the crown and kingdom of Jerusalem. These letters, were manifest testimonies of the pope’s treachery and treason towards Frederick, whom God had instituted and made His liege lord and sovereign, and the mightiest potentate on earth. So too, it was God’s will that Frederick should gain knowledge of this, and that those letters should fall into his hands. He protests in his last epistle to the Christian princes, that he kept those letters for a more certain testimony of all this.

When the pope had thus conspired against Frederick, and betrayed him as far as he could to the public enemy of all Christians, the Turk, he could no longer dissemble his mischievous treason, nor content himself with it, but he must devise and practice another. For he incited John, Frederick’s father-in-law, to make war against him, and the pope caused the subjects of the empire to withdraw their allegiance from him, and also the inhabitants of Picenum and of Lombardy. Thus joining themselves together, they sought further assistance from the French king, by which they gained great power. That done, they divided their force in two armies, invading the empire with one, and with the other, the territories belonging to the inheritance of Frederick.

But when the pope saw that fortune neither favored his designs, nor served his longings, he was like a man bereft of his wits, especially at these tidings of the prosperous success of the emperor against the Saracens. He tore and threw all his letters on the ground, and with all insulting language, he rebuked and reviled the legates for their master's sake, the emperor.

These injuries of the pope against Frederick, are great and most wicked treasons. But still his cruel and tyrannical mind was not content, but it went so far as is scarcely credible. For he not only set a variance between Frederick and his son Henry, but he also caused the son to become an enemy to his father. This was the drift of all his policy: that at one instant, in different and many places far one from another, war might be made against the emperor.

When the emperor understood what commotion the pope kept up in all his dominions, in his absence, and thinking to prevent the pope's purpose, and also to confirm the friendship of those whom he found to be his trusty subjects, Frederick left Asia, and with all speed came to Calabria. During his time there, he assembled his forces, and made all the preparation he could. From there he went to Berletta, where the duke of Spoletanum, with all his garrisons came to him. And from there he went into Apulia, and within a short time, by God's help, he recovered again all his dominions there. Then going into Campania, he won as many towns and holds as the pope had there, almost to Rome. Now, even though the emperor had gotten this entrance into the pope's dominions, by which he might have revenged himself for all the injuries done to him, he preferred nothing above Christian and public tranquility. For love of this, restraining his wrath, he sent his legates to treat for peace. Furthermore, to also decide all controversies between them, he sent eight or ten of the noblest and greatest men about him, princes and dukes of the empire.

Yet, so great was the insolence and pride of the pope, that by no gentleness or kindness could he be brought to promote the profitable concord of the church and the Christian commonwealth. O, worthy head, who claims all authority for himself in the church of Christ, and for his own willful revenge, cares nothing for the health and advantage of Christendom! The next year a peace was concluded between them, by the help of Leopold of Austria. The pope absolved the emperor of his excommunication (and therefore took 120,000 ounces of gold from him), restoring the titles both of his empire, and also of his kingdoms.

[181] A.D. 1193-1250.

Although Frederick concluded with the pope this unprofitable peace for himself, yet he faithfully performed those things that were agreed upon. But the pope, who thought it but a trifle to break his promise, would not stand to the conditions of the peace. For to pass over other things, he neither restored, as he promised, the customs of the land of Sicily, nor yet the city of Castellana. Yet Frederick, for the quietness and advantage of the commonwealth, bore and suffered these small injuries, and studied in all that he could, by liberal gifts as well as otherwise, to make the pope a trusty friend.

While these things were done in Italy and Sicily, great rebellions against the emperor were active in Germany, by his sons Henry Caesar, and Frederick of Austria. Henry being shaken off from his lord pope because of the peace between his father and the pope, he now began to make an open claim to the empire.

When intelligence of these things was brought to the emperor, he sent his legates, and commanded that both Henry Caesar his son, and other princes of Germany, who had assembled their armies, should break up and disperse. As he saw his son make so apparent a rebellion against him, and fearing greater insurrections in Germany, he thought it good to prevent it with all expedition. So he determined to go in all haste to Germany with his army,

from which he had been absent fourteen years. The pope promised the emperor that he would write letters in his behalf to all the princes of Germany, but persuaded him to the utmost of his power, that he should in no case go into Germany himself. Why? The pope's conscience accused him that he had written to the nobles in Germany, even from the beginning of his papacy, that they should not allow the emperor nor any of his heirs to enjoy the empire; and had stirred them all up to rebel against Frederick. He had also motivated Henry, the emperor's son, by bribes and fair promises, to conspire against his father. And to conclude, he was the author and procurer of the conspiracy which the Lombards then made against Frederick. Fearing lest these things come to the emperor's ear, the pope was greatly troubled. But the emperor not thinking it good to be absent at so important a time, went speedily into Germany. Assembling a council there, Henry Caesar's conspiracy was manifestly detected (of which the pope was the chief author). He was convicted of high treason by the judgment and sentence of seventy princes. Being commanded by his father to be bound, he was brought to Apulia where, not long after, he died in prison. Furthermore, by public commandment, the emperor renounced his son Frederick of Austria, and had him proclaimed an enemy to the public welfare. And when he saw that this punishment did not cause his son to come to his senses, and acknowledge his misconduct, the emperor, with a great army, took from him all of Austria and Syria, and brought them back under his own obedience and fidelity.

Then when he had set Germany in quietness, he left his son Conrad Caesar there, and returned to Italy, to punish those who had conspired against him, whose treasons were all detected at the condemnation of his son, chiefly instigated by the pope. The pope understanding that the emperor marched towards Italy, pretended to be reconcile, and a friend to Frederick, yet notwithstanding, he was a most secret and dangerous enemy. He advised the rebellious to join together, and to strongly fortify their cities with garrisons, that they should send to their friends for aid, and that with all the force they were able to muster, they should prepare for war.

And the pope sent his ambassadors to the emperor, to whom, under the pretense of promoting a peace, he had given a secret commandment that they should interdict him and his army, as soon as he came within the borders of Italy.

The emperor then prosecuted his purpose, and marched into Italy, where he brought under his subjection those cities that rebelled against him. And then he set upon the great host of the confederators, of whom he took one thousand prisoners, and also their general, and slew several captains, and took all their ensigns.

The pope now somewhat dismayed at this overthrow of his confederates, began to fear the emperor; and whereas before, he worked secretly and by others, now he went to work with might and main to subdue and deprive the emperor. Though the emperor saw and perceived what hatred and mortal malice the pope bore towards him, he desired that no fault be found in him for the breach of the peace. So he sent four legates to the bishop of Rome, who would answer and refute those incriminating charges which the pope laid to him.

When the bishop understood that the ambassadors were not far from Rome, he thought that in hearing the excuse and reasonable answer of the emperor, he might perhaps be provoked to desist from his purpose. So he refused to speak with them, and at the day appointed he pronounced the sentence of proscription against the emperor, depriving him of all his dignities, honors, titles, prerogatives, kingdoms and the whole empire. Calling the Venetian and Genoese legates, he made a peace between them, and covenanted with them that at

their charges they should rig and man thirty-five galleys, which were to spoil and burn all along the seacoasts of the kingdoms and dominions of Frederick.

But when the pope saw the good will and fidelity which the good duke of Venice bore to the emperor, and also saw what aid the emperor had from him, and that he was not likely to win him to his purpose, he then resorted again to his old crafty practices and subtleties. He devised to proclaim an edict at Rome to the universal church and people, in which he declares the reasons why he curses and gives the emperor to the devil of hell, and has dejected him from all his princely dignity. In the same edict he accuses Frederick of many great crimes that are detestable even to name. And besides that, he restrains his sovereign lord and emperor from the appeal which every private man may have by law. He accuses Frederick of treason, perjury, cruelty, sacrilege, killing his kindred, and of all impiety. He accuses him as a heretic, a schismatic, and a miscreant. To be brief, whatever mischief the pope can devise, he charges and burdens the emperor with that. The pope issued two other mandates, in which he commanded all bishops, prelates, and others of the clergy, that they should solemnly recite in their churches instead of their sermon, that by his decree he had excommunicated Frederick out of the fellowship of Christian men, removed him from the government of the empire, and that he had released all his subjects of their allegiance and fidelity towards him. And he charges them, and all other Christian men, under pain of cursing and damnation, that they neither succor the emperor, nor so much as wish him well.

Among the other noblemen of Germany at that time, was Otto, a prince of great honor, riches, and estimation., The pope, with both fair promises and rewards, enticed this prince away from the emperor. Otto in turn caused three other princes and dukes to revolt from the emperor to the pope. Frederick of Austria, Frederick's son, was easily won to the pope, and also came to Otto.

The emperor was at Patavium when this news was brought to him. Therefore he commanded Peter of Venice his secretary, on Easter day, to make a narration to the people of his great and liberal munificence to the bishops and church of Rome, and again, of the injuries by them toward him in recompence; also of his innocence in that of which the pope had accused him, and of the unseemliness of such an act or deed, of the right use of the ecclesiastical censure, and of the errors and abuse of the church of Rome. By this oration, he removed the cloud of blind superstition from many men's hearts, and the conceived opinion of the holiness of the church of Rome, and of its bishops. He revealed their usurped power and subtle persuasion, so that the people plainly saw the vices of the church of Rome, of the bishops of that see, and also their fraudulent deceits and atrocious doings. The people most vehemently lamented and complained about these things. By his letters and legates, the emperor also gave intelligence to all Christian kings, to the princes of his own empire, to the college of cardinals, and to the people of Rome, of the pretended crimes with which he was charged, as well as the cruelty of the bishop of Rome against him. A copy of that letter or epistle is as follows: —

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The Emperor to the Prelates of the World.

“In the beginning and creation of the world, the inestimable foreknowledge and providence of God (who asks counsel of none) created in the firmament of heaven two lights, a greater and a lesser; the greater he created to rule the day, and the lesser to rule the night: which two so

perform their proper offices and duties in the zodiac, that although oftentimes the one is in an oblique aspect to the other, yet the one is not an enemy to the other; but rather the superior communicates his light to the inferior. Even so, the same eternal foreknowledge has appointed upon the earth two authorities, that is to say, priesthood and kingly power; the one for knowledge and wisdom, the other for defense; so that man, who is made of two parts, might have two reins to govern and bridle him with, so that thereby peace and love might dwell upon the face of the earth.

“But alas, the bishop of Rome sitting in the chair of perverse doctrine or pestilence — that Pharisee anointed with the oil of iniquity above the rest of his consorts in our time, who for his abominable pride has fallen from heaven — endeavors with his power to destroy and to undo all. And he thinks, I believe, to star himself again there, from where he fell. His purpose is to darken and to shadow the light of our unspotted life, while altering the truth into lies. His papal letters, stuffed with untruths, are sent into various parts of the world, of his own corrupt humor, and upon no reasonable cause, blemishing the sincerity of our religion. The lord pope has compared us to the beast rising out of the sea, full of names of blasphemy, and spotted like a leopard. But we say that he is that monstrous beast of whom it is said, and of whom we thus read: ‘And there went out another horse that was red, and power was given to him who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another,’ Rev 6.4. For since the time of his promotion, he has not been the father of mercy, but of discord; a diligent steward of desolation instead of consolation; and he has enticed all the world to commit offense. And to take the words in a right sense and interpretation, he is that great dragon that has deceived the whole world; he is that antichrist, of whom he has called us the forerunner; he is that other Balaam hired for money to curse us; the prince of darkness, who has abused the prophets. This is the angel leaping out of the sea, having his vials filled with bitterness, so that he may hurt both sea and land; the counterfeit vicar of Christ, who sets forth his own imaginations.

“He says that we do not rightly believe in the Christian faith, and that the world is deceived with three manners of deceivers, which to name, God forbid that we should open our mouth; seeing that we openly confess only Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior to be the everlasting Son of God, coequal with his Father and the Holy Spirit, begotten before all worlds, and in process of time sent down upon the earth for the salvation of mankind; conceived by the Holy Spirit; who was born of the glorious Virgin Mary, and after that suffered and died, regarding the flesh; and by his godhead, the third day he raised from death that other nature which he assumed in the womb of his mother. But we have learned that the body of Mahomet hangs in the air, and his soul is buried in hell: whose works are damnable and contrary to the law of the Most High. We also affirm that Moses was the faithful servant of God and a true teacher of the law; and that he talked with God on Mount Sinai. By whom also God wrought miracles in Egypt, and delivered the law written to the Israelites; and that afterwards, with the elect, he was called to glory. In these and other things our enemy and the envier of our state, causing our mother the church to accuse her son, has written venomous and lying slanders against us, and sent the same to the whole world. If he had rightly understood the apostle’s meaning, he would not have preferred his violent will (which bears such sway with him) before reason. Nor would he have sent out his mandates at the suggestion of those who call light darkness, and evil good; who suspect honey to be gall, for the great good opinion they had conceived of that holy place, which indeed is both weak and infirm, and converts all truth into falsehood, and affirms that to be which is not.

“Truly my opinion, so impartial on every side, should not in any case be infringed and turned from the faith, to such enemies of so corrupt a conscience. Therefore we are greatly forced to marvel not a little, which also much disquiets us to see. that you, who are the pillars and assistants in the office of righteous dealing, the senators of Peter’s city, and the principal beams in God’s building, have not remedied the disturbances of so fierce a judge — as do the

planets of heaven in their kind, which to mitigate the passing swift course of the great orb or sphere of heaven, draw a contrary way by their opposite movings. Indeed our imperial felicity has been, almost from the beginning, spurned and envied by the papal see and dignity; like Simonides being asked why he had no more enemies and enviers of his state, answered, 'Because I have had no good success in anything that I ever took in hand.' And whereas we have had prosperous success in all our enterprises (the Lord's name therefore be blessed), especially in the overthrow recently of our rebellious enemies, the Lombards, to whom in their quarrel, the pope promised life and absolution, with remission of their sins. And our success is the reason why his apostolical bishop mourns and laments. And now he labors to oppose our felicity, not by your counsels, I suppose, but out of his own power of binding and loosing, of which he glories so much. But presently, where power and ability lack redress, abuse takes place. We see in him who was so mighty a king, and the worthiest prince among all the prophets, a desire and craving for the restitution of God's Holy Spirit, when he had polluted the dignity of his office. ^{Psa 51.11} But the proverb is, 'As things indissoluble are not to be loosed, so things that cannot be bound, are not to be bound.' This thing is manifestly proved in him. For why, the Scriptures of God instruct men how to live; they mortify our souls which are immortal; and quicken those who are dead for lack of life.

"And doubtless He is able to humble and bring down those who are unworthy of dignity — as much as He pleases, and whenever He pleases. Doubtless if the bishop of Rome were a true bishop indeed — innocent, unpolluted, and not associated with wicked livers and evil men — then his life would prove him to be so. He would not then be an offeror of dissentious sacrifice, but a peaceable offeror of love and charity; and he would cense, not with the incense of grief and hatred, but with the sweet smelling incense of concord and unity; nor yet would he make an execrable abuse of a sanctified office. If he were such a bishop as he ought to be, he would not twist or abuse the preaching the word into the fruit and gain of his own dissension. Nor would we be accused of being such an enemy of our mother the true church, as is laid to her Son's charge by such a bishop. This true and mother church we honor with all reverence and embrace, being so beautified and adorned with God's holy sacraments. Some singular persons notwithstanding, feigning themselves to be our brethren by that mother, and who yet are not — those, I say, who are subject and slaves to corruptible things — we utterly reject (putting them out from among us). Especially because injuries done by them, with which our majesty is so molested, vexed, and grieved, are not merely transitory and belonging to this life. Therefore we cannot so easily mitigate our mood, nor indeed should we do so; and therefore we are forced to take greater revenge for them. You therefore, who are men of grave and deliberate counsel, having the excellent gift (as from God) of wisdom and understanding, oppose that roaring enemy of ours in his proceedings, whose beginnings are so wicked and detestable, wisely comparing things past, with those to come. Otherwise you who are under our subjection, of our empire as well as our other dominions, will feel and perceive (both of my chief enemy and persecutor, and also of the princes who are his favorers and adherents) what revenge by the sword Frederick Augustus shall take upon them, God so permitting."

The bishops and prelates, with one assent supported the emperor, and scorned the pope's mandates and writs, and also the curses and threats of Albert his legate. They accused, reproved, and greatly blamed his temerity, and also the tyranny which he usurped

[183] A.D. 1193-1250.

against the churches of Germany, and especially against the good emperor; that without his consent he dared be so bold as to meddle in churches committed to the emperor's government, against the old and ancient customs; that he had excommunicated the emperor without just cause; that he had condemned the emperor's faithful subjects as enemies to the church, for standing with their liege and sovereign prince (which allegiance they might not

violate without horrible iniquity), and so he had sought to disquiet them likewise in their charges and administrations; and that in quarrel, he had also given such defiance to the emperor. They accused and condemned Albert (the pope's legate) as a most impudent impostor, and as a most pestiferous botch (embarrassment) and sore of the Christian commonwealth. They give him to the devil ^{1Cor 5-5} as a ruinous enemy of the church, as well as of his own natural country. And further, they think him worthy to have his reward with the rest of the pope's pursuivants, being one of the most wicked inventors and devisers of mischief that were in all of Germany. This done, they informed the emperor of it by their letters. And further, they notified all the princes of Germany (especially those which were of the pope's faction or rebellion, and favorers of Albert), that they should take heed and beware in any case of his subtle deceits and pernicious deceivable allurements, and that they should not assist the pope against the emperor.

While these things were thus at work in Germany, Frederick came to Etruria. After he had allayed certain insurrections there, he went from there to Pisa, where he was received and welcomed with great amity and honor. This city was always faithful to the emperors of Germany. Frederick then getting on his side the Lucenses, the Volaterans, the Genenses, the Aretines, and several other cities in Etruria, he came to Viterbium, which sided with him.

When the pope understood that Frederick was come to Viterbium he was very heavy, for he feared he would come to Rome, the good-will of which city the pope much mistrusted. He therefore caused a supplication to be drawn up, portraying the heads of Peter and Paul, and with a sharp and disrespectful oration he much defaced the emperor, promising everlasting life and the badge of the cross to as many as would arm themselves and fight against the emperor, as against the most wicked enemy of God and the church. Now when the emperor, marching somewhat near the gates of Rome, he beheld those whom the pope had stirred up against him with his goodly spectacle of St. Peter and St. Paul, and with his alluring oration. They were marked with the badge of the cross, and were coming out in battle against him. Frederick disdained being considered the enemy of the church, when he had been so beneficial to it. He made a fierce charge upon them, and soon put them to flight. As many as he captured (cutting off that badge from them), he caused to be hanged.

After this, when the emperor had greatly afflicted by battle, those who conspired with the pope against him, he marched to vanquish the rest of his enemies in Italy, and besieged Asculinum. Understanding what the pope's assistants had done with the princes electors, and other princes of Germany, he wrote letters to them. In them he first showed how those disrespectful and spiteful words which the pope blustered out against him, lighted upon the pope himself; and how the bishops of Rome not only seek to bring emperors, kings, and princes under their obedience, but also seek to be honored as gods, and say that they cannot err, nor be subject or bound to any religion. And further, like princes, these men command (under pain of cursing) that men believe everything they say, however great a lie it is. It goes so far, that by this covetousness of the pope's, all things go backward, and the whole commonwealth is subverted. Nor can any enemy be found more hurtful or perilous to the church of God than the pope. Frederick wrote to them further, that seeing their good wills and actions towards him, he would, with all the power and ability that God had given him, endeavor that the one who in the likeness of the shepherd of the flock, and the servant of Christ, and chief prelate in the church, shows himself so very much a wolf, a persecutor and tyrant, may be removed from that place, and that a true and careful shepherd of God's flock may be appointed in the church. Therefore he exhorts them, that if they desire the safety and preservation of the whole state of the commonwealth and empire, that they further his

purpose and proceedings, lest they too fall into the same snare of servitude with the bishop of Rome.

When the pope, as said before, would not hear the emperor's legates who came to treat for peace, the pope called to a council at Rome, all those prelates out of Italy, France and England, that he thought would favor him and his proceedings. So that thereby, as his last strategy and only refuge, he might deprive Frederick of his empire by their help, as an utter enemy to God and to the church. Frederick having knowledge of all these things, he determined to prevent their passage to Rome, by sea as well as by land. So that all the passages by land being now stopped and prevented, he commanded his son Henry with certain galleys, to go and keep the coasts of Sardinia; from there, go to Pisa and rig out a navy with the Pisans to meet with those who might come to aid the pope at Rome. The pope's champions understanding that they could not safely repair to Rome by land, procured forty galleys and ships out of Genoa to sail for their defense. They thought that if they should happen to meet with any of the emperor's ships or galleys, they would be able to make their part good, and repulse them. Encius in like manner, and Hugolinus (the captain and admiral of the Pisan navy for the emperor) launched forth to sea with forty ships and galleys. They met with the Genoese ships, and fiercely began to grapple with them and board them. In this fight at length three of the Genoese ships were sunk, with all the riches and treasure in them. In these ships, three legates of the popes were taken, of whom there were two cardinals, all cruel enemies against the emperor, and many other prelates. Besides these, there were a great number of legates and procurators of cities, innumerable monks and priests, plus 6000 soldiers, with others.

Pandolph Colonutius, in describing the circumstances of the great loss and misfortune of these champions of the pope by sea, declares that besides the great spoil and booty, they also found many writings and letters against Frederick, which had greatly helped them in the defense of those causes in which they had labored against him.

News of this was brought to the emperor not long after, who immediately led his army towards Rome. On the way, he reconciled the city of Pisa to the cause. But the coastal city of Fanum (Fano), because the townsmen had shut their gates and would not allow the emperor to come in, he took by force and destroyed it. The emperor, seeing that he do no good with the pope either by petition or lawful excuse, thought by his sudden coming there, and the fear of imminent peril, the pope might be brought to abandon his pertinacity. Even though the emperor was too strong for the pope, yet because he regarded nothing more than the public tranquility of the empire, and that he might then take the Tartar wars in hand, he did not refuse to treat for peace, as if he had been much the pope's inferior in force and fortune.

While this ruffle was going on between the emperor and the pope, the son of the Tartars' emperor invaded the borders adjoining to him. There he won Roxolanum, Bodolium, Mudanum, with many other cities, towns, and villages. He destroyed, wasted and burned the countries all about, killing and slaying man, woman, and child, sparing none of any sex or age. At this sudden invasion, and the people being in such fear and perplexity — having no city, no refuge, nor any aid to stand in their defense — were obliged to leave all that they had. They dispersed themselves into the woods, and fled into marshes and mountains, or wherever any succor offered itself to them.

The emperor thought it requisite that this mischief should be remedied and prevented with all speed. But his great enemy the pope was the only hindrance. For when he saw and perceived that he himself could do no good, and only labored in vain in seeking peace with the pope, he commanded Boiemus and Boius, to entreat and persuade with him.

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And (considering the imminent peril to the whole state of Christendom, that was likely to ensue because of such civil dissension) he thought that the pope would take up and conclude a peace, and mitigate somewhat his fierce and wrathful mood. But when he saw further, that neither by that means of entreaty nor by any other, would the pope desist from his stubborn and malicious purpose, he wrote to the king of Hungary. He said that he was right sorry and greatly lamented their miserable state, and that he much desired to relieve the need and necessity that he and all the rest stood in. But that he could not redress it, nor be of any assistance to him, because as the bishop of Rome refused all entreaties of peace, he could not depart from Italy without great peril to himself, lest by the pope's mischievous imaginations, he would be in peril of losing all at home. This was the loving zeal and affection of the pope and his adherents in this time of calamity towards the Christian state and commonwealth. The pope would rather bend his force, and revenge his malice upon this good and Christian emperor, than either himself withstand, or suffer and permit by any profitable peace, that this most bloody and cruel Tartar should be restrained from so great a havoc, spoil, and slaughter of Christian men. And yet truly, of all others, these men should have the greatest regard for Christian preservation, and should think this must have the supremacy! What else is this, if not manifest mockery and deceiving of the people?

When Frederick saw there was no other remedy, and that he labored in vain to have peace with the pope, he prosecuted this war against the pope to the uttermost. When he had gotten Tudertum, he destroyed the towns of Geminum and Narvia, and gave the spoil to his soldiers. He gently received the surrender of Siburnium, and wasted all the country around Rome. The pope, dismayed and troubled, and seeing that things did not prosper so well with him and against the emperor as he wished, he died for very anger.

In Gregory's stead, succeeded Celestine IV. The eighteenth day after he was made pope, he died. When the cardinals were all assembled again, they made Sinibald pope, whom they called Innocent IV. When Frederick was informed of his election, he was well pleased. And as he had been his friend in all this troubled time, he hoped the Christian commonwealth might now be brought to much peace and concord.

The legates of Frederick, with the assistance of Baldwin, the emperor of Constantinople, labored very diligently to conclude the promise of peace between Frederick and the pope. To be brief, every man was in good hope, and looked for no less. But the matter fell out far otherwise, and contrary to all their expectations. For the pope was secretly set upon, and encouraged by the cardinals and others, *against* Frederick. While the emperor's legates waited for the answer from the pope, Rainerus, the cardinal, went secretly to Viterbium with a number of soldiers, and took the town.

The emperor, hearing of this, mustered his bands, and with a sufficient force entered the pope's territory to recover Viterbium. From thence he sent ambassadors to Rome, and with them also the emperor of Constantinople, and the earl of Toulouse, who he thought were able to do much with the pope in the prosecuting of this peace. But when the legates perceived no conclusion of peace was purposed, they began to despair of the matter; and so sent word to the emperor. The emperor yet doubted not, but if he might himself speak with the pope, he should, upon reasonable conditions, accord with him; so by his legates and letters, he desired him to appoint a place where the emperor might resort to him. The pope seemed to be contented, and appointed a day at Fescennia, where they would talk together. The pope promised that he would be there before him, and await the emperor's coming. But the pope had made a confederacy with the French king against Frederick. And when he

knew the three galleys previously hired were ready, he secretly took ship in the night, and came to Genoa, and from there to Lyons in France, where, calling a council, with a loud voice he summoned Frederick. And appointing him a day, he commanded him to come there personally to plead his cause.

Frederick's sudden departure from Italy made a plain demonstration that there had been no conclusion of a peace. And yet this most modest emperor, using the innocency and uprightness of his cause — as one who is most desirous of peace and Christian concord — sent the patriarch of Antioch, the bishop of Panormia, and Thadeus Suessanus. the president of his court (a most skillful and prudent civilian) to the Council of Lyons. They signified to them that the emperor would be there for the defense of his own cause; and as the day was very short, required a more convenient time for him to repair there. The emperor also entreated that he might postpone the day of hearing till he might conveniently travel there. But the pope would not give so much as three days space, in which time the ambassadors assured them of the emperor's presence. When the day had come, the pope, with his confederates beside him, took it upon himself to be both adversary and judge. He condemned the emperor in his absence — against God's law, against Christian doctrine, against both the precept of the law of nature and reason, against the rule of equity, against the constitutions of emperors and also the decrees of the empire, without any observation of the law, or granting dilatory days, without proof of any crime, nor allowing the emperor's cause to be pleaded, nor hearing what might be answered in this. What more wicked sentence was ever pronounced? What more cruel act could be committed, considering the person? Or, what more brutish thing could have been imagined or devised?

When the emperor heard of this cruel and tyrannical sentence of the pope, passed and pronounced against him, he thought it good, by his letters, to let all Christian princes and potentates understand what injurious and manifold displeasure he had sustained by the four preceding popes in their times, as well as the cruelty and tyranny of this particular pope, in pronouncing the sentence of judgment and condemnation against him, passing the bounds both of justice, equity, and reason.

The pope used this policy to disturb Germany and the whole empire; and to utterly destroy and subvert them. And thus Germany was divided, some taking part with Frederick the emperor; some with those who would, by the pope's appointment, be the electors of the new emperor. And thus the public peace and quiet was broken and all together in tumult.

By these CIVIL WARS, Germany suffered no little calamity. In every place there was manslaughter and murder; the countryside despoiled; the towns and villages set on fire and burnt; the churches and temples in which the farmers had put their goods and substance, violated and robbed; houses pulled down, the goods divided, and every man's cattle driven away. To conclude, in this turmoil and contention of deposing and choosing another emperor, in this faction of princes, and this liberty of wearing armor; in this license of hurting and sinning — the impudent boldness of private soldiers, and especially of those who were horsemen, then counted as the better sort of soldiers — was so great, and their unbridled and insatiable desire in robbing, spoiling and taking booties, catching and snatching all that came to hand, was so much, that nothing could be sure and safe that any good man might enjoy.

Otto Boius, however, kept his promise and faith which he had pledged before to the emperor Frederick and Conrad his son. Whereupon Philip Javavensis, Albert and others calling a council at Mildorsus by the pope's commandment, sent for Otto, to whom they opened the pope's pleasure and commandment. To which, when he had heard all of it, Otto answered,

“I cannot marvel enough at some of you, that before now you persuaded me to leave and forsake the part I took with the bishop of Rome, whom you yourselves affirmed to be Antichrist, and that I should take part with the emperor, you yourselves will not keep your fidelity and promise made to those good princes.” And he said, “that he perceived in them a great inconstancy and levity, both in their words and deeds, who now call that wicked, unjust and violent wrong, that only recently they thought was equal, just, and right.”

[185] A.D. 1229-1250.

He said further, that “they were overcome with pleasures, corrupted with superfluity, won with bribes, gaping for honor and estimation; and that they neither regarded honesty, godliness, nor their duty and office; but studied how to make dissension and commotions, and longed after war and bloody battle.”

He then said that for his part he would obey God and his prince, to whom he had sworn fidelity; and that he did not at all esteem the feigned holiness and detestable practices of such prelates. He said he believed in Christ, and would trust to his mercy; and he believed how those whom they cursed and gave to the devil, were in the greatest favor with God. However, those prelates took in good part this expostulation of his, and seemed to bear Otto no malice or grudge for what he had said, but only to be desirous of peace and unity. Yet not long after, Otto was cursed as black as all the rest, and counted as bad as the worst.

Albert, the pope’s champion, now conceived a mischievous device against Conrad Caesar, the emperor’s son. Albert with certain of his confederates, by means of Ulric, a chief officer of the monks, came in the dead of night into the chamber where the Caesar with a few others about him was lying down. Falling upon them, they took some, and slew others. Finding no other body in the chamber or lodging, they thought that Caesar had been slain among the rest. But hearing the noise, Caesar had forsaken his bed, and hidden himself under a bench, and so he escaped their hands. The next day he indicted the bishop and his companions, and also the monk’s bailiff for treason, and seized all the goods of the house. But at the suit of the guiltless monks, he released all to them again, levying a of fine one hundred pounds. Ulric lost his office, and Albert, to escape punishment, donned the habit of a monk. Conrad Hochenfouseus, who was the murderer of these men, though he escaped the punishment of man’s hand, yet he did not escape the vengeance of God. For as he was riding abroad in the daytime, he was suddenly struck with a thunderbolt and died.

During all this busy and contentious time, it may well be gathered that Frederick was not still, but had his hands full suppressing these rebellious Popish tumults. And having strictly executed those who had conspired against his person, he came to Cremona. He took with him the wisest, most virtuous, and best learned men that there were, was thinking (with them) to go himself to Lyons to the pope, and there discuss the sentence, and also the conclusion of some peace, if he might by any means do that. And when all things were prepared and ready, he took the journey in hand. When he was within three days’ journey of Lyons, he was notified that the city of Parma was taken by the outlaws of various factions of the pope. When he understood this, and that the pope was the chief actor, he saw manifestly that it would little prevail to attempt any longer the thing he went for. At length, when he saw no other remedy, he put away from him all hope of peace. He prepared himself for the wars, with all his force and might. Thus altering his purpose and journey, he took the straightest way into Lombardy, and with an army of 60,000 men he besieged Parma. In the beginning all things prospered well with Frederick, and had good success; for he sharply repelled the charges of those who defended the city of Parma. Further, Robert Castilion, who was the emperor’s lieutenant in Picenum near Auximum, discomfited the pope’s army,

and slew more than 4000 of them, and took prisoner many who were of the confederate cities. But this good success and prosperous fortune did not last long. For when Frederick, to recreate himself (as he seldom had his health) rode about the fields with some of his horsemen to hawk and hunt, many of the soldiers wandered and ranged unarmed about the fields. The soldiers in Parma, having this opportunity, entered the emperor's camp with all possible force and speed. Not being strongly fenced, nor having gates to shut against them, this was easy enough to do. When they had killed and slain a great number of the emperor's soldiers, and burnt and destroyed the camp, they came back to Parma.

After this, in another conflict in Picenum, Richard defeated the pope's soldiers, and slew their captain Hugolinus, besides 2000 others slain or taken prisoner. When Frederick had again gathered, and newly mustered his bands at Dominum, he marched to Cremona; and notwithstanding that he understood the good success and victory that Encius had at Rhegium, he perceived the defection from him of most of Lombardy. So he determined to take his journey into Apulia. And when he had levied a strong and sufficient army there, he purposed to make his speedy return into Lombardy.

News was brought to him that Encius his son (coming to aid the Mutinenses against the Bononians) was taken prisoner two miles from Mutina; and also that in his absence, the pope's captains, with their bands and garrisons, went throughout Lombardy, Emilia, Flamminia, and Etruria, to stir up and procure the cities to revolt from the obedience of the emperor. The pope worked this partly by subtle policies, and partly by force and sinister means, to bring them to his purpose. Frederick determined, with all the force and power he might procure by any means, to begin afresh, and prosecute this war to the utmost. Nor was it to be doubted that he would have wrought some marvellous exploit and great attempt, but that he was prevented by unlooked-for death. When he fell into this ague (fever), which led to his death, he made and ordained his last testament. When he had given and appointed to Conrad and his other children, the great and innumerable mass of money which he had collected and levied for the maintenance of his wars, and godly purpose (as it is called), and had also given all his kingdoms and dominions (to each one according to their ages and years) he departed this wretched and miserable world.

Pandolph writes that Frederick was very willing to die, and as they made certain report to him who were present at his death, his mind was altogether set and bent on heavenly joy and felicity. He died in A.D. 1250, the 13th of December, in his fifty-seventh year of life, and thirty-seventh year of his reign.

Frederick had no equal in martial affairs; and in warlike policies, none could be compared to him among all the princes of that age. He was a wise and skillful soldier, a great endurer of painful labors, most bold in the greatest perils, prudent in foresight, industrious in all his doings, prompt and nimble about what he took in hand, and in adversity he was most stout and courageous. But as in this corruption of nature, there are few who attain perfection, neither is there any prince of such government and godly institution, both in life and doctrine, as is required of them. So neither was Frederick without his fault and human frailty, for the writers impute to him some faults with which he was stained and spotted.

Faithful Teachers in an Age of Corruption.

As you have heard of the iniquity and raging pride of the popish church against the lawful emperor, so now you will hear how God begins to resist and withstand the corruption of that church, by stirring up certain faithful teachers in sundry countries; such as in Swabia (about

A.D. 1240), where many preachers mentioned in *Urspergensis*,²⁰⁵ and in Crantzius (lib. viii. cap. 16 and 18),²⁰⁶ preached against the pope. These preachers (as Crantzius says) ringing the bells, and calling together the barons in Hallis of Swabia, preached that the pope was a heretic, and that his bishops and prelates were Simoniacs and heretics; and that the inferior priests and prelates had no authority to bind and loose, but were all deceivers. That no pope, bishop, or priest could restrain men from their duty of serving and worshipping God; and therefore such cities or countries as were then under the pope's curse, might lawfully resort to receiving the sacraments as well as before. That friars, both Dominican and Franciscan, subverted the church with their preaching; and that the indulgence of the pope was of no value. And thus much I thought to recite here, by which it may appear how resisting the pope's usurped power and corrupt doctrine is nothing new in these days [*i.e.*, 1500s].

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Not long after this, ARNOLD DE NOVA VILLA rose up, a Spaniard, a famously learned and great writer (A.D. 1250), whom the pope condemned as a heretic for holding and writing against the corrupt errors of the popish church. His teaching was that Satan had seduced the world from the truth of Christ Jesus; that the faith (which Christian men then were commonly taught) was such a faith as the devils had — meaning (as we now affirm) akin to what the papists teach as the historical faith; that most Christian people are led by the pope into hell. That all monks and nuns are void of charity and damned; that masses are not to be celebrated; and that they should not sacrifice for the dead.

Just as Arnold was condemned, so JOHN SEMECA, at the same time — the gloss-writer of the pope's decrees, and provost of Halberstat — was also excommunicated and deprived of his provostship, for resisting Pope Clement IV in gathering his exactions in Germany. And therefore he appealed from the pope to a general council, and had many great favorers on his side, till at last both the pope and he died.

Then followed the worthy and valiant champion of Christ, and adversary of antichrist, WILLIAM DE ST. AMORE (c. 1200-1272), a master of Paris, and chief ruler of that university. In his time he had no small ado writing against the friars and their hypocrisy, condemning their whole order. All the testimonies of Scripture that make against antichrist, he applied against the clergy of prelates, and the popish spirituality. He compiled many worthy works in which, though he uttered nothing but truth, he was condemned by antichrist as a heretic, exiled, and his books burnt.

In William's days, there was a most detestable and blasphemous book published by the friars, which they called "The Everlasting Gospel," or "The Gospel of the Holy Spirit." In this book were contained many abominable errors of the friars, so that the gospel of Jesus Christ was utterly defaced — which this book said was not to be compared with this Everlasting Gospel, no more than the shell is to be compared with the kernel, than darkness to light, etc. Moreover, the gospel of Christ (it said) should be preached no longer than fifty years, and then this "Everlasting Gospel" should rule the church, etc. Also, that whatever was in the whole bible, was likewise contained in this new gospel. At length, this friars' gospel was accused to the pope, and six persons were chosen to peruse and judge the book. Among them was this William, who mightily impeached this pestiferous and devilish book. These

²⁰⁵ Burchard of Ursperg, also called Burchard of Biberach (c.1177–1230) was a German priest and chronicler. His *Ursperger Chronicle* (or *Chronicon Urspergensis*) is the most important universal history of the late Staufer era.

²⁰⁶ Crantzius (1448-1517), or Albert Krantz or Albertus Crantzius, was a German historian and theologian. He is best known for his work "Wandalia," published in Cologne in 1519.

six, after perusing the book, were sent to Rome. The friars likewise sent their messenger. There they were refuted, and the book condemned. But the pope commanded that the book was not to be condemned publicly, but privately, wishing to preserve the estimation of the religious orders, as his own chief champions.

Among the others of that age, who withstood the bishop of Rome and his antichristian errors, was one LAWRENCE, an Englishman, and master of Paris; another was PETER JOHN, a Minorite. Lawrence was about the year A.D. 1260. In his teaching, preaching, and writing, he stoutly defended William de St. Amore against the friars. He also wrote other things in which, by various proofs and testimonies, he argued that antichrist's coming was not far off. The other, Peter John, was about the year A.D. 1290. He taught and maintained many things against the pope, proving that he was antichrist, and that the synagogue of Rome was Babylon.

To these may be added ROBERT GALLUS, born of noble parentage, who for devotion's sake was made a Dominican friar about the year A.D. 1290. This man calls the pope an idol, who having eyes sees not, nor desires to see the abominations of his people, nor the excessive enormity of their licentiousness, but only to see to the heaping up of his own treasure.

The Account of Robert Grossthead, Bishop of Lincoln.

It is time that we return to our own country again. Following the course of time, we will now add the bishop of Lincoln, named Robert Grossthead (or Grosseteste, c. 1170-1253), a man famously learned in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and in all liberal sciences. His works and sermons are still extant. He was a man of excellent wisdom, of profound doctrine, and an example of all virtue. He set forth many books concerning philosophy. Afterward, being doctor in divinity, he drew out several treatises from the Hebrew glosses, and translated various works out of the Greek. Many other works and volumes besides were written by Grossthead.

This godly and learned bishop, after many conflicts sustained against the bishop of Rome, after great labor and trouble of life, at length finished his course, A.D. 1253. Matthew Paris writes thus of his decease, (fol. 278); —

“Out of the prison and banishment of this world (which he never loved) was taken the holy bishop of Lincoln, Robert; who was an open reprover of the pope and of the king, a rebuker of the prelates, a corrector of the monks, a director of the priests, an instructor of the clerics, a favorer of scholars, a preacher to the people, a persecutor of the incontinent, a diligent searcher of the Scripture, a mallet against the Romans, and a contemner of their doings,” etc.

What a mallet he was to the Romans will better appear in the sequel. Pope Innocent IV had a certain cousin or nephew (so popes customarily called their sons) named Frederick. Still being young and under years, Innocent would prefer him to be a canon or prebendary in the church of Lincoln, in Robert's time, who was bishop of that church; and so he directed letters to certain men here in England for the execution of it.

It is no great wonder if this godly bishop Robert Grossthead was offended by these letters; he deserves a double commendation, in that he was so firm and constant in standing against the pope, as his answer to the pope indicates. In it he denounces the pope's attempt to appoint someone who would not be a true pastor, saying among other things: —

“This would be a great apostasy, corruption, and abuse of the seat and fulness of power, and an utter separation from the glorious throne of our Lord Jesus Christ, and a near approach to the two principal princes of darkness, sitting in the chair of pestilence, prepared for the pains

of hell (*i.e.* Lucifer and antichrist). Neither can any man, who is faithful to the see, obey with sincere and unspotted conscience such precepts and commandments, or other such attempts, even though proceeding from the high order of angels themselves, but rather ought with all their strength to withstand and rebel against them. Wherefore, my reverend lord, I, like an obedient child, upon my bounden duty of obedience and fidelity which I owe to the holy and apostolic see, and partly for love of unity in the body of Christ, do not obey but withstand and utterly rebel against these things contained in the letter, and which especially urge and tend to the aforesaid wickedness, so abominable to the Lord Jesus Christ, so repugnant to the holiness of the holy apostolic see, and so contrary to the unity of the catholic faith.”

Then it follows, in the history both of Matthew Paris, and of Florilegus,²⁰⁷ in these words: —

“That when this epistle came to the knowledge of the pope, fuming and fretting with anger and indignation, he answered with a fierce look and proud mind, saying, What old dotting frantic wretch is this, to so boldly and rashly judge my doings? By St. Peter and Paul, were it not but that we are restrained by our own clemency and good nature, we would hurl him down to such confusion that we would make him a fable, a gazing stock, an example and wonderment to all the world. For is the king of England not our vassal? and, to say more, our errand-boy or page, who may at our pleasure and beck both hamper him, imprison him, and put him to utter shame? When the pope in his great fury and rage had uttered this among his brethren the cardinals, they were scarcely able to appease his furious rage.”

“Not long after this, this reverend and godly Robert, bishop of Lincoln, fell grievously sick, and within a few days departed. During his sickness he called to him a certain friar of the preaching order, a man expert and cunning in both medicine and divinity, partly to receive from him some comfort of his body, and partly to confer with him in spiritual matters.

[187] A.D. 1250-1260.

“Thus on a certain day, the bishop reciting the doings of the pope, rebuked and reprehended severely the preaching friars, and also the other order of the minors. The vehemency of his disease more and more increasing, and because the nights were somewhat longer, the third night before his departure, the bishop, feeling his infirmity growing, directed certain of his clergy to be called to him, so that he might be refreshed with some conference or communication with them. To them the bishop — mourning and lamenting in his mind for the loss of souls — reproved such detestable enormities of the court of Rome, such as all kinds of avarice, the usury, the simony, the extortion, all kinds of filthiness, gluttony, and their sumptuous apparel in that court. Afterwards he went about charging more, how the court of Rome (the pope), like a gulf, was never satisfied, ever gaping so wide that the flood of Jordan might run into his mouth, aspired how to possess himself of the goods of those who die intestate, and of legacies bequeathed without form of law; and how, in order to licentiously to bring this to pass, they used to join the king, as a partaker with them in their spoils, extortions, and robbing. ‘Nor,’ he says, ‘will the church be delivered from the servitude of Egypt, except by violence and force, and the bloody sword. Although these are still but light matters, shortly greater and more grievous things than these will be seen.’ At the end of this, which he could scarcely utter without sighing, sobbing, and weeping, his tongue and breath began to fail, and so his voice being stopped, he made an end of both his speech and life. (Matth. Paris.)

You have heard it often complained of, how the pope violently encroached upon the church of England, in giving benefices and prebends to his Italians and strangers, to the great damage and ruin of Christ’s flock. This injury could by no lawful and gentle means be reformed. So about this time it was somewhat bridled by means of another kind. In the

²⁰⁷ Foxe may be referring to the "Florilegium," a compilation of excerpts from other historical writings.

reign of this king (Henry III), the bishop of London, named Fulco, had given a certain prebend, in the church of St. Paul, to one Rustand, the pope's messenger here in England, who died shortly after. The pope immediately conferred the prebend on one of his specials, a stranger like the other was. About the same instant, it happened that the bishop of London also died, by which the vacant bishopric fell into the king's hands. Upon hearing of the death of Rustand, the king gave the prebendship to one John Crakehale, who, with all solemnity, took his installation, not knowing as yet that it was already bestowed by the pope on another. Not long after, this being broadcast at Rome, immediately a proctor comes down with the pope's letters, to receive collation to the benefice, in which John Crakehale had already been installed by the king's donation.

This matter coming before Boniface, archbishop of Canterbury, who inquired and searched out which donation was first. And finding it was the pope's grant, he pronounced sentence with the pope against the king. So that in conclusion, the Roman cleric had the advantage of the benefice, even though the other had long enjoyed the possession. Thus the pope's man being preferred, and the Englishman excluded — after being invested and installed, and thinking himself in sure possession, Crakehale attempted to enter the chapter-house. But he was not permitted, whereupon the pope's clerk, giving way to force and number, went to the archbishop to complain. This being known, certain monks pursued the clerk, and one in the thickness of the throng, who was never after known, suddenly rushed upon him, and cut off his head. This heinous murder being famed abroad, a strict inquiry was made; but the murderer could not be known. Although great suspicion was laid upon Crakehale, the king's chaplain, no proof could be brought against him. But most men thought this bloody act was done by certain ruffians in the city or the court, who disdained that Romans should be so enriched with Englishmen's livings. Because they saw the church and realm of England in such subjection, and so trodden down by the Romans and the pope's messengers, they thought by such means to prevent them from coming into this land so much.

Besides many other matters, I will lightly touch on the conflict — not between the frogs and the mice, which Homer writes of ²⁰⁸ — but the mighty pitched field fought in A.D. 1259, between the young students and scholars of the university of Oxford. It had no other occasion but the difference of the country where they were born. For the northerns joining with the Welsh to test their manhood against the southerners, fell on them with their ensigns and warlike array, so that in the end, several on both sides were slain. This heavy and bloody conflict increased among them, and the end was that the northern lads with the Welsh had the victory. After fury and fiery fierceness had done what it could, the victors thinking partly of what they had done, partly of how it would be taken by the higher powers, and fearing punishment, took counsel together. They offered to king Henry 4000 marks, to Edward his son 300, and to the queen 200, to be released from all punishment. But the king answered that he set a higher value on the life of one true subject than on all they offered, and would not receive the money. The king, however, then being occupied in great affairs and wars, and partly involved in discord at home with his nobles, had no leisure to attend to the correction of these university men. (Matth. Paris.)

Contest between Henry III and the Barons – 1260.

What follows concerning the commotion between the king and the nobles is lamentable, and it contains a fruitful example, both for princes and subjects, of what mischief grows in the commonwealth when the prince does not regard offending his subjects, and when the

²⁰⁸ The "Battle of the Frogs and Mice," is a comic epic that parodies Homer's *Iliad*, perhaps written by Pigres.

subjects forget the office of Christian patience in suffering the injuries of their princes. Therefore, I thought it not unprofitable to occupy the reader a little in perusing this lamentable matter.

King Henry married Elenor, daughter of the earl of Provence, a foreigner, by which a great door was opened for foreigners, not only to enter the land, but also to fill the court. The king seemed to incline his favor more toward them, advancing them to greater preferment, than his own English lords, which was no little grievance to them. The king also had several brothers by his mother Isabel, who was a foreigner, and whom he supported with great livings and possessions, and large pensions. This was another heart-sore and hindrance to his nobles. Over and besides this, there were unreasonable collections of money from time to time, levied by the king, on the spirituality as well as on the laity. Because of all these collections, the commonwealth of the realm was utterly stripped, to the great impoverishment of the English.

In the year 1260, a great number of aliens resorted to England, and had the management of all the principal matters of the realm under the king, which not a little troubled the nobility of England. So that Simon Montfort, earl of Leicester, offering to risk death for the liberties of the realm, conferred with other lords and barons on the matter. Then they came to the king with a humble sort of petition, declared how his entire realm and his own affairs were altogether disposed by the hands and according to the wills of strangers, which was neither profitable to him, nor to the public welfare. For his treasures being wasted, and himself in great debt, he was not able to satisfy the provision of his own house. And now therefore, they said, if your highness will please to be informed by our advice, and to commit your house to the guiding and government of your own faithful and natural subjects, we will take upon us to discharge your whole debt within one year, out of our own proper goods and revenues, so as that within five years we may repay ourselves.

To these words so lovingly declared — so humbly pretended — so heartily and freely offered, the king as willingly condescended. He assigned to them both the day and place where to confer and to deliberate further on the matter. This would be at Oxford the fifteenth day after Easter. At this day and place all the states and lords, with the bishops of the realm, were summoned to appear. An oath was taken there, first by the king himself, then by the lords, that whatever decrees or laws should be provided in the said assembly, to the profit of the king and of the realm, they would be universally be kept and observed to the honor of God, and utility of his church, and wealth of the realm.

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Besides these lords and the king, there were also nine bishops, who swearing to the same, would excommunicate all those who might withstand the provisions made there — the king holding a burning taper in his hand, and the lords openly promising to rise with all their force against all who would stand against these provisions. In this assembly it was enacted, ordained, and established, among various other provisions, that all strangers and aliens of whatever estate or condition, would immediately leave the realm on pain of death; that if any held [estates] from the king in whole or in part, and should die (while his heir was under age), the wardship of the heir should belong to the king.

Moreover, it was there decreed, that the wool of England should be wrought only within the realm, nor would it be exported to foreigners; that no man should wear any cloth but that which was wrought and made within the realm; that garments too sumptuous should not be

imported nor worn; and that all excessive and prodigal expenses, wasted upon pleasure and superfluity, should be avoided by all persons.

Many other laws and decrees were ordained in this assembly which lasted fifteen days.

The King Absolved by the Pope From His Oath Made at Oxford.

After the promulgation of the laws, many things displeased the king, and he began to repent of his oath. But because he could not at that time choose otherwise, he dissembled for a season. The following year (A.D. 1261), the king sent to the pope, praying both for himself and his son Edward, to be released from their oath made at Oxford. This absolution being easily obtained (or rather bought at the pope's hands) the king stepped back from all that was previously concluded, called another parliament at Oxford. There, before the lords and nobles, he declared how in the late Council of Oxford they had agreed on certain measures for the common utility of the realm of the king, as they pretended, for increasing his treasure and diminishing his debt. And thereupon they bound themselves with an oath, causing himself and his son Edward to be bound to it. But now they, contrary to the covenant they made, did not seek so much the profit of him and of the realm, as their own. They did not take him as their lord, but went about to bring him under their subjection. And moreover, his treasure greatly decreasing, his debts increasing, and his princely liberality cut short and trodden under foot, they should not marvel if he would no longer be ruled by their counsel, but would provide himself with some other remedy. Moreover, as to the oath with which he and his son stood bound to them, he had already sent to Rome, and had obtained absolution and dispensation of the same, both for him, and his son Edward, and for all others who would take his part. Therefore he required of them to be restored again to that state and condition he had enjoyed in times past.

To this, the nobility answered on the other side, in the number of whom was Simon Montfort earl of Leicester, Richard Clare earl of Gloucester, with many more. Their answer to the king was, "that the provisions made at the council at Oxford, to which they were sworn, they would hold, defend, and maintain to their lives' end." All this while, the pope's absolution for the king, although it was granted and obtained at Rome, yet it was not brought down in solemn writing.

At length, the writing of the king's absolution being brought from Rome, the king soon commanded it to be published throughout the realm. And so he applied to the French king and other strangers for help. Moreover, he seized all his castles into his own hand, rejecting the counsel of the lords, to whose custody they were committed before. He also removed the former officers, such as justices, the chancellor, with others installed before by the lords, and appointed new ones in their stead.

The following year (1263), the barons of England, confederated themselves together, for maintaining the statutes and laws of Oxford, and partly moved by their old dislike conceived against the foreigners, joined all their forces, and attacked the foreigners who were around the king. They wasted and spoiled their goods and manors, whether they were ecclesiastical or temporal persons. Because of this it came to pass, that a great number of foreigners, especially monks and rich priests, were urged to such extremity, that they were glad to flee the land.

In the meantime, the king then staying in the Tower, and seeing most of his nobles and commoners, with the Londoners set against him, agreed to a peace with the barons, and was content to assent again to the ordinances and provisions of Oxford, even though the queen, by all means possible, went about persuading the king not to assent to it. So that, as she was

endeavoring to cross by barge from the Tower to Windsor, the Londoners standing on the bridge with their exclamations, cursing and throwing stones and dirt at her, interrupted her course, forcing her to return to the Tower again.

When this contention was conveyed to the French king, and he decided against the barons, it wrought great indignation in their hearts; so they hastened home to defend themselves with all their strength and power. The king called his council together at Oxford, from where he excluded the university of students for a season. Hearing that the barons were assembled in a great number at Northampton, he went there with his host, and with his banners displayed. The king commanded the barons who were within, to yield the city to him, or he would immediately destroy them. But boldly and with one mind they answered that they would not obey the king's will, but would rather defend themselves and the city, if need be, even to the death. When the noblemen on the king's side heard of this, they sent word back that they would at least come to the wall of the city to speak to the king, if by any means peace might be made. And suspecting no deceit, they came to the wall. But in the meantime, while matters were reasoned and addressed, the Lord Philip Basset, with picks and other instruments, undermined the wall of the city, and the wall fell down. A great plain was made, so that forty horsemen abreast might have gone through. The foreign monks were thought to be the workers of this subtlety, because they made way and entrance for those who came in. But when those who passed by saw this, and the king's banners were erected ready to enter in, a great howling was made. The noise of the people came to the ears of the barons, and they made speed to resist them, but it was all in vain, because they were already prevented by a great company of their enemies. But the clerics of the university of Oxford, (which university was transferred there by the barons' command) did the king's men more hurt than the barons, with their slings, long bows, and crossbows. For they had a banner by themselves, that was set up on high against the king. The king being greatly moved, swore upon his entering in, that they should all be hanged. When they heard this, many of them shaved their crowns, and those who were able ran away as fast as they could. When the king entered the city, many fled in their armor into the castle; others left their horse and armor, and ran into the churches; and a few were slain, and those were of the common people. But there was not much bloodshed, because all things were done suddenly. When the city at length was quieted, the king commanded his oath to be executed upon the clerics. But his counsellors said to him, "Far be this from you, O king, for the sons of your nobles, and of other great men of your kingdom, were gathered there together into the university. If you would cause them to be hanged or slain, even those who now take your part would rise up against you, not suffering, to the utmost of their powers, the blood of their sons and kinsfolk to be shed." And so the king was pacified, and his wrath against the clerics was appeased.

The king then went to Rochester, and raising the siege, he proceeded to Tunbridge, and from there he continued his journey to Winchester, where he received to peace the seamen of the haven towns. Three days after, he came to the town of Lewes, and was received into the abbey, and his son Edward into the castle.

[189] A.D. 1263

The barons now drew near to the king; for they were not far distant from Lewes. And the king's troops being without provision for their horses, it was commanded that they go out and find hay – when they were attacked by their enemies, and most of them killed. Then the barons, coming to the full plain, descended there, and girding and trimming their horses, they put on their armor. There Earl Simon created the earl of Gloucester, and Robert de

Vere, and many other new knights. This being done, he divided and distinguished his host into four separate divisions, and appointed noblemen to guide and govern every division. In the meantime the king's host came forth, preparing themselves for the field in three divisions, of which Edward the king's son led the first. Most part of the king's army were but young men, for the king did not think his barons would have come so near. Their armies being on both sides set in array and order, they exhorted one another on either side to fight valiantly. After they buckled together, the battle was great, and many horsemen were overthrown even in a moment. But by and by the king's son Edward, with his band, as a fierce young gentleman and valiant knight, fell upon his enemies with such force that he compelled them to recoil back a great way, so that many of the hindmost (thinking because of their giving way, that the foremost were slain) ran away. Straightway the Londoners, not knowing how the battle went, took to their heels. Edward pursued them with his band, killing them for the space of two or three miles; for he hated them because they had rebelled against his father, and disgraced his mother when she was in her barge on the Thames, as mentioned before.

While Prince Edward was thus in chase of the Londoners, the main division of the barons set upon the king's main division, of which the king of Almain, brother of King Henry, had the leading. He was soon discomfited, and he with his son Henry and other captains were taken prisoners. The reserve where the king himself fought was immediately attacked, and seeing his knights and soldiers on every side about him beaten down and slain, and his soldiers forsaking the field, the king retired into the abbey. Shutting up the gates, he had them strongly guarded with soldiers. The barons thus getting the field after a long fight, with many men slain on both sides, entered the town of Lewes.

In the meantime, when Prince Edward returned from chasing the Londoners, he came to the place where the bloody battle had been fought, and saw the great discomfiture and overthrow, which in his absence, had happened with great slaughter. His heart was much dismayed, and his countenance altered. Yet comforting and encouraging his knights and soldiers, of whom he had a valiant company, he marched in battle array toward the town. The barons came against him again with all their power. And thus was begun between them a fresh field and a new battle, and many men were slain on both sides. At length the earl de Warenia, with the king's two brothers, forsook the field and fled. After them, more than 700 chosen soldiers went, who were of their house and family. The same day they came to Pevensey, and there they took shipping over the sea. Also Hugh Bigot fled, with several others, and left the valiant prince fighting in the field, upon which he retreated to the town. When he did not find the king at the castle, he went from there to the abbey where the king was. In the meantime, the town was divided into parts, some fighting, some spoiling, some getting spoils. But when the barons had assembled some company, they assaulted the castle, thinking to rescue John Gifford and others whom the king's soldiers had taken prisoners and put there. But the soldiers within manfully defended it, and in throwing out balls of wild-fire for its defense, they set fire to part of the town. The barons then retired and left the castle, and purposed to set upon the abbey where the king and his son Prince Edward were. This too was set on fire by the assault; yet shortly it was recovered and quenched. Then Edward the king's son, perceiving the bold enterprise of the barons, prepared with the courageous knights and soldiers who still remained in the abbey, to issue out and make a new charge against them. But the barons, perceiving this, sent messengers to the king to entreat a truce for the day, and on the morrow talk and conclude a further peace between them — when Prince Edward was given as hostage for the king and his party, and Henry, son of the king of Almain, was given as hostage for his father.

In this year also (1263), Boniface, archbishop of Canterbury, a foreigner, had for some years been beyond the seas in disgrace with the king of England, on the occasion of some misdemeanor. The king, being of a relenting nature, though bearing much with the insolence of the clergymen, consulted with his nobles about the return of Boniface into England.

After much ado, we read that Boniface returned, and becoming more holy towards his death, he went with other bishops to the king, requesting that being mindful of the decay of his kingdom by ecclesiastical livings bestowed on foreigners, Boniface would hereafter prefer learned and godly men of the king's own nation. The king answered that he would willingly do it. "Therefore I think it fitting that you, who are yourself a foreigner and unlearned, and also my brother Ethelmer, bishop of Winchester, whom I have preferred to such dignities only for kindred's sake, should first give examples to others, and forsake your churches, and I will provide other learned men to serve in them." The king's answer so pierced Boniface, that he ever after lived a wearisome life in England. Therefore, perceiving himself to be disliked by the king and the people, Boniface desired to return to his country. Thereupon, first felling and selling the woods, letting out the archbishopric, taking great fines from his tenants, and collecting a great mass of money from the clergy of his province, he went with the curse of all men to Savoy, and soon after died.

After the death of Pope Urban, succeeded Pope Clement IV (A.D. 1265). Clement (as Nic. Trivet affirms) was first a married man, and had a wife and children, and was solicitor and counsellor to the French king. Then, after the death of his wife, he was bishop and afterwards archbishop of Narbon. At last he was made cardinal; and being sent as a legate by Pope Urban, he was in his absence elected pope by the cardinals.

Now, after all the tumults and broils of the king and his barons, to the vexation of the whole land, it was thought appropriate and necessary that all parties at variance should be reconciled. Whereupon peace was made between them. The king was now at leisure to reform the abuses of the church. As he considered that non-residence being a blameworthy abuse, required reformation, he wrote his mind to the bishop of Hereford for the redress of this. His letter, because it is memorable, and the matter contained in it is applicable to non-residents of our own time, we have inserted it here.

*A Letter of King Henry III to the Bishop of Hereford
concerning Non-residence.*

"The king to the bishop of Hereford sends greeting: Pastors or shepherds are set over flocks, so that by exercising themselves in watching over them day and night, they may know their own cattle by their look, bring the hunger-starved sheep into the meadows of fruitfulness, and the straying ones into one fold by the word of salvation and the rod of correction; and to endeavor that indissoluble unity may be kept. But there are some who damnably despising this doctrine, and not knowing how to discern their own cattle from others, take away the milk and the wool, not caring how the Lord's flock may be nourished. They gather up the temporal goods, and whoever perishes in their parish with famishment, or miscarries in manners, they do not regard. These men do not deserve to be called pastors, but rather hirelings. ^{Joh 10.12} And even in these days, when removing ourselves to the borders of Wales, to take order for the disposing of the garrisons of our realm, we have found this fault in your church of Hereford.

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“We report it with grief; for we have found there a church destitute of a pastor’s comfort, having neither bishop nor official, vicar nor dean, who may exercise any spiritual function and duty in it. But the church itself, which in times past usually flowed in delight (and had canons who attended upon service day and night, and who ought to exercise works of charity, have forsaken the church, and lead their lives in countries far from here), has put off her stole or robe of pleasure, and fallen to the ground, bewailing her widowhood; and there is none among all her friends and lovers who will comfort her. Truly, while we beheld this, and diligently considered it, pity moved our sympathy, and the sword of compassion inwardly wounded our heart sorely, so that we could no longer dissemble so great an injury done to our mother the church, nor pass by it uncorrected.

“Therefore we command and strictly charge you, that all occasions set aside, you endeavor to remove yourselves with all possible speed to your church, and there personally execute the pastoral charge committed to you in the same. Otherwise we would have you know for certain that if you do not take care to do this, we will wholly take into our own hands all the temporal goods, and whatever else belong to the barony of that church, which goods, it is certain our progenitors of godly devotion have bestowed upon it for the sake of spiritual exercise. And such goods and duties as we have previously commanded to be gathered and safely kept and turned to the profit and commodity of the same church, that cause now ceasing, we will seize. And we will no longer suffer that he reaps temporal things, who irreverently does not fear to withdraw and withhold spiritual things to which he is bound by office and duty; or that he receives any profits, who refuses to undergo and bear the burdens of that office. Witness the king at Hereford, the first of June, in the forty-eighth year of our reign.”

Prince Edward Escapes from Custody.— Battle of Evesham.

But leaving these affairs of the church, and churchmen, we will now enter into other troubles of the temporal state. You heard before about a pacification concluded between the king and his barons, when Prince Edward was given as hostage (A.D. 1264). But it came to pass among the lords and barons, that no such firm reconciliation was made as was likely to last long. For in the year 1265, the sons of Earl Simon did something that so displeased the earl of Gloucester, that he challenged Henry, the eldest son of Earl Simon Montfort. This affair, however, was settled without fighting. But afterwards the earl of Gloucester sent to the Lord Roger Mortimer, who always took the king’s part, desiring that they might talk together about the interests of the king. When they met, the earl of Gloucester showed him all that he purposed to do, and lamenting that he had so offended the king, said that he would now make amends, and would deliver Prince Edward. So they sent secretly to Robert the brother of the earl of Gloucester, who was near Earl Simon, and made him consent with them. And to work this more circumspectly, Roger Mortimer sent to Edward, the king’s son, a horse excelling all others in fleetness, to which he might safely trust, when he saw a convenient opportunity. After these things were thus contrived, Prince Edward desired leave from Earl Simon to prove his courser against such time as he might ride at the tilt. As soon as he had gotten leave, and had wearied several of their horses with galloping and ranging the field, he at last got upon that fleet horse which was sent for that purpose, and spying a servant on horseback coming toward him with two swords, he turned about to his keeper, and to others who were with him, saying, “My loving lords, thus long I have kept your company, and have been in your custody. And now, not purposing to use your company any longer, I commit you to God.” Quickly turning his horse about, he put it to the spurs, and away he went. The others charged after him apace, but could not overtake him. When the prince’s escape was publicly known, many people came to him from every quarter, with great joy. Among them, the first was the earl of Gloucester, and the other soldiers of the king; in a short space of time he had a great and a mighty host.

When Earl Simon understood this, he greatly doubted and mistrusted himself. Sending into Wales, he got from there a great many men, and augmented his force as strongly as he could from every part of England. He also sent Simon his son to the noblemen of the northern parts, that with all possible speed he might bring them with him. A great company came with him, and stayed a while at Kenilworth and pitched their tents there. When this was declared to Edward, he prepared himself in the night, to go to the place where Simon and his company had pitched. In the morning they were very early in arming themselves, and met some of their enemies straggling loosely, thinking to go foraging. These they took, and with their fresh horses they newly horsed their own soldiers whose horses had tired with the long travel. And so, marching forward, they came very early in the morning upon their enemies, whom for the most part they found sleeping. Laying lustily about them, they slew several, took some, and the rest they put to flight. They took fifteen of their finest ensigns, with many other rich spoils.

But when Edward heard that Earl Simon was coming toward Kenilworth to join with his son's battle, he marched forward to meet him at Evesham the third day after. Edward had his own standards and ensigns taken down, and displayed young Simon's, which he had taken. So that Earl Simon was deceived, thinking they were his son's army, not knowing of his overthrow till his scout, to better spot them, went up to the abbey steeple where he could plainly discern them and all their standards. For by this time they had mounted the hill, thinking to have that advantage when they gave their charge, and they also displayed his own standards again. Then he cried aloud to Earl Simon, and said, "We are all but dead men; for it is not your son who comes, as you suppose, but it is Edward the king's son that comes from one part, and the earl of Gloucester from another part, and Roger Mortimer from the third part." Then the earl said, "The Lord be merciful to our souls, for our bodies and lives are now in their hands." He commanded that every man should make himself ready to God, and to fight out the field for it was their will to die for their laws, and in a just quarrel. Those would depart, he gave leave to go their ways, so that they would not be a discouragement to the rest.

Then his eldest son Henry came to him, and comforted him, desiring him not to despair, nor mistrust in the good success of this victory, with other such cheerful words. "No, my son," he said, "I do not despair; but it is your presumption, and the pride of the rest of your brothers that has brought me to this end you see. Notwithstanding, I trust that I shall die to God, and in a righteous quarrel." After words of comfort given to all his host, and the oration made as is the manner, they all armed themselves. The king also (whom the earl always kept with him) he armed in his own armor: and then dividing their battles, they marched towards their enemies. But before they joined them, the Welshmen ran away. Thinking to escape over the river Dee, some were drowned, and some slain. Then the battle joined and they fought hand to hand. In a short time many of the earl's party fell and were slain; the king himself being struck at, cried out to them with a loud voice, saying, "Do not kill me, for I am Henry your king." By these words, Lord Adam Monthant knew him, and saved him. Also Prince Edward his son, hearing his cry, came and delivered him to the guard and care of certain knights.

In the meantime, Earl Simon was hard beset, beaten, and slain before Edward the prince came at him. But before he fell, when he fought for his life, and his son Henry, and other noblemen on his part were around him, he broke out into these words to his enemies, saying, "What! Is there no mercy and compassion with you?" They answered back, "What compassion should be shown to traitors?" Then he said, "The Lord be merciful to our souls; our bodies are in your hands." And so soon as these words were spoken, they mangled his

body, and cut off his head, which Roger Mortimer sent to his wife. Not far off from him, Henry his eldest son was also slain.

[191] A.D. 1264-1271.

After this great slaughter and overthrow there was a parliament summoned at Winchester by the earl of Gloucester, and others. Here it is to be remembered that although the king was in the camp of the earl of Leicester, being then in custody, and his son Edward with the earl of Gloucester, yet the king was on that side against his will. And therefore in the parliament the king was restored to his kingly dignity, which before that time was under the custody of the barons.

Soon after, a general voyage was proclaimed to war against the Turks. A subsidy for that was collected in England. Prince Edward and others were appointed to take their voyage, and were now on their journey.

After some stay in Sicily, Prince Edward took sail again, and soon after Easter he arrived at Acre, and went ashore. He took with him a thousand of the best and most expert soldiers, and tarried there a whole month, refreshing both his men and horses, so that in this space of time he might learn the secrets of the land. After this he took with him six or seven thousand soldiers, and marched forward twenty miles from Acre, and took Nazareth. He slew all those that he found there, and afterwards returned to Acre. But their enemies followed after them, thinking to attack them unawares. The prince perceiving this, again charged, slew many of them, and put the rest to flight.

Prince Edward Wounded by an Assassin.

When the fame of Prince Edward thus grew among his enemies, and they began to fear him, they devised among themselves how they might circumvent and betray him by some strategy. Whereupon the great prince and admiral of Joppa sent to him, pretending with great hypocrisy to become a Christian, and that he would draw with him a great number besides, provided that they might be honorably entertained and treated by the Christians. This pleased the prince well, and induced him to finish the thing he had begun so well, by writing back. He also sent by the same messenger, and wrote back to him several times about the matter, by which no distrust should arise. When this messenger came the fifth time, he was searched by the prince's servants, according to custom, to see what weapon and armor he had about him, and also his purse; and when not so much as a knife could be found about him, he was brought up into the prince's chamber. After doing homage, he pulled out certain letters, which he delivered to the prince from his lord, as he had done before. At this time the prince was laid bareheaded upon his bed in his jerkin,²⁰⁹ because of the great heat.

When the prince had read the letters, it appeared by them, that on the following Saturday the prince of Joppa would be there ready to accomplish all that he had written and promised. The report of this news by the prince to those standing by pleased them well, and they drew back somewhat to consult about it among themselves. In the meantime, the messenger kneeling and making his obeisance to the prince (questioning further with him) put his hand to his belt, as though he would have pulled out some secret letters, and suddenly he pulled out an envenomed knife, thinking to strike him with it as he lay there on the bed. But the prince lifting up his hand to defend his body from the blow, received a great wound in the arm: and the assassin being about to fetch another stroke at him, the prince

²⁰⁹ *Jerkin*: a tight sleeveless and collarless jacket.

with his foot gave him such a kick that he felled him to the ground. With that the prince got him by the hand, and wrested the knife from him with such violence, that he hurt himself with it in the forehead, but immediately thrust the traitorous messenger through and slew him. The prince's servants being in the next chamber not far off, hearing the bustling, came running in with great haste, and finding the messenger lying dead on the floor, one of them took up a stool and beat out his brains. The prince was angry at this, because he had struck a dead man, one who was already killed. The rumor of this attack being so strange, soon went throughout the court, and from there among the common people, so that they were very heavy and greatly discouraged. The captain of the temple came to the prince, and brought him a costly and precious drink against poison, lest the venom of the knife penetrate the blood. And in a blaming way he said to him, "Did I not show your grace before about the deceit and subtlety of this people? Notwithstanding," he says, "let take heart your grace, you will not die of this wound, my life for yours." But the surgeons and physicians were immediately sent for, and the prince's wound was dressed.

Within a few days it began to putrefy, and the flesh looked dead and black; whereupon those who were about the prince began to be very sad and heavy. Perceiving this he said to them, "Why do you whisper thus among yourselves? What, do you see in me I that cannot be healed? Tell me the truth, do not be afraid." Whereupon one said to him, "Your grace, you may be healed, we do not mistrust it; yet it will be very painful for you to suffer." — "May suffering restore health?" he asked. — "Yes," says the other, "on pain of losing my head." — "Then," said the prince, "I commit myself to you, do with me what you think good." Then one of the physicians said, "Is there any of your nobles in whom your grace reposes special trust?" To whom the prince answered, "Yes," naming certain of the noblemen who stood about him. Then the physician said to the two whom the prince first named, the Lord Edmund, and the Lord John Voisie, "And do you also faithfully love your lord and prince?" Who both answered, "Yes, undoubtedly." Then he says, "Take away this gentlewoman and lady (meaning his wife) and do not let her see her lord and husband until such a time as I tell you." Whereupon they took her out of the prince's presence, crying out and wringing her hands. Then they said to her, "Be contented, good lady and madam; it is better that one woman should weep a little while, than that all the realm of England should weep a great season." Then upon the morrow they cut all the dead envenomed flesh out of the prince's arm, and said to him, "How cheers your grace? We promise you within fifteen days you will show yourself abroad (if God permits) on horseback, whole and well as you ever were." And according to the promise he made the prince, so it came to pass, to no little comfort and admiration of all his subjects. When the great Sultan heard of it, and that the prince was still alive, he could scarcely believe it. And sending to him three of his nobles and princes, he excused himself by them, calling his gods to witness, that this was done neither by him, nor with his consent. These princes and messengers standing aloof from the king's son, worshipping him, fell flat upon the ground. "You reverence me," the prince, "yet you do not love me." Nevertheless he treated them honorably, and sent them away in peace.

When Prince Edward had been in Acre eighteen months, he took shipping and returned homeward, and came to Rome where he was honorably entertained by the pope. From there he came to France, where his fame and noble prowess was much celebrated among the common people, and envied by the nobility, especially by the Earl de Chalons, who sent him and requested that he might break a staff with him at a tilt in his country.²¹⁰ As the prince would not diminish his honor and fame by declining the challenge (although he might have

²¹⁰ Chalons-sur-Saône is a city in eastern France, situated on the Saône River, about 180 miles from Paris.

well alleged sufficient excuse), he willingly consented. Whereupon it was proclaimed that Prince Edward by such a day, with those who were with him, had challenged all comers at the tilt and barriers. Then great assemblies were made in the country all about, and several horsemen as well as footmen had sworn among themselves, and conspired against the Englishmen, selling their horses and armor aforehand, and drinking to one another in good success of the spoil of those whom they would take as their prisoners. Prince Edward in the meantime sent into England for certain earls and barons to come to him. When the day appointed had arrived, the prince had with him more than one thousand horsemen, who were knights, besides his footmen. Yet there were as many more on the other side both in horsemen and footmen.

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When the parties met, the French footmen, who had conspired beforehand, began both to rob, rifle, and kill the Englishmen, who resisted and defended themselves both with bows and slings. They slew many of the Frenchmen, and drove them to the gates of their city. The others they chased across a river, where many of them were drowned. In the meantime the Earl de Chalons, with fifty of his knights who followed him, came out and joined battle with a like number of the prince's followers. For a long time they tried it with their swords, laying at one another. At last the earl perceiving he was not able to match with Prince Edward at the arm's end, closed with him, and taking him about the neck, held him with his arms very tight. "What, my lord," asked the prince, "do you mean to have my horse?" — "Yes, indeed," said the earl, "I mean to have both you and your horse." At this Prince Edward, being indignant, lifted himself up, and gave the earl such a blow, that forsaking his horse, he still hung about the prince's neck, till the prince shook him off to the ground. The prince, being somewhat in a heat, left the grounds to take some air, thereby to refresh himself. But when he saw the injury of the French towards his men, and how they had slain many of them, he said to them, that they intended rather the exercise of battle, than of tourney. "Therefore," he said, "from now on, do not spare any of them, but give them back as good as they give you." Then they began to kill each other freely on their part, and let their swords work.

When by this time the English footmen had again returned, and saw the conflicts of the horsemen, and that many of the Englishmen were overthrown; they put themselves amidst the grounds. By some stabbing the horses, some cutting the girths of the Frenchmen's saddles, they overthrew the riders. Then when the Earl De Chalons was horsed again by some of his men and had come among the throng, Prince Edward also rushed in among the thickest, and again coupled with the earl, and cried out to him that he should yield himself as vanquished; but he would not do so. Notwithstanding, when his strength began to fail him, the earl was obliged to yield himself to a "simple knight," as Prince Edward bade him. The rest of the earl's horsemen and knights fled and saved themselves. However, many of them were slain in that place, and the Englishmen returned having the victory. But after this, when they expected quiet and to be at rest, the citizens attacked them unawares, two and three at a time, and killed some of them as they went along in the streets. When the prince heard this, he sent for the mayor and burgesses, commanding them to see this matter redressed, and do it immediately. For otherwise, he assured them by his knighthood, that upon the morrow he would set fire to the city, and level it to the ground. Upon which they went, and set watchmen in many places to keep the peace, by which the prince and his men were in safety and quiet. Thus in this pastime of tourneying, much blood was spilt.

From there the prince went to Paris, and was honorably entertained by the French king, and after certain days, he went from thence into Gascony, where he stayed till he heard of the death of the king his father.

King Edward I - 1274.

Edward the eldest son of Henry III, as soon as he heard of his father's death, returned from Gascony home to his country, and was crowned (A.D. 1274). He then laid down his crown, saying he would not put it on, before he had gathered together all the lands pertaining to the kingdom. Sufficient proof of the gentle nature of this courageous prince is given by this one example: at one time being engaged in his sport of hawking, he happened to sharply rebuke the negligence of one of his gentlemen about his hawk, for what fault I cannot tell. The gentleman being on the other side of the river, hearing his menacing words said, "he was glad that the river was between them." The courageous blood of this prince being incensed by this answer, he leaped straight into the flood, which was a swift stream, dangerously deep, and no less hard in getting out. Notwithstanding, either forgetting his own life, or neglecting the present danger, and having a good horse, he risked his own death to have the death of this man. At length, recovering the bank with much difficulty, and with his sword drawn, he pursued his provoker, who not having so good a horse, and seeing himself in danger of being overtaken, reined in his horse, and turned back bareheaded to the prince, submitting his neck under his hand to strike. The prince, whose courage and passion could not be quenched by the whole river of water, so cooled at the submission of this man, that the quarrel ended, his anger ceased, and his sword was put away without any stroke given. And so both returned to the hunting, good friends again.

As Edward urged his claim to Scotland as well as England, and pursued it by force of arms, and as the Scots, etc., saw that they could not make their party good, they sent secretly to pope Boniface for his aid and counsel. He immediately sent down his precept to the king, that he should cease to disquiet or molest the Scots, for they were a people exempt from his jurisdiction and properly pertained to the papal chair. The king briefly responded, swearing with an oath, that he would to his uttermost keep and defend that which was his right, evidently known as it was to all the world. Thus the Scots bearing themselves bold upon the pope's message, and also confederating with the French, passed over that year. The next year (1303, the 29th year of the king's reign), Pope Boniface VIII (r. 1294-1303) directed his letters again to the king, in which he claimed the kingdom of Scotland was the property of the church of Rome, and not subject to the king of England. Therefore it was against God, against justice, and also prejudicial to the church of Rome, for the king to have or to hold any dominion over it. He added furthermore, that the kingdom of Scotland was first converted by the relics of the blessed apostle St. Peter (d. A.D. 67), through the divine operation of God, to the unity of the catholic faith!

The king, after he received these letters from the pope, assembled a parliament at Lincoln. By the advice of parliament he addressed letters in reply to the pope. In them, first — in all reverend manner — he desires the pope not to give a light ear to the sinister suggestions of false reports, and imaginers of mischief. Then he declares out of old records and histories from the first time of the Britons, that the realm of Scotland had always been, from time to time, one with England, beginning first with Brutus, in the time of Eli and Samuel the prophet (c. 1100 B.C.). This Brutus, coming from Troy to this isle — then called *Albion*, afterward called *Britannia* by him — had three sons: Locrinus, to whom he gave that part of the land then called *Loegria* by him, now called *Anglia*; Albanactus his second son, to whom he gave *Albania*, now called *Scotia*, and his third son Camber, to whom he gave *Cambria*, now called Wales, etc. — The letter then continued:

“And thus much concerning the first division of this isle, as found recorded in ancient histories. In this material, passing over the death of King Humber, the acts of Dunwald king of this realm, the division of Belyn and Brenne, the victories of King Arthur, we will resort to nearer times, testified and witnessed by sufficient authors, such as Marian Scot, William Malmesbury, Roger Abyndon, Henry Huntington, Radulph de Bizoto and others. All of them make special declarations, and give manifest evidence of the execution of our right and title of superiority ever continued and preserved up to now.

“And first, to begin with King Edward before the conquest, son to Alfred king of England, about A.D. 900, it is plain and manifest that he had the king of Scots under his dominion and obedience. And here it is to be noted that this matter was so notorious and manifest, that Marian the Scot, writing that history in those days, grants, confesses and testifies the same; and this dominion continued in that state twenty-three years. At which time, Athelstan succeeded to the crown of England. Having conquered Scotland by battle, he made one Constantine king of that party, to rule and govern the country of Scotland under him, adding this princely word, that it was more honor to him to *make* a king, than to *be* a king.

[193] A.D. 1274–1303.

“Twenty-four years after that (which was A.D. 947), Eldred the king, our progenitor, Athelstan’s brother, received homage from Malcolm I, then king of Scots.²¹¹

“Thirty years after that (which was A.D. 977), King Edgar our predecessor received homage from Kenneth II, king of Scots. Here was a little trouble in England by the death of St. Edward, king and martyr, destroyed by the deceit of his mother-in-law, but still within memory.

“Forty years after the homage done by Kynald to King Edgar (that is to say, A.D. 1017), Malcolm II, king of Scots, did homage to Canute our predecessor. After this homage was done, the Scots showed some piece of their natural disposition, whereupon, by war made by our progenitor St. Edward the Confessor, thirty-nine years after that homage was done (that is to say, A.D. 1056) Malcolm king of Scots was vanquished, and the realm of Scotland was given to Malcolm III, his son, by our said progenitor St. Edward, to whom the said Malcolm did homage and fealty.

“Within fifty years after that, William the Conqueror entered this realm, of which he did not count it a perfect conquest until he had likewise subdued the Scots; and therefore in the same year (A.D. 1068), Malcolm III king of Scots did homage to William the Conqueror as his superior, by conquest king of England.

“Twenty-five years after that (which was A.D. 1093) Donald III²¹² did homage and fealty to William Rufus, son to the said William the Conqueror, and yet after that, he was deposed for his offenses and demerits, and his son substituted in his place; who likewise failed in his duty. Edgar brother to the last Malcolm, and son to the first, was ordained king of Scotland by the said William Rufus, who did his homage and fealty accordingly. “Seven years after that, (which was in A.D. 1100), the said Edgar, king of the Scots, did homage to Henry I, our progenitor.

“Thirty-seven years after that, David I, king of Scots did homage to Matilda the empress, as daughter and heir to Henry I. Wherefore being later required by Stephen to make his homage, who had then obtained possession of the realm, he refused so to do, because he had before made it to Matilda, and thereupon forbore. After David’s death, which followed shortly after, the son of the said David made homage to King Stephen.

²¹¹ Originally, “*Trise, then king of Scots...*”

²¹² Originally, “*the said Malcolm...*”

“Fourteen years after that (which was in A.D. 1150), William king of Scots, and David his brother, with all the nobles of Scotland, made homage to the son of Henry II, with a reservation of their duty to Henry II. his father.

“Twenty-five years after that (which was in A.D. 1175), William I king of Scotland, after much rebellion and resistance, according to their natural inclination (king Henry II then being in Normandy) finally acknowledged his error, and made his peace and composition, confirmed with his great seal, and the seals of the nobility of Scotland, making with it his homage and fealty.

“Within fifteen years after that (which was in A.D. 1190), William king of Scots came to our city of Canterbury, and there did homage to our noble progenitor King Richard I.

“Fourteen years after that, William did homage to our progenitor King John, on a hill beside Lincoln, making his oath upon the cross of Hubert, who was then archbishop of Canterbury, and was present there, and a marvellous multitude assembled for that purpose.

“Twenty-six years after that (which was in A.D. 1230), Alexander II king of Scots married Margaret the daughter of our progenitor Henry III at our city of York, in the feast of Christmas. At which time the said Alexander did his homage to our said progenitor, who reigned in this realm fifty-six years. And therefore, between the homage made by the said Alexander king of Scotland, and the homage done by Alexander, son to the said king of Scots, to us at our coronation at Westminster, there was about fifty years. At which time, the said Alexander king of Scots repaired to the feast of our coronation, and there he did his duty as aforesaid.”

In the year 1303, William Wallace in his rebellion, gathered great multitudes of the Scots to withstand the king, till at length he was taken, and sent up to London, and there executed (1305); after which the king held his parliament at Westminster. Robert I, or Robert the Bruce, forgetting his oath to the king, within a year or two after this (1306), by the counsel of the abbot of Stone, and the bishop of St. Andrews, sent to Pope Clement V²¹³ for a dispensation of his oath; insinuating that King Edward had wrongfully vexed and grieved the realm of Scotland. Whereupon the pope wrote to the king to leave off such doings. Despite the pope's inhibition, the king prosecuted his own right. He gathered his men and set off to Scotland, where he joined battle with Sir Robert and his army at Methven, a plain near St. John's Town.²¹⁴ Edward put him to flight, and so chased the Scots, that 7000 of them were slain. In this victory, the captured bishops and abbots were sent to the pope; the temporal lords and other Scots to London. Sir Robert Bruce after this discomfiture, when he had thus lost both the field and his chief friends, fled into Norway. When this noble Edward had thus subdued the Scots, he yielded thanks to God for his victory, and returned to London, which was the thirty-fifth and last year of his reign (1307).

Variance Between the French King, and Boniface VIII.

Now touching the variance and dissension between Philip the French king, and Pope Boniface VIII. After the bishopric of Rome had been vacant through the dissension of the cardinals, for the space of two years and three months, at length Pope Celestine V was chosen successor to Pope Nicholas IV. Celestine in his first consistory began to reform the clergy, by which he procured to himself such hatred among his clergy, that Boniface,

²¹³ Robert Bruce murdered John Comyn before the altar at Greyfriars Church in Dumfries in 1306, for which Clement excommunicated him. It was later lifted by Robert Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow.

²¹⁴ At the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, Robert defeated a much larger English army under Edward II of England, confirming the re-establishment of an independent Scottish kingdom.

speaking through a reed in his chamber wall at midnight, warned him (as if it had been a voice from heaven) that he should give up his papacy, as a burden greater than he could wield. Thus Pope Celestine after he had sat six months, was induced by the treachery and falsehood of Boniface, to resign his bishopric. This was partly on account of that voice at midnight, and partly from fear, having been told by certain persons craftily suborned in his chamber, that if he did not resign, he would lose his life.²¹⁵

Pope Boniface VIII, succeeding Celestine (1294), behaved himself so imperiously that he put down princes, and excommunicated any kings who would not take their confirmation at his hand. He drove away many of his cardinals for fear; some of them he deposed as schismatics and despoiled them of all their substance. He excommunicated Philip IV, the French king, for not allowing his money to go out of the realm; and therefore Boniface cursed both him and his to the fourth generation. Albert I, the emperor, not once or twice, but thrice sought at Boniface's hands to be confirmed, and yet he was rejected. This pope first ordained the jubilee in Rome. In solemnizing it on the first day, he showed himself in his *pontifical* robes, and gave free remission of sins to as many as came to Rome from all the parts of the world. The second day (being arrayed with *imperial* ensigns) he commanded an unsheathed sword to be carried before him, and said with a loud voice, "Lo, here the power and authority of both the swords!"

Thus premising these things about Pope Boniface, I will now come to the occasion of the strife between him and the French king. In A.D. 1301, the bishop of Oppanham, being accused of a conspiracy against the French king, was brought to his court, and so committed to prison. The pope hearing this, sent word to the king by his legate, to set him at liberty. The French king, not daring to the contrary, released the bishop. But at the same time, he dismissed both the bishop and the legate, commanding them to leave his realm. Upon this Pope Boniface revoked all the graces and privileges granted either by him or his predecessors to the kingdom of France; and not long after he thundered out the sentence of his curse against him. Moreover, Boniface cited all the prelates, all divines, and lawyers both civil and canon, to appear personally before him at Rome, at a certain day. Against this citation the king provided and commanded by proclamation, that no person should export out of the realm either gold, or silver, or any ware or merchandise, upon pain of forfeiting all their goods, and their bodies at the king's pleasure.

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He provided at the same time, that the roads and harbors or seaports, should be diligently kept, that none might pass unsearched. Besides this, the king defeated the pope by giving and bestowing prebends, and benefices, and other ecclesiastical livings, contrary to the pope's profit. For this cause, the pope wrote to the king in form and effect as follows.

*Boniface, bishop, and servant to God's servants, to his beloved son Philip,
by the grace of God, king of France, greeting and apostolical blessing.*

"Boniface, the servant of God's servants. Fear God, and observe his commandments. We will have you understand that you are subject to us both in spiritual things, and temporal; and that no gift of benefices or prebends belongs to you; and if you are keeping any which are vacant, that you reserve their profits to the successors. But if you have given any, then we judge the

²¹⁵ After Cardinal Benedict Caetani became his successor as Boniface VIII, some claimed Celestine's resignation was unlawful. Thus the majority of the cardinals found it advisable to keep Celestine under supervision, and he was not allowed to return to his hermitage. On the verge of escaping via the Adriatic Sea, he was captured and sent back to Boniface, who kept him interned in Fumone Castle, where he died, aged 81. *Ency. Brit.*

gift to be void, and revoke however far you have gone forward. And whoever believes otherwise, we judge them heretics.”

To this letter of the pope. King Philip answered as follows:

*Philip, by the grace of God king of France, to Boniface,
in deeds not behaving himself as a pope, little friendship or none.*

“To Boniface, bearing himself as chief bishop, little health or none. Let your foolishness know, that in temporal things we are subject to no man, and that the gifts of prebends and benefices made and to be made by us, were and shall be good, both in time past and time to come. And that we will manfully defend the possessors of the said benefices, and we think that those who believe or think otherwise, are fools and madmen. Given at Paris the Wednesday after Candlemas, 1301.”

Appeal of William Nagareta Against Boniface VIII – 1303.

After these and other writings passing to and fro between the French king and the pope, within a year and a half, the king summoned a parliament, sending down his letters to his sheriffs and other officers, to summon the prelates and barons of the realm to the court of parliament.

*A declaration of master William Nagareta,²¹⁶ made against Pope Boniface VIII,
with his appellation also made at Paris, before the king
and his council in the church of Paris.*

“In the name of God, amen. In the year of our Lord, 1303, the 12th day of March, and the ninth year of the popedom of the most holy father the Lord Boniface VIII, by God’s providence pope, and in the presence of us common notaries, and witnesses underwritten, the nobleman master William Nagareta, (or de Nogaret), knight, a worshipful professor of the laws, standing before the most excellent prince the lord Philip, by the grace of God most noble king of France, spoke with lively words, and gave in writings these things that follow:

“There have been false prophets among the people, as there have also been false teachers among you. St. Peter, the glorious prince of the apostles, speaking to us by the Spirit, told us the things to come; that as there were false prophets in prior times, so likewise there would come among you false teachers, bringing in sects of destruction; by the which the way of truth will be defaced; and they will covetously make merchandise of you with feigned words. Such masters follow the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the reward of wickedness, and had his bridled ass to correct his madness, which speaking in a man’s voice, stopped the foolishness of the prophet. All these things, as they are shown to us by the greatest patriarch himself, your eyes see them fulfilled this day according to the letter. For there sits in St. Peter’s chair the master of lies, causing himself to be called ‘Boniface,’ that is ‘a well doer,’ when he is notable in all kinds of evil doing; and so he has taken to himself a false name. And where he is not a true ruler and master, he calls himself the lord, judge, and master of all men. Coming in contrary to the common order appointed by the holy fathers, and also contrary to the rules of reason, and so not entering into the Lord’s sheepfold by the door, he is not a shepherd nor even a hireling, but rather a thief and robber. For he (the true husband of the Romish church yet living) deceived the one who delighted in simplicity, and enticed him with feigned flatterings and gifts, to let him have his spouse (the church) to be his wife, against truth, which cries, ‘Those whom God has joined together, let no man put asunder.’ And at length laying violent hands upon him, persuading him falsely that what the deceiver said had come from the Holy Spirit, was not ashamed to join to himself with wicked practice, that holy church which is

²¹⁶ William of Nogaret, French statesman and councilor who served as keeper of the seal to Philip IV.

mistress of all churches, calling himself her husband, whereas he cannot be so. For Celestine, the true Romish bishop, did not agree to the divorce, being deceived by so great a subtlety; nothing is so contrary to agreeing as error and deceit, as man's laws bear witness, therefore I need not speak of his violence.

“But because the Spirit inspires whom he will, and he that is led by the Spirit is not under the law; the holy universal church of God, not knowing the crafts of that deceiver, stumbling and doubting whether it came from the Holy Spirit that Celestine should leave his government, and the sins of the people deserving it, for fear of a schism he suffered the foresaid deceiver: although, according to the doctrine of our Lord, ‘By his fruits he might be known,’ whether he came to the said government by the Holy Spirit or otherwise; his fruits (as it is plainly written here beneath) are now manifest to all men, by which it is apparent to the world, that he did not come not in by God, but by other ways; and so he did not come in by the sheepfold. His fruits are most wicked, and his end is death; and therefore it is necessary that so evil a tree, according to the Lord's saying, ‘should be cut down and cast into the fire. This cannot avail to his excuse, which is made by some men, that is, that the cardinals agreed upon him again, after the death of Celestine the pope, seeing that he could not be her husband, whom it is manifest he defiled by adultery, when her first husband was yet living, and she being worthy to have the promise of marriage kept to her. Therefore, because that which is done against the Lord turns to the wrong of all men; and especially in so great a mischief, I, like a bridled ass, by the power of the Lord, and not by the voice of a perfect man, not being able to bear so great a burden, take in hand to rebuke the madness of the said false prophet Balaam, who at the instance of King Balak, that is, of the Prince of Devils, whom he serves, is ready to curse the people blessed by the Lord. I beseech you, most excellent prince, and Lord Philip, by the grace of God, king of France, that like the angel of God in times past met the prophet Balaam on the way, with a drawn sword, as he was going to curse God's people; so you, who are unwilling to execute fierce justice, and are therefore like the angel of the Lord, and minister of power and office, would meet with a naked sword this wicked man who is far worse than Balaam, so that he do not perform that evil which he intends to the people.

“1. I propound that the foresaid man, who names himself Boniface, is no pope, but wrongfully keeps the seat which he has to the great damage of all the souls of God's holy church. I say also, that his entering was faulty in many ways, and he did not enter in at the door, but otherwise, and therefore is to be judged a thief and a robber.

“2. I propound also, that the said Boniface is a manifest heretic, and utterly cut off from the body of the holy church, because of many kinds of heresies, which are to be declared at a convenient time and place.

“3. I propound also, that the said Boniface is a horrible simoniac, and such a one that has not been since the beginning of the world; and the mischief of this sin in him is notorious to all the world (which is manifest to all who will plainly understand) insomuch that being openly slandered, he said openly that he could not commit simony.

[195] A.D. 1303-1304.

“4. I propound also, that the said Boniface, being wrapped in many manifest and heinous sins, is so hardened in them, that he is utterly impossible to be corrected; and he lies in dungeon of mischief so deep that he cannot be suffered any longer, without the overthrow of the church. His mouth is full of cursing, his feet are swift to shed blood. He utterly tears in pieces the churches, which he ought to cherish; wickedly wasting the goods of the poor, and making much of wicked men who give him rewards; persecuting the righteous, and not gathering but scattering the people, bringing in new sects of destruction that have not been heard of; blaspheming the way of truth, and by robbery thinking himself equal to the Lord Jesus Christ

who is blessed forever. And he being most covetous thirsts for gold, covets gold, and by some device gets gold from every people; and utterly disregarding the worshipping of God; he makes merchandise of us all with feigned words, sometimes by flattering, sometimes by threatening, sometimes by false teaching, and all to get money with; envying all things but his own; loving no man, nourishing war, persecuting and hating the peace of his subjects. He is rooted in all unspeakable sins; contradicting and striving against all the ways and doctrines of the Lord. He is truly the abomination of the people, which Daniel the Lord's prophet described.

"Therefore I answer that laws, weapons, and all the elements ought to rise against him, who thus overthrows the state of the church; for whose sins God plagues the whole world. And finally nothing remains to him, being so insatiable, to satisfy him with, except the insatiable mouth of hell, and the fire that cannot be quenched, continuing forever. Therefore, seeing that in a general council it so becomes, and I see this wicked man to be damned, who offends both God and all men — I ask and require as instantly as I can, and I beseech you, my lord and king aforesaid, that you would declare this much to the prelates, doctors, people and princes, your brethren in Christ, and chiefly to the cardinals and all prelates, and call a council in which (when the aforesaid wicked man is condemned) by the worshipful cardinals, the church may be provided with a shepherd. And for that council I offer myself ready lawfully to pursue the aforesaid things. And whereas the said man being in the highest dignity, in the meantime cannot be suspended of his superior, therefore he ought to be taken, suspended indeed for the things aforesaid, seeing that his state is called into judgment, by the means aforesaid.

"I beseech and request the said cardinals by you, and I presently request of them and of the church of God, that this wicked man being put in prison, the church of Rome may be provided with a vicar who may minister those things that will pertain till the church of God is provided with a bishop, to utterly take away all occasion of a schism. And lest the said wicked man should keep and hinder the prosecuting of this, I require these things of you, my lord king, affirming you to be bound to do this for many causes. *First*, for the faith's sake. *Secondly*, for your kingly dignity, to whose office it belongs to root out such wicked men. *Thirdly*, for your oath's sake, which you made for the defense of the churches of your realm, which the aforesaid ravener utterly tears in pieces. *Fourthly*, because you are the patron of the churches, and therefore you are bound not only to their defense, but to restoring their goods, which this aforesaid man has wasted. *Fifthly*, following the footsteps of your ancestors, you ought to deliver your mother, the Romish church, from so wicked a band in which she is tied and bound by oppression. I require that a public instrument may be made of these requests by the notaries here present, under the witness of the worshipful men who are here present. These things were done and spoken, as aforesaid, at Paris, in the king's house of Lupara."

The Appeal of King Philip Against Boniface VIII

After this protestation of Master Nagareta, immediately ensued the appeal of the king, pronounced and published against Boniface, recapitulating and amplifying the same charges that are in the appeal of Nagareta. Philip made his appeal to a general council, in the following form:

"We, Philip, by the grace of God, hearing and understanding the objections propounded by our beloved faithful knight, William of Nagareta, against Boniface, now having the government of the Romish church. Although we would gladly cover with our own cloak, the filthy parts of such a father; yet for the love of the catholic faith, and great devotion that we bear to the holy Romish and universal church our mother, and all faithful men, and spouse of Christ, following the steps of our ancestors who did not hesitate to shed their own blood for the increase and defense of the church's liberty and the faith; and desiring to provide for the purity of the faith and state of the church; and also to avoid the hurt of general slander, not being able any longer to pass over these things with winking and dissembling, and my conscience driving me to the

same; seeing that this estimate and opinion of this Boniface in these matters is not rashly conceived by us, but vehemently and plainly increased by the many and continual complaints of credible men, and fearing, moreover, the destruction of the faith, both of us and of all other subjects, and especially of kings and princes of the world, who ought to reprove negligence, who acknowledge that we have received power given to us from the Lord, to promoting and increasing it; we agree to your request in this behalf, and to calling and assembling a council for the glory of God (saving the honor and reverence that is due to the holy Romish church in all things) whereby the truth may appear in the premises, and all error avoided. So that the state of the universal church, and all Christianity, and the matters of faith, and the holy land may be provided for, and the slanders and jeopardies hanging over us may be withstood; we are ready, and offer ourselves gladly, as much as it lies in us, to bestow our labors and diligent pains thereabout; earnestly requiring and beseeching in the merciful sympathy of Jesus Christ, you archbishops and other prelates here present, as children of the church and pillars of faith, called by the Lord to the promoting, increasing and preserving of it, to care for the same, so that with all diligence you would give heed, as becomes you, and that you would effectually labor by all ways and fit means, to the calling and assembling of this council in which we intend to be personally present. And lest the said Boniface, who has boldly and wrongfully many times threatened to proceed against us, stopping and hindering our purposes and intent, lest any of his works of darkness (if there are any) should come to light, directly or indirectly hindering the calling and gathering of this council; or lest any state being in the same realm that will indeed proceed against us, or our state, churches, prelates, barons, and other faithful vassals, our subjects, our lands, or our realm, and the state of the realm, by abusing any spiritual sword, in excommunicating, suspending, or in other ways, by any means. For us and our well-wishers, and those who will follow us, we provoke and appeal in writing to the aforesaid general council (which we instantly desire to be called) and to one lawful chief bishop who shall be, or to any other to whom we should appeal; and yet not going from the appeal made by William of Nagareta, to whom we adhered then, and also still adhere — requiring earnestly a witness of our appeal by you prelates and notaries, to expressly renew such provocation and appeal, when and before whom it shall be thought fitting to you.”

Then the archbishops, bishops, abbots, and priors, make their appeal in like manner with the king to a general council.

Pope Boniface VIII Made Prisoner and Dies.

These things being done, the year 1304 then followed. In that year, a garrison of soldiers, sent partly by the French king, partly by the cardinals of Columna, came to the gates of Arvadium, where the pope hid himself. The captains of this army were one Schaira, brother to those cardinals, and another, William de Longareto, high steward to the French king.

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They invaded the pope's town, and finding the gates open, they assaulted the pope's frontier where the pope with his nephew, a marquess, and three other cardinals were immured. The townsmen, seeing their intent and strength to be bent against the pope, rang the common bell, and so assembling themselves in a common council, they ordained Adolphus, one of the chief rulers of the town, to be their captain. Unknown to them, he was a great adversary to the pope. Adolphus joined with the French company against the pope, and beset his palace on every side. First setting upon the palaces of the three cardinals, who were then the chief ones about the pope, they rifled and despoiled all their goods. The cardinals barely escaped their hands by a back door; but the pope's palace, through the strength of the marquess, was somewhat better defended. At length the pope, perceiving himself not able to make his party good, desired a truce with Schaira, which was granted from one till nine.

During this time of truce, the pope secretly sent to the townsmen of Arvagiura, desiring them to save his life. If they would do this, he promised to so enrich them, that they would all have cause never to forget or repent of their kindness bestowed on him. To this they excused themselves, saying that it did not lay not in their ability to do him any good, for the whole power of the town was with the captain. Then the pope, all destitute and desolate, sent to Schaira, beseeching him to lay out in articles where he had wronged him, and he would make him amends to the uttermost. Schaira gives a plain answer to this, signifying to the pope, "That he would in no way escape with his life, except on these three conditions: *First*, to restore back the two cardinals of Columna, his brethren whom he had previously deprived, with all others of their stock and kindred. *Secondly*, that after their restitution, he would renounce his papacy. *Thirdly*, that his body would remain in his power and custody." These articles seemed so hard to the pope, that in no case would he agree to them.

When the truce expired, the captains and soldiers, setting themselves against the bishop, first set fire to the gates of the palace, by which the army, now having a full entrance, began to rifle and despoil the house. The marquess, hoping to save his life and the lives of his children, yielded himself into the hands of Sclaira and the other captain. When the pope heard of this, he wept and made great lamentation. After breaking through the windows and doors, they burst in up the pope, whom they accordingly treated with words and threats. Upon this he was put to a choice, whether he would presently leave this life, or give up his papacy. But he said that he would never while he lived renounce his popedom. Schaira was ready to slay him, but he was prevented by some who were about him. The soldiers, who in the meantime ranged through all the corners of the pope's house, loaded themselves up with all the immense treasure of gold, silver, plate, and ornaments that were collected there. Thus Boniface, bereaved of all his goods, remained in their custody three days, during which time they set him atop a wild unbroken colt, his face turned to the horse's tail, and caused the horse to gallop, so that the pope was almost breathless. They kept him this way without food, so that he was nearly famished to death. After the third day, the Arvagiens and people of the town, mustering ten thousand together, secretly burst into the house where the pope was kept. Slaying his keepers, they delivered the pope by a strong hand. Being brought into the middle of the town, he gave thanks with weeping tears to the people for saving his life, promising moreover (being stripped of all his goods, and having neither bread nor drink to put in his mouth), God's blessing and his, to all those who now would relieve him with anything either to eat or drink.

And here now we see what poverty and affliction can work in a man. The pope, previously in all his pomp and most ruffling wealth, was ever so proud; but now he was so humble and lowly that every poor and simple man might have bold and free access to his person. To make the story short, the pope, in that great distress of famine, was not so greedy for the people's victuals, as they were greedy for his blessing. The women and people of the town came so thick, some with bread, some with wine, some with water, some with meat, some with one thing, some with another, that the pope's chamber was too small to receive the offering. It was so much, that when they lacked cups to receive the wine, they poured it down on the chamber floor, not regarding the loss of wine to win the pope's holy blessing. Thus Pope Boniface, being refreshed by the town of Arvagiurn, took his journey from there, accompanied with a great multitude of soldiers, and came to Rome where, shortly after, partly from fear, partly from famine, partly from sorrow for the loss of so inestimable a treasure, he died.

Now, after this matter between the French king and Pope Boniface, let us proceed in our English history. About this time, in the days of King Edward I, the church of Rome began daily to rise up more and more, and swell so high in pride and worldly dominion, that kings could scarcely do anything but what pleased the pope, who ruled all in all countries, but chiefly here in England. When the king and the church of Canterbury in their election had chosen one Robert Burnhil, bishop of Bath, to be archbishop of Canterbury, Pope Boniface, of his own presumptuous authority, ruling the matter according to his own pleasure, frustrated their election, and thrust in another, named John Peckham. For among other things, this had always been one practice of the court of Rome, to ever have the archbishop of their own appointing, or such a one that they might be sure of his being on their side, to weigh against the king. Pope Boniface directed a solemn bull from Rome to this John Peckham, and also to all quarters of the universal church. In this bull it was decreed, directly against the rule of Scripture and Christian obedience,

“That no church or ecclesiastical person should henceforth yield to his king or temporal magistrate, neither giving nor lending, nor promising tribute, or subsidy, or whatever portion of the goods and possessions belonging to him, but should be clearly exempted and discharged from all taxation in behalf of the prince and his affairs.”

This decree manifestly rebelled against the ordinance of God, and the apostolical canon of St. Peter, and all other examples of holy Scripture. For as there is no word in the Scripture that excludes spiritual men more than temporal from obedience and subjection to princes, so if the prince was to be too rigorous in his exacting, or cruel in oppression, that is no cause for the clergy to be exempt, but rather they should bear the common burden of obedience, and pray to God to turn and move the prince's mind.

This bull was directed from Rome to the archbishop of Canterbury, and likewise through the whole church, under the pope's authority. It happened not long after, that the king held his parliament at St. Edmundsbury, where it was granted to him by all cities and boroughs, an eighth of their goods, and by the commoners a twelfth. Only the clergy, by virtue of this bull, stoutly refused to pay anything to the king. This response not pleasing the king, he desired them to deliberate better with themselves on the matter, and after mature advice to give him an answer at the next parliament, which would be held the next Hilary term at London.²¹⁷

In conclusion, when the parliament met, the clergy still persisted in the denial of their subsidy, alleging the pope's bull for their warrant and discharge. Whereupon the king excluded them from his protection and the safeguard of his laws. Concerning the archbishop of Canterbury mentioned above, because he was found more stubborn than the rest, and was inciting the others, the king seized all his goods, and caused an inventory of them to be enrolled in the exchequer.²¹⁸ Several other bishops relented soon afterward to the king, and contributed a fifth of their goods to him, and were again received to favor.

[197] A.D. 1304-1307.

After the death of John Peckham, archbishop of Canterbury, succeeded Robert Winchelsey, with whom the king afterward had similar variance. And as this king was troubled in his time with both archbishops, John Peckham and also Robert Winchelsey; so it happened to all other kings for the most part, from the time of Lanfranc (that is, from Pope Hildebrand) that every king in his time had some trouble or other with that see. As William Rufus and

²¹⁷ The Hilary term is a period in the legal and academic calendars of England and Wales, running from January to March. In the context of the legal system, it is one of four terms, alongside Easter, Trinity, and Michaelmas.

²¹⁸ *Exchequer*: the British Treasury (government funds).

Henry I were troubled with Anselm; Henry II with Thomas Becket; King Richard and all England with William, bishop of Ely (the pope's legate); King John with Stephen Langton; King Henry III with archbishop Edmund; likewise this King Edward I with John Peckham and Robert Winchelsey. And so other kings after him, with some prelate or other.

After Pope Boniface VIII succeeded Benedict XI, and then Pope Clement V, who transferred the pope's court to Avignon in France, where it remained for seventy-four years after. At the coronation of Clement, Philip king of France was present, also Charles his son; and John duke of Brittany, with a great number of other men of state and nobility. At the coronation, in the middle of the pomp and procession, a great wall broke down and fell upon them. Duke John with twelve others were slain; King Philip was hurt and wounded; the pope was struck from his horse and lost from out of the mitre on his head, a carbuncle (garnet stone), valued at 5000 florins. Because of this Clement ordained that the emperor, though he might be called king of the Romans before, he might not enjoy the title and right of the emperor until he was confirmed by Clement. And the emperor's seat being vacant, the pope would reign as emperor till a new emperor was chosen. By Clement the order of the Templars (who at that time were considered abominable) was put down at the Council of Vienna. He also ordained and confirmed the feast of Corpus Christi, granting indulgences to those who heard the service. And as Pope Boniface before him had heaped up the book of decretals, called *Sextus Decretalum*,²¹⁹ so this Clement compiled the seventh book of the decretals, which he called *The Clementines*. In the time of this pope, the Emperor Henry VI was poisoned as he received the sacrament. It was done by a false dissembling monk called Bernard, who feigned being Henry's friend. It was not thought to be done without the consent of the pope's legate. The emperor, perceiving himself poisoned, warned the pope to flee and escape; for the Germans would surely slay him. Although the pope escaped himself, many of his order were slain with fire and sword.

Variance with the Greek Orthodox Church.

Pope Clement V had made good provision against the empire of Rome to bring it under his girdle. It went so far that without the pope's benediction, no emperor might take the state upon himself. And now he proceeded to intermeddle with the empire of Constantinople. This is where he first exercised his tyranny and power of excommunication against the emperor Andronicus Paleologus ²²⁰ (A.D. 1306), declaring him to be a schismatic and heretic because he neither would nor dared allow the Greeks to make their appeal from the Greek church to the Roman pope; nor would he acknowledge him for his superior. From this it may appear that the Greek church did not admit the pope's superiority as yet, nor indeed at any time before, except about the time of Pope Innocent III (A.D. 1202). That was when Baldwin, earl of Flanders, joined with the Venetians and went against the Greeks, to place Alexius in the empire of Constantinople — on condition (as Platina writes) of subduing the Greek church under the church of Rome. Alexius I being restored, and slain shortly after, the empire came to the Frenchmen, with whom it remained for fifty-eight years, till Michael Paleologus who restored the empire to its pristine state. Afterward, Michael, emperor of Constantinople, being called to a council at Lyons by Pope Gregory X about the controversy of the procession of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the church of Rome, submitted himself and the Greeks to the subjection of Rome. He thereby procured for himself such a grudge and hatred among the Greek monks and priests, that after his death

²¹⁹ Latin. The sixth (book) of the decretals; so called because it was appended to the body of the canon law, which was comprised of the five books of the decretals of Gregory IX; the sixth was published A. D. 1298.

²²⁰ Andronicus II Palaiologus (or Andronikos II Palaiologos) reigned as Byzantine emperor from 1282 to 1328.

they denied him the due honor and place of burial. The son of this Michael Paleologus was Andronicus, mentioned above. He was constrained by the Greeks not to admit any appeal to the bishop of Rome, and was therefore accursed by the Roman pope's censures as a heretic. It appears by this, that the Greeks, recovering their state again, refused all subjection at this time to the church of Rome; this was A.D. 1307. After this, Clement V followed Pope John XXII, with whom Louis the emperor had much trouble. After him succeeded Pope Benedict XII.

Now to return to the English history in the year 1307, which was the thirty-fourth of the reign of king Edward I. The king kept a parliament at Carlisle, where great complaints were brought in by the nobles of the realm, concerning the manifold and intolerable oppressions of churches and monasteries, and exactions of money by the pope's legate, William Testa. The pope sent this legate into England with his bulls, in which he reserved the first fruits of all churches vacant at any time, within the realm of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland; and also the fruits of abbeys and priories, etc. The king, with his nobles, seeing the inconvenience and injury of this to the whole realm, in the parliament held at Carlisle, withstood the legate. He commanded him by the assent of the earls and barons, that from then on he should abstain from all such exactions. As concerning his lord the pope, the king wrote to him, declaring and admonishing the pope, that he should not exact the first fruits of the churches and abbeys, founded by his predecessors and the noblemen of the land, for the honor and maintenance of God's service, for alms and hospitality.

The Epistle of Cassiodorus to the Church of England.

During this parliament, as men were talking of the pope's oppressions, a certain paper was suddenly circulated among them, with this superscription:

*An Epistle of Cassiodorus to the Church of England,
concerning the Abuses of the Romish Church.*

“To the noble church of England, serving in clay and brick, as the Jews did in times past under the tyranny of the Egyptians; Peter the son of Cassiodorus a catholic soldier, and devout champion of Christ, sends greeting, wishing the church to cast off the yoke of bondage, and to receive the reward of liberty.

“To whom shall I compare you, or to whom shall I liken you, O daughter of Jerusalem? To whom shall I match you, O daughter of Sion? Great is your troubled state, like the sea. You sit alone without comfort all day long; you are confounded and consumed with heaviness. You are given up into the hands of him from which you cannot rise without the help of someone to lift you up. For the scribes and Pharisees are sitting in the chair of Moses, the enemies of the Romans are as your heads and rulers: enlarging their guarded phylacteries, and seeking to be enriched with the marrow of your bones, laying heavy burdens, and not able to be borne upon your shoulders, and on your ministers, and they set you under tribute (you who of old time have been free) beyond all honesty or measure. But do not marvel at this, for your mother (the church), who is the lady of people, like a widow having married and coupled herself to her subjects, has appointed him to be your father: that is to say, the bishop of Rome, who shows no point of any fatherly love towards you. He magnifies and extends to the utmost his authority over you, and by experience he declares himself to be the husband of your mother. He often remembers to himself the prophetic saying of the prophet, and has well digested the same in the inward part of his breast: ‘Take to yourself a great book, and write in it quickly with the pen of a man;’ ^{Isa 8.1} ‘take the spoil, rob quickly.’ But is this what the apostle says he was appointed for, where he writes thus: ‘Every bishop, taken from among men, is appointed

for men in those things that belong to the Lord;’— not to spoil, nor to lay on them yearly taxes, nor to kill men, but ‘to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins,’ ^{Heb 8.3} and to sorrow with those who are ignorant and err.

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“And so we read of Peter the fisherman (whose successor he boasts himself to be), that after the resurrection of Christ, he returned with the other apostles to the office of fishing. When he could find nothing on the left-side of the ship, at the bidding of Christ he turned to the right side, and drew to land a net full of fishes. Therefore the profitable ministry of the church is to be exercised on the right side, by which the devil is overcome, and plenty of souls are gained and won to Christ. But certainly the labor on the left side of the ship is far otherwise. For in it faith stumbles, heaviness bears rule, and that which is desired by seeking is not found. For who is so foolish as to think that he can at the same time serve both God and man, satisfy his own will, or stick to the revelations of flesh and blood, and offer worthy gifts to Christ? And doubtless, that shepherd who does not watch for the edifying of the flock, prepares another way for ‘the roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.’ ^{1Pet 5.8} And now behold, I say, O daughter, that the deeds of him who calls himself your Father, are such as have not been heard of before. He drives away the good shepherds from the sheepfold, and places in their stead bishops to rule, but not to profit his nephews, cousins, and parents; some who know no letters (cannot read), and others dumb and deaf, who do not understand the plain voice of the sheep, not curing the wounds of those who are hurt by wolves. But like hirelings, they pluck off the fleeces, and reap what other men have sown; moreover, whose hands are always in their baskets and pouches, but their backs are turned from their burdens. By this it is manifest, that the priesthood has clean changed in these days — the service of God has decayed — alms are diminished and brought to nothing — the whole devotion of kings, princes, and Christians is banished. May this not be thought a wonderment in the eyes of all men: that whereas Christ commands tribute to be paid to kings for him and for Peter, ^{Mat 17.24-27} this bishop now goes about by dominion of his style, to subdue both realms, and princes of realms (against Christ’s will, whose vicar he says he is, who refused the realms and judgments of this world) which this bishop contrarywise claims, believing that all he writes in his style are his?

“Alas! O daughter, what more does he yet have against you? Mark, he draws from you whatever pleases him, and is not content to have only a tenth of your goods from you; unless he also has the first fruits of the benefices of the ministers, by which he may get a new patrimony for himself as well as for his kindred, contrary to the godly wills of the first founders. Over and besides all this, he introduces other execrable taxes and stipends for his legates and messengers, whom he sends into England. They not only take away the feeding and clothing of you and yours, but also like dogs, they tear in pieces your flesh and skins. May this prince not be compared to King Nebuchadnezzar, who destroyed the temple of the Lord, and carried away its golden and silver vessels? This man does the very same. He robbed the ministers of God’s house, and left them destitute of due help, in like manner. Truly those are better off who are killed with the sword, than those who ache with hunger; for they are dead immediately, but these are wasted with the barrenness of the earth.

“O daughter, all those who pass by, let them have pity and compassion on you, for there is no sorrow like your sorrow. For now your face is blacker than coals, through much sorrow and weeping, and you are no longer known in the streets. Your foresaid ruler has placed you in darkness, and has given you wormwood and gall to drink. O Lord, hear the sorrow and sighing of your people; behold, Lord, and descend; for the heart of this man is more hardened than the heart of Pharaoh. He will not allow the people to depart, except by the strength of your hand. For he not only scourges them miserably upon the earth, but also after their death, he intends to engross the goods of all Christians under the name and title of *dying intestate*, of making no

will. Therefore, let the chivalry of England well remember how the Frenchmen in times past, directed their greedy eyes toward the realm of England, and labored with all their power to bring it under their subjection. But it is to be feared, lest the new devices and practice of this new enemy supply that which up to now has been lacking in them. For in diminishing the treasure of the realm, and spoiling the church goods, the realm will be brought into such inability, that it will not be able to help itself against the enemy.

“Therefore, O daughter, and you its ministers, do not suffer yourselves to be led any more into such miserable bondage. It is better for the wealth of you and yours, that the Christian king and the powers of the realm, who have clothed you with great benefits, and you also who are clothed with their benefits, labor with all your power to resist the devices, conspiracies, arrogance, presumption, and pride of the foresaid person. It is not for any zeal of God, but for enriching his parents and his own kindred (exalting himself like an eagle) by these and such other exactions, that he goes about after another kind of extortion, to scrape up and devour all the money and treasure of England. Now, lest the dissembled simplicity of the realm in this behalf brings utter subversion, and afterward is compelled to seek remedy when it is too late, I beseech the Lord God of Hosts to turn away the veil from the heart of that man, and to give him a contrite and an humble mind. In so far, that he may acknowledge the ways of the true God, by which he may be brought out of darkness, and be forced to relinquish his old sinister attempts; and so that the vineyard which the Lord’s hand has planted, may be replenished continually with the preachers of the word. Let the words of the Lord, prophesied by the mouth of Jeremy, stir up your minds to withstand and resist the subtle practices of this man, of whom the Lord says: ‘O you pastor, who have scattered my people, and cast them out of their habitations, behold I will come and visit upon you, and upon the malice of your studies: nor shall any of your seed sit upon the seat of David, nor have power any longer in Judah. So that your nest shall become barren, and utterly subverted, like Sodom and Gomorrah.’

“And if being terrified by these words, he do not leave off from this which he begins, and does not make restitution of what he has received, then let all and singular persons sing for him being hardened, to him that sees all things,’ *Psa 108*. For as truly as favor, grace, and benevolence, remits, and neglects many things, so again the gentle benignity of man, being too oppressed and grieved, seeking to be delivered and freed from it, strives and searches to have the truth known, and by all means possible casts off that yoke that grieves him,” etc.

Death Of King Edward I – 1307.

In the year 1307, King Edward, marching toward Scotland, fell sick. This sickness so increased upon him, that he despaired of life. Therefore, calling before him his earls and barons, he had them swear that they would crown his son Edward. That being done, he called his son Edward, informing and advising him with wholesome precepts; and he charged him also with several matters, as he valued his blessing. First, That he should be courteous, gentle, upright in judgment, fair-spoken to all men, constant in deed and in word, familiar with the good; and especially to be merciful to the miserable. He also gave him charge not to be too hasty in taking his crown before he had revenged his father’s injuries against the Scots. But that he should remain in those parts to take his father’s bones with him, after being well boiled from the flesh. Being enclosed in some fit vessel, he should carry them with him till he conquered all the Scots, saying that so long as he had his father’s bones with him, none would overcome him. He desired and required him to love his brothers Thomas and Edmund; also to cherish and be tender to his mother Margaret, the queen. He also strictly charged him upon his blessing (if he would avoid his curse) that he should in no case call back to him, or send for Peter Gaveston. The king had previously banished Peter Gaveston from the realm, for his naughty and wicked intimacy with his son Edward, and for leading him astray with evil counsel. For this he banished Peter Gaveston

utterly out of the realm, and also put Edward his son into prison. And therefore he strictly charged his son not to send for this Gaveston, nor to have him about him.

[199] A.D. 1307-1311.

And finally, because he had conceived in himself a vow to have returned personally to the Holy Land (which from his many wars with the Scots he could not perform), he had therefore prepared 32,000 pounds of silver, for sending some soldiers with his heart to the Holy Land. He required his son to see this accomplished, so that the money, under his curse and malediction, should not be employed for other uses. But the disobedient son did not observe these injunctions and precepts after the decease of his father, but quitting the war with the Scots, he hasted with all speed to his coronation. Also contrary to the mind of his nobles, and against the precept of his father, he sent for Peter Gaveston, and prodigally bestowed upon him all that treasure which his father had bequeathed to the Holy Land. He was moreover a proud despiser of his peers and nobles, and therefore reigned unfortunately.

King Edward II – 1307.

Edward II was born at Carnarvon, in Wales. After the death of his father, he entered the government in A.D. 1307, but was not crowned before the following year because of the absence of Robert Winchelsey, archbishop of Canterbury, who was banished by King Edward I. Whereupon the king wrote to the pope for the restitution of the archbishop. For by an ancient law of the realm, the coronation of the king could not proceed without the archbishop of Canterbury. Edward, though he was personable in body and outward shape, in conditions and evil dispositions he was much deformed. He was unsteadfast in his word, and lightly disclosed secrets of great counsel. He also refused the company of his lords and men of honor; he associated with villains and vile personages; and moreover, he was given to drinking and those vices which usually ensue on drunkenness. As he was disposed to such vices of his own nature, so he was made much worse by the counsel and familiarity of certain evilly disposed persons, such as Peter or Pierce (Piers) Gaveston, the two Spensers,²²¹ and others. Following their wanton counsel, he gave himself to riot and debauchery. He did not order his government with gravity, discretion, or justice, which caused great variance between him and his nobles. Shortly, he became odious to them, and in the end, he was deprived of his kingdom.

In the first year of his reign he took to wife Isabella, daughter of king Philip IV of France, with whom the year after he was crowned at Westminster by the bishop of Winchester, as Robert Winchelsey, archbishop of Canterbury had not yet returned home. The barons and lords first requested the king to put Peter Gaveston away from him, or else they would not consent to his coronation. Whereupon he was forced to grant them at the next parliament to have their requests accomplished, and so he was crowned. In the meantime, emboldened by the king's favor, Peter Gaveston continued triumphing and lightly treating all the other states and nobles of the realm, so that he ruled both the king and the realm. All things went as he wished, nor did the king have any delight or keep company with any but him; and with him alone he shared all his mind, and conferred all his counsels. This seemed strange to the lords and earls. It inflamed them so much against Gaveston, that through the incitement of

²²¹ That is, Hugh Spenser (or Despenser) the elder, earl of Winchester, and his son Hugh (the younger). Hugh Despenser the younger was the king's favorite and chamberlain after Gaveston's death. He accumulated vast wealth and lands through his marriage to Eleanor de Clare, a co-heiress to the Gloucester earldom. His influence over Edward II was so great that he was often seen as the real ruler of England during the period from 1321 to 1326.

the nobles, the bishops of the land would proceed in excommunication against him, *unless* he departed the land.

At length the parliament met (A.D. 1310), and articles were drawn up by the nobles to be exhibited to the king. These articles were the same as contained in *Magna Carta*, and *de Foresta*, with such other articles as his father had charged him with before — to wit, that he would remove from him and his court all aliens and perverse counsellors, and that all the matters of the commonwealth should be debated by the common council of the lords, both temporal and spiritual; and that he would stir no war outside of England in any other foreign realm, without the common assent of these lords, etc. The king perceived that their intent was indeed, to separate Peter Gaveston from his company. Seeing no other remedy than yielding and granting his consent, he agreed that Gaveston should be banished to Ireland. And so, the parliament breaking up, the lord returned home well pleased.

The Pride and Tyranny of Pope Clement V.

In the history of King Edward I, mention was made of Pope Clement V who succeeded Benedict; also of the suppression of the Templars which happened in this year (1310) by means of the French king, Louis IV. He burned in the city of Paris fifty-four Templars, with the grand master of the order. And he induced Pope Clement to call a council at Vienna, where the whole order of Templars was condemned. Shortly after, with the consent of all Christian kings, it was totally suppressed in one day. After this, the French king thought to make his son king of Jerusalem, and to transfer to him all the lands of the Templars. But Clement the pope would not agree. He transferred all their lands to the order of Hospitallers for a great sum of money given in return. The cause of these impious Templars being suppressed was on account of their abominable and filthy practices, which are better not told, if those things which some authors write are true.

Another matter of similar abomination I may mention here, touching a certain nunnery in France called Provines. Within it, at the cleansing of a fish-pond, many bones of young children were found, and also the bodies of some infants not yet decomposed. On account of this, twenty-seven of the nuns were brought to Paris and imprisoned.

In the same council at Vienna it was also decreed by Clement V, that all religious orders who were then exempt, should be subject to the common laws as others were. But the Cistercian monks, with money and great gifts, redeemed their privileges and exemptions from the pope. These Cistercians succeeded better than the Minorites of the Franciscans in their suit. Certain of these Franciscans offered the pope 40,000 florins of gold, besides silver, if he would dispense with their having lands and possessions, which was against their rule. The pope asked them where that money was. They answered, in the merchants' hands. So they were given three days to produce the merchants. Then the pope absolved the merchants of their bond made to the friars, and commanded all that money to be employed for his own use. He declared to the friars that he would not infringe or violate the rule of St. Francis lately canonized, nor should he do it for any money. And thus these rich friars, although they called themselves "the begging friars," and "the mendicant order," lost both their money and their indulgence. Pope Clement V excommunicated the Venetians for aiding and preferring Azoda above the state of Ferrara. He wrote letters throughout Europe, condemning them as enemies of the church, and giving their goods as a lawful prey to all men; this caused them to sustain great harm. But Francis Dandulus, a nobleman of Venice, and an ambassador from the Venetians to Clement, sought to obtain their absolution and the safety of their city and country, and to pacify the pope's fury. He so humbled himself before this proud prelate, that he allowed an iron chain to be tied around his neck, and he

lay down flat before his table to catch the bones and fragments that fell from it, as if he had been a dog, till the pope's fury was assuaged. So that afterwards, in reproach (because he so humbled himself on behalf of and in aid of his country), that by some he was called a dog. But the city of Venice showed themselves not ungrateful to Dandulus for his gentle good will thus shown to his country. For just as he had abased himself in the vile and ignominious condition of a dog for his country's sake, so they extolled him with as much glory when he returned home. They decked and adorned him in the best array, with the best princely ornaments of the city, to make amends for his former reproach.

Peter Gaveston Beheaded.

Let us proceed to the next year (A.D. 1311). In this year Peter Gaveston, who had wandered the surrounding countries, and could find no safe resting place, secretly returned to England and presented himself to the king.

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The king for joy ran to meet him, and embracing him, not only retained him, but also for his sake, he undid all those acts which had been enacted in the parliament. The queen and the whole court seeing this doting of the king, were exceedingly sorrowful. After Gaveston's return was rumored among the commons, the peers and nobles of the realm were not a little stirred, consulting with themselves as to what was best to be done. At last they determined that Thomas, earl of Lancaster, should be elected the chieftain among them, and the chief actor in this business. All other earls, barons, and prelates also consented to him, except Walter, bishop of Coventry. Therefore archbishop Robert excommunicated him afterwards. The earl of Lancaster, by the assent of the rest, sent to the king (who was then at York) humble petitions in the name of the whole nobility as well as of the commoners, desiring his grace to give Gaveston over to them, or else, according to the ordinance of the realm, that he might be banished. But the tyrannous king, who set more value on the love of one stranger than on his whole realm, would neither hearken to their counsel, nor give way to their supplications, but in all hasty fury he removed from York to Newcastle, where he remained till near midsummer.

In the meantime, the barons had gathered a host of sufficient and able soldiers, and came towards Newcastle, not intending any molestation against the king, but only the execution of the laws upon the wicked Gaveston. The king not having the men to resist their power, removed to Tynemouth, and from there to the castle of Scarborough. Leaving Gaveston there in the safe keeping of his men, the king journeyed toward Warwick. The lords hearing where Peter was, directed all their power there. So that at length Gaveston saw no remedy but to come into their hands, yielded and submitted himself. He required no other condition but that he might say a few words to the king in their presence.

It chanced that Guy, the earl of Warwick, came to the place where Gaveston was in custody. Taking him out of the hands of his keepers, he carried him to the castle of Warwick, where they would have put him to death; but doubting and fearing the king's displeasure, they stayed a little. When one of the company (a man of sage and wise counsel, as my author writes) standing up among them, gravely declared the nature of the man, the wickedness of his own condition, the realm so greatly damaged by him, the nobles despised and rejected, the intolerable pride and ambition of the man, the ruin of things likely to ensue by him, and the great charges and expenses they had been at in so long pursuing and catching him. And now that they had gotten him in their hands, he exhorted them to use and take the occasion now present.

Briefly, he so persuaded the hearers, that immediately Gaveston was brought out and beheaded. And thus the one had called the earl of Warwick the black dog of Ardeine, was torn apart by the dog.

After this, great disturbance arose between the king and the lords. Having their forces lying about Dunstable, they sent a message to the king at London, to have their former acts confirmed. Gilbert, earl of Gloucester, the king's nephew (who neither held against the king, nor against the nobles), with the bishops and prelates of the realm, went between both parties with great diligence to attain unity. At which time two cardinals also came from Rome, with letters from the pope. The nobles responded to the message of the cardinals, then at St. Albans, that as for themselves, they would be welcome at all times; but regarding their letters (for they were unlettered men, and only brought up in war and feats of arms) they did not care for seeing them. Then a message was sent back, requiring that they would at least speak with the pope's legates, who purposely came with the intent of setting quiet and unity in the realm. They answered again, that they had bishops who were both godly and learned, by whose counsel alone they would be led, and not by any strangers, who did not know the true cause of their commotion. And therefore they said explicitly that they would have no foreigners or aliens to interfere in their business and affairs pertaining to the realm. Yet notwithstanding, through the mediation of the archbishop, and of the earl of Gloucester, the matter was so taken up at length, that the barons agreed to restore to the king or to his attorney of St. Albans, all the treasure, horses, and jewels of Gaveston which were taken at Newcastle, so that their requests would be granted. And so the matter was settled at that time.

Shortly after this (1312), Isabella the queen was delivered of a fair child at Windsor (the future Edward III). At his birth there was great rejoicing throughout the land, and especially the king was so joyed, that he began more and more to forget the sorrow and remembrance of Gaveston's death, and was more agreeable after that to the will of his nobles.

In the meantime the Scots began to be busy, and to rebel through means of Robert Bruce. Being chased out of Scotland by King Edward I, as mentioned before, he went into Norway, but then returned to Scotland. He so influenced the lords there, that in a short time he was made king of the realm, and warred so strongly upon those who took the king's part, that he won from them many castles and strongholds, and invaded the borders of England. The king hearing this, assembled a great army, and entered the realm of Scotland by sea. Robert Bruce with his Scots fought a strong battle against him at Bannockburn (1314). In the end, the Englishmen were discomfited. The Scots after this, exalted with pride and fierceness, invaded the realm of England, killing and destroying man, woman, and child. They won and wasted the north parts as far as York. ²²²

Great Famine in England.

Besides this, there was such a dearth of victuals, such a penury of all things oppressing the whole land, such a murrain (plague) among sheep and oxen, that men were compelled to eat horse-flesh, dogs, cats, mice, and whatever else they could get. Moreover, such a price of corn followed, that the king hardly had bread for the sustenance of his own household.

²²² Over a three year period, one English-held castle or outpost after another was captured and reduced: Linlithgow in 1310, Dumbarton in 1311, and Perth, by Bruce himself, in January 1312. Bruce also made raids into northern England, landing at Ramsey in the Isle of Man. He laid siege to Castle Rushen in Castletown, capturing it on 21 June 1313 and denying the English the island's strategic importance. (Scottish History Society, "Wars of Independence")

Moreover, there were some who stole children and ate them, and many died for the lack of victuals. Yet all this did not amend the king of his evil living.

The cause and origin of this great dearth, was partly the wars and dissension between the English and the Scots, through which a great part of the land was wasted. But the main cause was the intemperate season of the year. Contrary to the common course, it was so moist with an abundance of rain, that the grain laid in the earth could not ripen by the heat of the sun, nor grow by any nourishment. Those who had any tidbit to eat could not be satisfied, but soon were as hungry again. Those who had nothing, were driven to steal and rob; the rich were constrained to abandon and diminish their households; the poor died from famine. And not so much the lack of provisions, which could not be gotten, as the unwholesomeness of it when it was taken, so consumed the people, that the living were not sufficient to bury the dead. The corruption of the foods, because of the unseasonableness of the ground, was so infectious that many died of hot fevers, many of pestilence and other diseases. Not only were the bodies of men infected, but also the beasts by the putrefaction of the herbs and grass. The beasts fell into so great a murrain, that eating flesh was suspected and thought to be contagious. The price of a quarter of corn and salt, from the month of June to September, rose from thirty shillings to forty shillings. The flesh of horses was then precious to the poor. Many were driven to steal fat dogs and eat them. Some, again, were said in secret corners to eat their own children. Some would steal other men's children to kill and eat them. The prisoners and thieves who were in prison, for hunger fell upon those who were newly brought in to them, and tore them in pieces, eating them half alive. Briefly, this extreme penury would have extinguished and consumed (it was thought) most of the people of the land, had not the king by the advice of the Londoners given a command throughout his land, that no corn should at that time be turned to making drink. Such a Lord is God, thus able to do where he is disposed to strike. And yet we miserable creatures in our wealth and abundance will not cease daily to provoke His terrible majesty.

[201] A.D. 1311-1323.

The King Prohibits the Exactions of the Pope's Legates.

Soon after this, two legates came from Rome, sent by Pope John XXII, under pretense of setting an agreement between England and Scotland. For their charges and expenses, they required from every spiritual person four pence in every mark.²²³ But all their labor availed nothing; for as the legates were in the north parts with their whole family and train, they were robbed and despoiled of their horses, treasure, apparel, and whatever else they had. Being severely handled, they retired back to Durham, where they stayed waiting for an answer from the Scots. But when neither the pope's legacy nor his curse could obtain any place with the Scots, the legates returned to London where they first excommunicated and cursed as black as soot, all those arrogant and presumptuous robbers of Northumberland. Secondly, for replacing the losses which they incurred, they exacted from the clergy *eight* pence in every mark, to be paid to them. But the clergy would not agree, seeing that it was the legate's own covetousness (they said) that made them venture farther than they needed. The king being notified of this, and taking sides with his clergy, he directed his letters to the legates in the following form:

“The king to Master Rigand of Asserio, canon of Aurelia, greeting: we have taken notice of the clamors and lamentable petitions of the subjects of our realm, perceiving by it that you practice many and sundry inconveniences that are very strange, never before accustomed nor

²²³ A mark at the time was equal to 160 pence. So this was a 2.5% tax.

heard of in our realm — against the clergy and ecclesiastical persons, as well as against the laity, even to the utter oppression and impoverishing of many of our liege people. If this were to be winked at (God forbid) it may in process of time be the occasion of greater perils; for which we are (not without cause) moved, and not a little grieved. We command you therefore, that from now on, you do not practice, nor presume in any case to attempt anything within our realm, either against our clergy or laity, that may in any way tend to the prejudice of our royal person, or of our crown and regal dignity. Witness the king at Windsor, the sixth day of February, in the eleventh year of his reign.”

In the same year (1318), the king wrote to the same effect to the archbishop of Canterbury, to the archbishop of York, and to every other bishop throughout England. By these letters the greedy legates were restrained from their ravening purpose, taking what they could get, and settling a peace (such as it was) between the king and the earl of Lancaster. The legates were obliged to depart.

Besides the restraint mentioned above for “strange impositions,” it followed in the same year, that the king prohibited gathering Peter-pence, directed to the legate. The tenor of that prohibition follows.

A Prohibition of Peter-pence.

“The king to Master Rigand of Asserio, canon of Aurelia, greeting. We are given to understand that you demand and purpose to levy the Peter-penny within our realm, otherwise than the Peter-penny has been customarily levied in the time of any of our progenitors. In this, you are exercising grievous ecclesiastical censures, to the great annoyance and damnifying of the subjects of our realm. For the quick remedy of this, our loving subjects have made their humble supplication to us. The Peter-penny has up to now been customarily gathered and levied on lands and tenements within our realm, in a due manner and form. Not willing that any such unaccustomed impositions be made in any way on the lands and tenements of any our subjects within our dominions, we prohibit you, upon grievous penalty, strictly charging that you in no way presume to exact, gather, or levy the said Peter-penny in any other form or manner than it has been customarily gathered and levied in the time of our progenitors, or since the beginning of our reign — not until further order is taken in our high court of parliament, by the advice of the nobles and peers of our realm, such as may well be taken without prejudice of our crown, and the damage of our subjects. Witness the king at Westminster, the first day of March.”

To the same effect, letters were directed to the archbishops, deans, archdeacons, and the rest of the clergy.

Regarding the origin of his Peter-pence, mention was made already in the life of King Offa, and others (p. 86): yet to briefly recapitulate the matter, according to the rolls it follows thus:

“It is thus found recorded in ancient chronicles touching the Peter-pence of St. Peter (A.D. 187), Offa, king of Mercia, travelled up to Rome in the time of Pope Adrian I, to obtain the canonizing of St. Alban. And having performed his vow, visiting the college of English students which then flourished in Rome, he gave to the maintenance of the scholars of England, who were students in Rome, one penny out of every tenement within this realm that had land belonging to it, amounting to the yearly value of thirty pence.”

In the meantime, the lords and nobles of England, detesting the outrageous pride of the two Spensers, by which they daily worked both great dishonor to the king, and hindrance to the commonwealth, conspired against them. These Spensers being favored by the king, were as haughty and proud as Peter Gaveston was. Having much influence over the king, they were

greatly hated both by the nobles and commoners, who now gathering their forces together, made a request to the king, that he should remove the Spensers from his presence. To this end there was a parliament called in London, and the barons came together with a great company. At this parliament both the Spensers were banished from the land for the term of their lives; they took shipping at Dover, and so left the land. But it was not long after, before the king sent for them again, and set them in high authority. Therefore the barons again intending to reform this mischief, assembled their forces. But the king made haste gathering his people, and was stronger than the barons. He so pursued them in diverse places, that the barons *not* being fully joined together, were in the end chased so closely that Thomas, earl of Lancaster, was taken and put to death, with the rest of the nobility, numbering twenty-two of the greatest men, and greatest captains of this realm.

After the ruin of these noble personages, the king, as though he had gained a great conquest, began to triumph not a little with the Spensers, trusting and committing everything to their counsel — so far that both the queen and the other nobles were but little regarded.

Polydore Virgil, among other histories of our English nation which he deals with, also studied the acts and life of this king. Coming to write of the queen's going over into France, he draws much variety from different authors concerning the cause of it. The precise truth of the matter is as follows.

The king of England had been frequently called to the court of France, to do homage for the dukedom of Aquitaine, and other lands which the king held in France. When the king of England refused, the French king began to enter all those possessions which Edward held in France; upon which great contention and conflicts arose on both sides. At length in this year (1325) a parliament was called in London, where it was at last determined that certain men should be sent over to make an agreement between the two kings. To better further this agreement, it was thought good that Queen Isabella, sister to Charles V, the French king, should be sent over.²²⁴ Here it is to be noted first, that the queen's lands, possessions, and castles, upon the breach between the French king and the king of England a little earlier, were seized into the king's hands, and the queen was put to her pension, etc. Thus the queen being sent over, she had but few to attend upon her. Only Sir John Cromwell, baron, and four knights, took their passage into France.

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Queen Isabella and Prince Edward Proclaimed Traitors – 1326.

By their mediation it was concluded that the king of England (if he would not come himself to do his homage) should give to his son Edward, the dukedom of Aquitaine, and the earldom of Pontigne, and so he should come to make his homage to the king, and to possess the same. Upon this, deliberation was taken in the council of England. But the two Spensers, fearing either to take the voyage with the king, or else to remain behind without the king, so appointed that Prince Edward was sent. Afterwards this would prove their utter desolation. For all things being quieted and ordered according to the agreement in France, King Edward of England sent for his wife and his son to return from France. But though she sent home most of her family, she refused to return herself; for what cause is not fully certain.²²⁵ The king seeing this, issued a proclamation requiring the queen and his son to return by a

²²⁴ Isabella was sister to Charles, Philip, and Louis, all of whom became kings of France.

²²⁵ Other historians say she announced her refusal to return to England until the two Spensers were removed from court. She had become the mistress of Roger Mortimer of Wigmore. With Mortimer and other baronial exiles she crossed to Essex in 1326 and routed the forces of Edward and the Spensers.

certain day, or else be proclaimed traitors to the king, and to the realm. Notwithstanding, the queen persisted in her purpose, and refused to return unless the other nobles who had fled might also be permitted to return safely with her. The king immediately had them both proclaimed as traitors.

Here then a great hatred began between king and king, and between the king and the queen, and much preparation for war. Then the king (counselled by the Spensers) sent secretly to procure the death of the queen and of his son, through the earl of Richmond, the queen's familiar friend. But that was prevented and utterly frustrated. The queen, however, doubting what corruption might exist in the court of France, removed from there, and was received, with her son Edward, joyously and honorably in the court or country of the earl of Henawde, or Heinault, where a marriage was concluded between Edward her son, and the earl's daughter. When this was proclaimed in England, several men of honor and name came over to the queen. Soon after, the earl of Heinault prepared a body of 500 men of arms to send over with the young prince and his mother to England. The fame of this shortly spread throughout the realm. The king made all provision to have the havens and ports securely kept, to resist the landing of his enemies. On the other side, and with no less preparation, the queen provided all things necessary to her expedition. When she saw her time, she hastened to the seacoast with Prince Edward, Lord Edmund, earl of Kent (the king's brother), Sir Roger Mortimer, the Lord Wygmore, and other exiles of England. They were also accompanied by the band of Heinaulters, of whom Sir John Heinault, the earl's brother, was a captain. Isabella had with her 2,757 soldiers, both Englishmen and foreigners. She took shipping, and had such a favorable wind, that they landed in England, near Harwich, in Suffolk.²²⁶ After her landing, the Earl Marshal and the earl of Leicester joined her, along with other barons, knights, and bishops — namely, the bishops of Lincoln, Hereford, Durham, and Ely. The archbishop of Canterbury, though he did not come himself, he sent his aid, and money. Thus the queen, well furnished with both men and provisions, set out toward London; so that the further she came, the more her number increased daily. The king's power on the other hand decreased; so that almost no one in all the realm could be hired with any wages to fight on the king's behalf against the queen. Nor did the queen's army hurt any man or child, either in goods or anything else, along the way.

At the arrival of the queen, the king was in London. At first he would not believe it to be true. Afterward he fortified the tower of London with men and provisions, committing the charge of it to John Eltham, his younger son. Leaving Walter Stapleton, bishop of Exeter, behind him to rule the city of London. Hearing daily the great recourse of the people who drew to the queen, Edward fled with a small company westward toward Wales. But before his departure from London, he caused a proclamation to be made, in which all persons were charged, upon forfeiture of life and goods, with all their power, to rise and invade the rebels and destroy them all. Only the life of the queen, his son, and his brother, were reserved. Also that no man should help, rescue, or relieve the rebels, with goods, victuals, or otherwise. It was also proclaimed that whoever brought to the king the head and body of Sir Roger Mortimer, either dead or alive, would have a thousand pounds from the king's coffers.

On the other side, the queen issued her own proclamation in which it was forbidden to take or spoil violently any man's goods against the will of the owner, under pain of losing his finger if it were three-pence: of his hand if it were six-pence: of his head if it were twelve-pence. Moreover, whoever brought to the queen the head of Hugh Spenser the younger,

²²⁶ Harwich is actually in Essex. But Suffolk, with Norfolk to the north, and Essex to the south, are all in East Anglia.

would receive two thousand pounds from the queen for so doing. This done, the queen sent her letters to the city of London for aid and succor, to subdue the oppressor of the realm.

These letters being published and perused, the bishop of Exeter, to whom the rule of the city was committed, sent to the mayor for the keys of the gates, using such sharp words in the king's name, that a conflict began to kindle between him and the citizens; so that the commoners in their rage took the bishop and beheaded him with two of his household, at the Standard in Cheapside. Then the king, with Hugh Spenser, Sir Robert Baldock (the chancellor), and the earl of Arundel, went into Wales. The queen so pursued them, that they took Sir Hugh Spenser the father, who being drawn and torn, they at last hung up at Bristol in iron chains (A.D. 1326). As the king was thus fleeing, the queen had it proclaimed throughout her army, that the king should come and appear, and so receive his kingdom back, if he would be comforting to his liege subjects. When he did not appear, Prince Edward his son was proclaimed high keeper of the realm.

In the meantime, Henry earl of Lancaster, brother to the good Earl Thomas who was beheaded, also Lord William Souch, and Master Uphowel, were sent by the queen into Wales to pursue the king. There they took him and sent him to the castle of Kenilworth. They took Hugh Spenser the son, and Sir Robert Baldock, chancellor, and Sir John Earl of Arundel, and brought them all to the town of Hereford. Soon after, Hugh Spenser the son was drawn and hanged on a gallows, fifty feet high, and then beheaded and quartered. His quarters were sent into the four quarters of the realm. Sir John of Arundel was beheaded, Sir Robert Baldock was put into Newgate at London, where shortly after he pined away and died among the thieves. This being done, a parliament was assembled at London, from which a message was sent to the king, that if he would resign his crown, his son would have it after him: if not, another would take it to whomever the lot would give it. Whereupon the king, being constrained to yield his crown to his son, was kept in prison. There he is said to have felt great repentance. It is thought by some writers, that the following year, while in prison, the king was miserably slain by means of Sir Roger Mortimer. He was buried at Gloucester, after he had reigned nineteen years.

In the time and reign of king Edward II, the college of Cambridge, called Michael House, was founded and built by Sir Henry Stanton, knight, for the use and increase of learning. About the same time was Nicolas de Lyra, who wrote the ordinary Gloss of the Bible. Also William Ockham, a worthy divine, and of a right sincere judgment, as the times then would either give or suffer.

Among those who fell into trouble with this king during his contention with his barons, was one Adam, bishop of Hereford. Being impeached of treason with others, he was arrested in the parliament. Many things were laid against him there, for taking part with those who rose against the king, with other matters and heinous rebukes, etc. The bishop for a great while answered nothing to these charges. At length, claiming the liberties and privileges of the church, the bishop answered to the king in this form:

“I, a humble minister and member of the holy church of God, and bishop consecrate (although unworthy) cannot, and should not answer to these high matters without the authority of the archbishop of Canterbury, my direct judge, next under the high bishop of Rome, whose suffragan I am, and the consent likewise of my other fellow bishops.”

[203] A.D. 1323-1327.

After this, the archbishop and other bishops with him were ready to make humble intercession for him to the king, and they did so. But when the king would not be won nor

turned with any supplication, the bishop, together with the archbishop and the clergy, coming with their crosses, took Adam away, claiming him for the church, without making any more answer. They charged, moreover, none to presume to any further lay hands on him, under the censures of the church and excommunication. The king, moved by this boldness and stoutness of the clergy, commanded notwithstanding, to proceed in judgment. A jury of twelve men proceeded upon the inquiry of his cause. Finding and pronouncing the bishop to be guilty, the king immediately caused all his goods and possessions to be confiscated to himself. Moreover, the king had Adam's plate and all his household provisions thrown out of his house into the street; yet he remained still under the protection and defense of the archbishop. This archbishop was Walter Winchelsey. After him succeeded Simon Mepham in the same see of Canterbury, A.D. 1327. (Ex Thorn. Walsingham).

Emperor Louis IV Troubled, and at Last Poisoned by the Pope.

After the decease of Pope Clement V, the Romish see stood vacant for two years and three months. Pope John XXII, a Cistercian monk, was next elected (1316). He sat in that papacy for eighteen years. He was stout and inflexible — given so much to heaping up riches, that he proclaimed them heretics, who taught that Christ and his apostles had no possessions of their own in this world. At this time lived emperor Louis IV of Bavaria (r. 1328-1347), a worthy man; who had no less contention with this pope, and others who followed him, than did Frederick, who was mentioned before in the time of King Henry III. This contention continued for twenty-four years. The cause and first origin of this tragic conflict rose upon the constitution of Clement V, predecessor to this pope. He ordained that the emperors might be called *kings of the Romans*, but they might not enjoy the title or right of the empire to be called *emperors*, without their confirmation by the pope. Therefore, because this emperor used the imperial dignity in Italy, before he was authorized by the pope, the pope excommunicated the emperor. Notwithstanding that the emperor several times proffered himself to make treaty of peace and concord, yet the pope would not bend. The writings of both parties are still extant, in which the bishop of Rome makes his boast, that he had full power to create and depose kings and emperors at his pleasure.

In the same time were several learned men who, seeing the matter, greatly condemned the bishops of Rome's doings. Among them was William Ockham, whose treatises were afterwards condemned by the pope, for writing against the temporal jurisdiction of their see. Another was named Marsilius, who wrote the book entitled 'Defensor Pacis' (Defender of Peace) which was given into the hands of the emperor. In it, the controversy of the pope's unlawful jurisdiction in temporal affairs is largely disputed, and the usurped authority of that see is set forth to the utmost. It is found in some writers, that a great cause of this variance was that one of the emperor's secretaries in some of his letters, unknown to the emperor, had likened the papal see to the beast rising out of the sea in the Apocalypse. At length, after much suit was made to the pope at Avignon, the emperor could not obtain his coronation. Coming to Rome, he was received with great honor, where he and his wife were both crowned by the full consent of all the lords and cardinals there. Not long after this, the pope died at Avignon in France. After John XXII succeeded Benedict XII, who reigned for seven years. He confirmed and prosecuted the censures and cursings that his predecessor had published against Emperor Louis IV. Moreover, he deprived him of his imperial crown, and also of his dukedom of Bavaria.

After him followed Pope Clement VI (r. 1342-1352), a man of the most furious and cruel disposition. Renewing the former excommunications made by his predecessors, he had his

letters posted on church doors, in which he threatened and denounced most terrible thunderbolts against the Emperor Louis, unless within three days he would satisfy God and the church, and renounce the imperial possession of the crown. Upon this, the emperor came to Frankfort, and there he was ready to stand in all things to the ordinance of the pope. He sent his orators to the court of Rome, to entreat the pope's favor and good will towards him. The pope answered these messengers, that he would never pardon the emperor before he gave up and confessed his errors and heresies, and resigned his empire into the hands of the pope. He must submit himself, his children, and all his goods to the will and pleasure of the bishop, declaring that he would not receive back any part of these, except upon the pope's good grace, as his will should be to restore them.

The pope also sent to the emperor certain written conditions for him to sign. The princes and electors, seeing the conditions — some of which spoke to the malicious defacing and destruction of the empire, abhorring its wickedness — desired the emperor to stand to the defense of the imperial dominion, as he had begun, promising that their assistance and aid to the utmost would not be wanting. Upon that, other orators were sent to Pope Clement from the princes, desiring him to abstain from such articles conceived against the state and majesty of the empire. The pope surmised that all this sprung from the Emperor Louis, to the utter subversion of him and all his posterity. On Maundy Thursday the pope issued the blackest curses against the emperor, renewing all the former processes of his predecessor against him, as being both a heretic and a schismatic. He commanded, moreover, the princes electors to proceed in choosing a *new* emperor. Upon which, the archbishop of Cologne, the duke of Saxony, and some other electors, being bribed by John king of Bohemia, elected his son Charles emperor (1347). In the meantime, whatever sorrow there was among the princes and citizens of Germany, and whatever complaints were made against Pope Clement and those electors, cannot be expressed. For as they were all together at Spire in a general assembly, so there was none among them who allowed the election of Charles, or who cared for the pope's process, promising all to adhere and continue faithful subjects to Louis IV, their lawful emperor. But Louis, remembering his oath made before to the pope, voluntarily and willingly gave up his imperial dignity, and went to Burgravia, where shortly after, through the procurement of Pope Clement, poison was given him to drink. And there the good and gentle emperor, wickedly persecuted and murdered by the pope, fell down dead. I may well count him among the innocent and blessed martyrs of Christ. For if the cause being righteous makes a martyr, what papist can justly disprove his cause or faith? If persecution joined to it causes martyrdom, what martyr could be more persecuted than the one who, having three popes like three bull dogs upon him, at length was devoured by them.

Pope Clement VI first reduced the year of jubilee to every fiftieth year, which before was kept only on the hundredth year. And so, being absent to Avignon (which he then purchased with his money to the See of Rome) he had it celebrated at Rome (A.D. 1350). In this year the number of pilgrims going in and coming out every day at Rome, was estimated at 5000. The bull of Pope Clement, given out in that year of jubilee, proceeded in these words: —

“Whatever person or persons, for devotion's sake, will take their pilgrimage to the holy city, the same day when he sets forth out of his house, he may choose for himself whatever confessor or confessors, either on the way, or wherever else he chooses. To these confessors we grant, by our authority, the plenary power to absolve all papal cases, as fully as if we were present there in our proper person. Also, we grant that whoever being truly confessed, chances to die on the way, shall be quit and absolved of all his sins. Moreover, we command the angels

of Paradise to take his soul out of his body, being absolved, and to carry it into the glory of Paradise, etc.”

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And in another bull, he says,

“We will that no pain of hell shall touch him; granting, moreover to all persons, signed with the holy cross, power, and authority to deliver and release three or four souls, whom they themselves please, out of the pains of purgatory,” etc.

King Edward III – 1327.

After the imprisonment of King Edward II, as expressed above, his son Edward was crowned king of England, being about fifteen years of age. He reigned for fifty years. He was a prince of great temperance, very expert in feats of arms, and no less fortunate in all his wars than his father was unfortunate before him. He was worthily commended for his liberality and clemency, and briefly, he was famous and excellent in all princely virtues. Concerning the memorable acts of this prince, both in war and in peace, such as, how he subdued the Scots, had great victories by the sea, how he conquered France (A.D. 1332), won Calais (A.D. 1348), and took the French king prisoner. How the French arms were first brought in by him, and joined with the English arms; also how the Order of the Garter was first invented and ordained by him (A.D. 1356). How in his parliament at Nottingham, he decreed that all those in Flanders or elsewhere, who had skill in making cloth, might peaceably inhabit the land, and be welcome. (For three years before it was enacted, no wool was to be transported over the sea, which was to bridle the pride of the Flemings, who then loved the sacks of wool better than the nation of Englishmen.) All these, with other noble acts of this worthy prince, although they are fully treated of in other chronicles; yet according to the order I have begun (saying something about each king’s reign, even if not pertinent to our ecclesiastical history), I have mentioned them here, making haste to other matters, shortly and compendiously abridging them out of many and various authors.

The coronation of King Edward III and all the pomp of it had no sooner ended, than Robert Bruce king of Scotland thought this was a fit time for his purpose, to invade England. He understood the state and government of the realm to be (as it was indeed) in the queen, the young king, the earl of Kent, and sir Roger Mortimer; and that the lords and barons, as he was informed, scarcely well agreed among themselves. So about the feast of Easter, he sent his ambassadors with heralds and letters of defiance to young King Edward III, and to the queen and the council, declaring that his purpose was to enter and invade the realm of England with fire and sword, etc.

The king and queen made speedy preparation for this expedition. The noblemen provided themselves with all necessary things; the English captains and soldiers (their bands thoroughly furnished) were ready at their appointed time and place. After this, the king set forward his army towards Durham, and encamped himself nearby. He also sent the lord Vifford and the lord Mounbrey to Carlisle with a sufficient company to keep that entrance. He also sent the lord marshal of England to keep the town of Newcastle with a sufficient company to defend it and the adjoining country.

But the Scots secretly passed the river between the two towns into England, few being aware of it till the great fires which the Scots had kindled and made in England, betrayed those who came burning and destroying the country all about as far as Stanhope-park. This being declared to the king, he commanded his army to march towards them with all speed. But the

Scots, understanding the superior force of the king, always kept the advantage of the hills. They retired in the night from one to another, so that without great advantage on the one side, and hazard on the other, the king could not set upon them.

Thus the Scots kept the advantage of the hills in the day time, and retiring in the night time till they came to another hill, they came near the bank of that river where they first passed over. There they made a show to offer battle to the king on the morrow. Whereupon the king was busied putting his men and divisions in readiness to fight the next morning, but they were wearied in pursuing the Scots from place to place. The Scots in the meantime crossed over the river, and excited the danger of the king. It would have availed the king very little to pursue them, as the wily Scots knew full well. For the joy of it, Lord William Douglas, one of the Scot's generals, with two hundred horses, gave alarm in the king's camp. They came so near that he cut certain of the lines of the king's tent with his sword, and retired to his company without great loss of any of his men. A truce of four years was soon after concluded between them.

After the truce of four years, the king prepared another army against Scotland, and wasted the land, burnt, destroyed, and took towns and castles with small resistance or none. And during the next six months, he did what he pleased in that land, without any battle offered to him. For the king of Scots was but a child, not above fifteen years of age, and lacked good captains to defend the realm. ²²⁷

Origin of the Hundred Years War. ²²⁸

Then Sir Robert de Artois, a nobleman of France, descended of the royal blood, being in England with the king, often put him in mind of his good and rightful title to the crown of France. King Edward was not unwilling to hear of this, but often took delight in reasoning and debating the matter with him. Yet he thought it not good to make any attempt without advised and cautious counsel. Therefore, calling together certain of his council, he sought their deliberate advice touching the matter. In brief, it was thought good by them, that the king should send certain ambassadors over to the earl of Heinnault, whose daughter he had married, to hear as well his advice and counsel in this; and also to learn what friends and aid might be procured by him and his means. The king appointed for this ambassage the bishop of Lincoln with two baronets, and two doctors. In a short space of time they returned to the king with this answer: that not only the earl's counsel and advice should be at the service of the king of England, but also the whole country of Heinnault. And further, that he would procure for the king greater aid, as the duke of Brabant, his cousin-germain,²²⁹ and a powerful prince, the duke of Guerles, the archbishop of Cologne, the marquess of Juliers, etc., who were all good men of war, and able to gather ten thousand fighting men. This answer well pleased the king, and made him very joyous. But this counsel of the king, secret though it was, came to the French king's ears. Whereupon he stayed the voyage of the cross which he then had in hand, sending out countermands to stay it, till he knew further the purpose of the king of England.

The king hereupon took shipping, and when he had consulted with all the lords of the empire in this matter, and understood their fidelity, he repaired to the emperor, at whose

²²⁷ Robert the Bruce died in 1329. His son then became king David II, at age five. But the kingdom was left in the hands of Robert's most trusted lieutenant, Moray, until his son reached adulthood.

²²⁸ The Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) was an intermittent conflict between England and France, triggered by Edward III's claim to the French throne through his mother, Isabella, sister of Charles IV and daughter of Philip IV.

²²⁹ *Cousin-germain*: a son or daughter of one's uncle or aunt.

hands he was well entertained and honorably received. King Philip hearing this, prepared his army, and rigged his navy, that as soon as the king entered the dominion of France, they might also enter into England, requiring like for like.

War Between Edward and the French King – 1332.

The king of England after the feast of St. John Baptist, according to his purpose, prepared all things for such an expedition, conducting his army and gathering a greater force in the empire, as was promised, using the *emperor's* authority in this as his lieutenant general, although altogether at the charge of the king of England. The French king, as soon as King Edward had landed his army at Machelen in Flanders, sent certain ships to the coast of England. They had been lying ready and waiting for such opportunity. On a Sunday, while the townsmen were at church, little looking for any such matter, these ships entered the haven of Southampton, took the town and despoiled it. They shamefully ill-treated the women, burnt, killed, took captives, and carried away rich spoils to their ships, and then departed into France. Further, as the king of England had allied himself with the noblemen of the empire, and had the friendly favor of the emperor, so the French king had made league and alliance with David II, the king of Scots, and immediately sent garrisons and bands into Scotland to keep the Englishmen engaged. King Edward, departing from Machelen (Belgium), moved his host toward Heinault till they came to Cambray, and besieged it with 40,000 men, while another company went to St. Quintin.

[205] A.D. 1327-1340.

But neither there, nor at Cambray, nor elsewhere, was anything remarkable achieved. But the summer being well spent, and the king of England prevailing little in the siege of Cambray – being strong in situation, and well defended with men and ammunition – he broke up the siege, and marched further into the heart of France. Afterwards (without any battle either given or taken) he returned with his army to Gaunt.

The winter then drew on, and the king thought it best for a season to return to England with his army, giving up the wars till the next spring. When he came to London, he was told of the great spoil the Frenchmen had made at Southampton. He answered that within one year, he had no doubt, they would be well paid and recompensed. In the spring, the king again prepared his army, and rigged his navy, purposing to land in Flanders. But the archbishop of Canterbury (then lord chancellor) having understood that the French forces were on the sea, and watching for the king, told him of it; he desired him to go more strongly or else not to venture. But the king not crediting the archbishop, and being angry with him, said that he would go forward. Whereupon the bishop resigned the chancellorship and removed himself from the king's council. Then the king consulted further with Lord Morley his admiral, and others. He furnished himself with a greater force, and embarked. So that a few days before midsummer, he was upon the sea with a great fleet. The French king, to stop his passage, had a great navy ready, well near 400 sail ships, before the town of Sluse. And he had made the Christopher of England (which the Frenchmen had captured at Southampton) their admiral's ship. Between these two navies there was a long and terrible fight. But in the end the victory, by God's grace, fell to the king of England (a fight in which he himself was personally engaged). So that of 30,000 Frenchmen, few or none escaped alive, and 200 sail ships were taken, in one of which were found 400 dead bodies.

This victory being achieved, and its fame spreading abroad in England, it was not believed, till letters came from the king to Prince Edward his son, then at Waltham, written in 1340 and directed to the bishops and prelates of the realm. The effect of them follows here:

“We thought it good to intimate to you, the bountiful benignity of God’s great clemency poured upon us of late, for your true certainty and rejoicing. It is not unknown (we suppose) to you, and to our other faithful subjects, who also have been partakers with us of this, with what storms of boisterous wars of late we have been tossed and shaken, as in the great ocean. But although the rising surges of the sea are marvellous, yet more marvellous is the Lord above, who turning the tempest into a calm in such great dangers, has so mercifully regarded us. For whereas we recently ordained our passage upon urgent causes into Flanders, the Lord Philip de Valois, our bitter enemy, learning of it, laid against us a mighty navy of ships, intending thereby either to take us, or at least to stop our voyage. If this voyage had been staid, it would have been the cutting off of all the great enterprises intended by us and taken in hand. And moreover, we ourselves would have been brought into great confusion. But the God of mercies, seeing us so distressed in such perils and dangers, has graciously, and beyond man’s expectation, sent to us great succor, the strength of fighting soldiers, and a prosperous wind after our own desires. By the means and help of these, we set out of the haven into the seas, where we soon perceived our enemies well appointed and prepared with a main multitude to set upon us, on midsummer-day last past. Against them, notwithstanding, Christ our Lord and Savior has rendered to us the victory, through a strong and vehement conflict.

“In this conflict, a mighty number of our enemies were destroyed, and well near their whole navy was taken — with some loss also on our part, but nothing in comparison to theirs. By reason of this, we do not doubt that our passage by the seas hereafter will be quieter and safer for our subjects, and also many other advantages will ensue, as we have good cause to hope well of them. For this cause, devoutly considering the heavenly grace so mercifully wrought upon us, we render most humble thanks and praise to Christ our Lord and Savior, beseeching him, that as he has been and always is, ready to anticipate our necessities in time of opportunity, so he will ever continue his helping hand towards us, and so direct us here temporally, that we may reign and joy with him in heaven eternally. And in like sort we require your charity, that you also rising up with us to the praise of God alone, who has begun so favorably to work with us to our goodness, in your prayers and divine service, instantly recommend us to the Lord, while we are travelling here in these foreign countries, studying not only to recover our right here in France, but also to advance the whole catholic church of Christ, and to rule our people in justice. And also that you call upon the clergy and people, every one through his diocese, to do the same, invoking the name of our Savior, that of his mercy he will give to us his humble servant a docible (teachable) heart, so to judge and rule rightly upon this, doing that which he has commanded, that at length we may attain to that which he has promised, etc.”

After this victory the king passed into Flanders, and came to Gaunt in Brabant, where he had left the queen. She joyfully received him, having delivered her fourth son a little before. His name was John, commonly called John of Gaunt, who was earl of Richmond and duke of Lancaster. At Villenorth the king assembled his council, at which the noblemen of Flanders, Brabant, and Heinnault, joining together in most firm league, the one to help and defend the other, with the king of England, against the French king. They purposed and determined to march from there toward Tournay to besiege it. The French king, understanding their counsel, fortified and supplied it before their arrival. Furthermore to stop King Edward, he sent a great army with King David of Scotland, to invade England, thereby causing the king to remove his siege sooner.

This David (with the aid of the Scots and Frenchmen) so far succeeded, that they recovered almost all of Scotland. Then they invaded England, and came with their army, wasting and burning the country before them. They came as far as Durham, and then returned back into Scotland, where they recovered all their holds again, saving the town of Berwick. Edinburgh

they took by a stratagem or subtle device practiced by Lord William Douglas and others. Apparelling themselves in poor men's habits, as suppliers of corn, provender, and other things, demanded of the porter early in the morning whether they had need of them. Not mistrusting them, the porter opened the outward gate, where they were to wait till the captain arose. Perceiving the porter had the keys to the inward gate, they threw down their sacks in the outer gate so that it might not be shut again, slew the porter, and took from him the keys to the town. Then they blew their horns as a warning to their bands, who laid not far off. Coming quickly, and finding the gates already opened, they entered suddenly, and killed as many as resisted them, and so they obtained the city of Edinburgh.

At the same time, the French king gathered together an army, purposing to raise the siege of Tournay. Among others, he sent for the king of Scots, who came to him with a great force, besides other noblemen of France. So that the French king had a great army, and thought himself able enough to raise the siege. But for all this, he dared not yet approach the king of England so near as to engage him in battle, but kept himself aloof with his army, in a sure place for his better defense. The king of England wasted, burnt, spoiled, and destroyed the countryside for twenty miles around Tournay, took many strongholds and towns, slew over 300 men of arms, and killed 14 noblemen — including the Lord of Duskune, of Maurisleou, of Rely, of Chastillion, of Melly, of Fenis, of Hamelar, Mountfaucon, and other barons.

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He also slew over 130 knights, all men of great possessions and prowess, and took 300 other small cities and towns. Yet for all this, the French king dared neither rescue his towns nor relieve his own men. But of his great army he lost (which is to be marvelled at, being in the midst of his own country) by famine and other inconveniencies, and for lack of water, more than 20,000 men, without fighting any battles.

Truce Between the Kings of England and France.

Whereupon at the entreaty of Philip, by his ambassadors to the king and by the mediation of the Lady Jane, a one-year truce was concluded. Lady Jane was sister to king Philip, and mother to the earl of Heinault; king Edward had married Lady Jane's daughter.

As soon as this truce was finished. King Edward broke up his camp, removed his siege from Tournay, and came again to Gaunt. From there (very early in the morning) he with a small company took shipping, and came by sea to the tower of London; very few or none were aware of it. He was greatly displeased with some of his council and high officers (through their fault he was constrained, against his will, to condescend to the truce, not having money to maintain his wars). He commanded the Lord John Stonehore, chief justice of England, and Sir John Poultney, with various others, to be apprehended and brought to him to the Tower. The next morning he sent for the bishop of Chichester, Lord Wake (the treasurer), and others who were in authority and office, and commanded them all to be kept as prisoners in the Tower, only the bishop being excepted.

The history regarding this matter, reports that at this time the king had evil substitutes and covetous officers under him. They attended more to their own gain than to the public honor and commodity of the realm, and left the king destitute and naked of money. John Stratford, then archbishop of Canterbury, was also suspected of this crime.

About the year A.D. 1341, two cardinals were sent from the pope to seek three additional years of truce with King Edward, to be concluded with the French king. This was all by the

pope's means. Here it is to be understood that it was not to the pope's purpose to allow the king of England to reign over so many countries.

The next year, which was A.D. 1342, the emperor, who before had shown great courtesy to King Edward in his first voyage — insofar that he made him his vicar or vicegerent-general, and also offered Edward aid against the French king — now (either turned by inconstancy, or seduced by the pope) writes contrary letters to Edward, revoking the vicegerentship that was granted to Edward, and befriending the French king.

In the meantime, Pope Benedict XII died. After him succeeded Pope Clement VI. It is reported of him, that he was very liberal and bountiful to his cardinals, enriching them with goods and possessions — not of his own however, but with the ecclesiastical dignities and preferments of the church of England. King Edward being offended by this, voided and frustrated all those provisions of the pope. He charged and commanded that no person whatever should busy himself with any such provisions, under pain of imprisonment and losing his life (A.D. 1344).

Letter of the King and Nobles of England to the Pope.

Pope Clement began to make new provisions for two of his cardinals, of the benefices and churches that would next be vacant, besides bishoprics and abbotships, worth 2000 marks. The proctors of the cardinals were sent down to collect them. But the king and nobility of the realm not suffering such proceedings under pain of imprisonment, caused the proctors to immediately leave the realm. The nobles and commoners shortly after wrote a fruitful epistle to the pope, for the liberties and maintenance of the English church, which the pope and the cardinals were not able to answer. The argument of this letter is as follows:

*The letter of the king of England, and the nobles of the same,
to the pope, against the reservations and provisions which he had in England.*

“To the most holy father in God, Lord Clement, by the grace of God, of the holy church of Rome, and of the universal church, chief and high bishop; his humble and devout children, the princes, dukes, earls, barons, knights, citizens, burgesses, and all the commonalty of the realm of England, assembled at the parliament held at Westminster the fifteenth day of May 1543; send devout kissings of his holy feet, with all humble reverence and humility. Most holy father, the holy discretion, government, and equity, which appears to be in you, and should be so of duty (being so high and holy a prelate, and head of the holy church), by whom the holy universal church and people of God ought to be enlightened, as by the sun-beams, gives us good hope and likelihood that the just petitions (to the honor of Jesus Christ and holy church, and your holiness also) declared by us, shall be graciously heard and considered by you; and that all errors and other iniquities should be quite taken away and removed. In their place, may fruitful exploits and necessary remedies (by the grace of the Holy Spirit which you in so high an estate have received) likewise be graciously ordained and disposed by you. Wherefore most holy father we all (upon great deliberation and common assent) come to your holiness, showing and declaring that the noble kings of England, our progenitors, our ancestors, and we — according to the grace of the Holy Spirit given to them and to us, every one according to his devotion — have established, founded, and endowed within the realm of England, churches, cathedrals, colleges, abbeys, priories, and other houses of religion. And to the prelates and governors of the same places we have given lands, possessions, patrimonies, franchises, advowsons,²³⁰ and patronages of dignities, revenues, offices, churches, with many other benefices. Whereby the service of God and the faith of Christ might have been honored and

²³⁰ *Advowson*: the right in English law of presenting a nominee to a vacant ecclesiastical benefice.

had in reverence, that the hospitals and alms-houses that are made, with all the churches and edifices, might be honestly kept and maintained, and that devout prayers might be made in those places for the founders, and the poor parishioners be aided and comforted. And such only ought to have the cure of it,²³¹ who are able to hear confessions; and in their own natural tongue are otherwise fit to inform and teach their parishioners.

“And because (most holy father) you cannot well come to the notice of such diverse errors and faults, nor yet understand the conditions of these places, being so far off, unless your holiness is informed and notified — we having the perfect intelligence and understanding of the said errors and defaults of these places within the realm, have thought it fit to signify the same to your holiness: that diverse reservations, provisions, and collations by your predecessors apostolic of Rome, and by you, most holy father, in your time, have been granted — and that more largely than they have been accustomed to be — to diverse persons as well as strangers, from many nations, some of whom are our enemies, having no understanding at all of the language and condition of those over whom they have the government and cure. Whereby,

- a great number of souls are in peril,
- a great many of their parishioners are in danger,
- the service of God is destroyed,
- the alms and devotion of all men are diminished,
- the hospitals are perished,
- the churches with their appurtenances are decayed,
- charity is withdrawn,
- the good and honest persons of our realm are unadvanced,
- the charge and government of souls is not regarded,
- the devotion of the people is restrained,
- many poor scholars are unpreferred,
- and the treasure of the realm is carried out against the minds and intents of the founders.

“All these errors, defaults and slanders, most holy father, we neither can nor ought to permit or endure. We therefore most humbly request of your holiness, that the slanders, errors and defaults which we have declared to you, may be considered through your great discretion; and that it may please you that such reservations, provisions, and collations may be utterly annulled, so that from now on the same are no longer used among us.

[207] A.D. 1340-1346.

“And to take such order and remedy in this, so that the benefices, edifices, rights, with their appurtenances, may to the honor of God, be occupied, defended, and governed by our own countrymen. And that it may further please your holiness, that by your letters you signify to us, without delay, what your pleasure is regarding this our lawful request; so that we may do our endeavor with diligence in this for the remedy, correction, and amendment of those enormities specified above. In witness of this, we have set our seals to these letters patent. Given in the full parliament at Westminster, the eighteenth day of May, A.D. 1343.”

The king shortly after sent over his proctors, the Earl of Lancaster and Derby, Hugh Spenser,²³² Lord Ralph Stafford, with the bishop of Exeter and others, to the pope’s court, to discuss and plead about the right of his title before the pope. To whom Pope Clement VI, not long after, sent down this message: how Louis, Duke of Bavaria the emperor, whom the pope had deposed before, had submitted himself to him in all things; and therefore deserved at his hands the benefit of absolution; and how the pope had conferred and restored the

²³¹ *Cure*: spiritual charge over someone; the care of the soul; the office of a parish priest or of a curate.

²³² Obviously not one of the two Spensers (or Despensers), who had been executed in 1326.

empire to him justly and graciously, which before he held unjustly, etc. When the king heard this message, being moved to anger, he replied, saying that if the pope also agreed and compounded with the French king, then he was ready to fight with them both.”

During this year (1343), pence, half-pence, and farthings, began to be coined in the Tower. And the next year (1344), the castle of Windsor (where the king was born) began to be repaired. In this house, what was called the round table was situated, the diameter of which, from the one side to the other, was 200 feet. For the expenses of this house, there was allowed one hundred pounds weekly for maintaining the king’s chivalry, till at length (because of the French wars) it came down to nine pounds a week.

During the same year, the clergy of England granted to the king tenths (tithes) for three years. In recompence for these, the king granted to them his charter, containing these privileges: that no archbishop or bishop should be arraigned before his justices, if the said clergyman submits and claims his right as a clergyman, professing himself to be a member of holy church; doing so, he shall not be bound to come before the justices. And if it is laid to their charge that they have married two wives, or married a widow, the justices shall have no power to proceed against them. But the cause shall be reserved to the spiritual court, etc.

About this present time at the setting up of the round table, the king made Prince Edward, his eldest son, the first Prince of Wales. All this while the truce continued between the two kings, although it is thought that the French king made many attempts to infringe it. Whereupon Henry Earl of Lancaster, with 600 men at arms, and as many archers, was sent over to Gascony the year after (A.D. 1345). There he so valiantly behaved himself that he subdued 55 townships to the king, and took 23 noblemen prisoners encountering with the French at Allebroke. He dealt with the soldiers so courteously and liberally that it was a joy to them, and a preferment to fight under him. His manner in winning any town, was to reserve little or nothing for himself, but to divide the whole spoil to his soldiers. One example is mentioned in the author (whom I cite): how the earl in winning the town of Briers, had granted to every soldier for his booty, the house with all its contents which he might obtain by victory. Among his other soldiers was one who took a certain house which contained the mint and coined money for that country. When the soldier had found it, in breaking up a house where the gross metal was not yet perfectly worked, he came to the earl, declaring to him the treasure, to know what was his pleasure with it. The earl answered that the house was his, and whatever he found in it. Afterward the soldier, finding a whole mint of pure silver ready coined, again informed the earl, as he thought such treasure too great for his portion. The earl again declared that he had given him the whole house once, and what he had once given, he would not take it back again, as children usually play. And therefore he bid him to enjoy what was granted to him; even if the money were thrice as much, it would be his own. This story, whether it was true or otherwise in those days, I have not affirmed. But if in these covetous, wretched days of ours now present, any author were to report a similar act was practiced, I would hardly believe it to be true.

As the Earl of Lancaster was thus occupied in Gascony, the Scots were just as busy in England, wasting and despoiling without mercy. They were thought to be backed by the French king. And therefore he was judged, both by that and other ways, to have broken the covenants of truce between him and the king of England.

It further appears that the French king (contrary to the form of truce taken at Vanes) had seized some of the nobles of England, and brought them to Paris to be imprisoned and put to death — besides other slaughters and despoilings made in Brittany, Gascony, and other

places. King Edward therefore, seeing the truce was broken on the French king's part, published and sent abroad his letters of defiance, 14 June 1345.

Therefore, the following year (A.D. 1346) King Edward first sent his letters to the court of Rome, complaining to the pope about king Philip, how he transgressed and broke the truce between them. About July Edward voyaged into Normandy in such a secret way, that no man well knew where he designed to go. First he entered the town of Hogs, and from there he proceeded to Cardoyne. There, about July 27th, by the river of Cardoyne, he fought a great battle with the Normans and other Frenchmen, who defended the bridge to stop his passage. At the battle, of the lords of France, the Earl of Ewe and the Earl of Tankerville were taken; also 100 of their knights with other men of arms, and 600 footmen. The town and suburbs were beaten down to the hard walls. All that could be borne away, was transported to the ships.

Edward's Confessor Describes the King's Progress in France.

Now concerning the campaign of the king, with his achievements from the winning of Codane or Cardoyne, to the town of Poissy, all is sufficiently described by one of the king's chaplains and his confessor. Being a Dominican Friar, and accompanying the king through his entire journey, he writes as follows:

"We have great cause to praise and laud the God of Heaven, and to confess his holy name, who has wrought mercy to us. For after the conflict at Codane, in which many were slain, and the city taken and sacked even to the bare walls, the city of Baia immediately yielded, fearing lest their counsels had been betrayed. After this, the lord our king directed his progress toward Rouen. And while at the town of Lexon, certain cardinals came to him, greatly exhorting him to peace. The cardinals being courteously entertained by the king from reverence to the pope's see, they were answered that the king being desirous of peace, had tried by all reasonable ways and means how to maintain it; and therefore he had offered conditions of peace to no small prejudice of his own cause. And he is yet ready to admit any reasonable offer of peace. With this answer, the cardinals went to the French king, to persuade him in like manner. They returned to King Edward, offering him in the French king's name, the dukedom of Aquitaine, besides the hope of obtaining more, if a treaty of peace might be obtained. But because that did not content the king, and as the cardinals did not find the French king so tractable and desirous of peace as they looked for, they returned, leaving the matter as they found it. So the king hastening forward, subdued the country and the great towns, without any resistance of the inhabitants, who all fled and ran away. Such fear of God struck them, that it seemed as if they had lost their hearts.

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"As the king had gotten many towns and villages, so he also subdued many strong castles, and with little difficulty. His enemy was at the same time at Rouen, and had reared a great army. Yet he ever kept on the other side of the river Seine, breaking down all the bridges so that we could not come over to him. The country round about was despoiled, sacked, and consumed with fire for a circuit of twenty miles. Yet the French king, being scarcely one mile from us, either would not, or else dared not (when he might easily have passed over the river) make any defense of his country and people. And so our king journeyed forward. He came to Pusiake or Poissy, where the French king had also broken down the bridge, and kept on the other side of the river."

After coming to Poissy, this chaplain and confessor to the king, named Michael Northburgh, describes the king's progress, and the acts of the English from the town of Poissy, to his coming to Calais as follows:

*A Letter of William Northburgh, the King's Confessor,
describing the King's Progress into France.*

“Salutations premised, we give you to understand that our sovereign lord the king came to the town of Poissy, the day before the assumption of our lady, where a bridge over the Seine was broken down by the enemy. But the king waited there till the bridge was made again. And while the bridge was being repaired, a great number of men-at-arms, and other soldiers came to hinder the works. But the earl of Northampton issued out against them and slew more than 1,000; the rest fled away, thanks be to God. At another time our men passed through the water, although with much difficulty, and slew a great number of the common soldiers about the city of Paris and adjoining country. So that our people now made other good bridges, God be thanked, without any great loss or damage to us. On the morrow after the assumption of our lady, the king passed over the river Seine and marched toward Poissy, a town of great defense and strongly secured, with a very strong castle within it. When our vanguard had passed the town, our rear-guard gave an assault and captured it. More than three hundred men-at-arms of our enemies were slain.

“The next day, the Earl of Suffolk and Sir Hugh Spenser marched forth upon the commons of the country, assembled and well armed, and discomfited them. They slew more than 200, and took 600 gentlemen prisoners, beside others. After that, the king marched toward Grand Villers. While he was encamped there, the vanguard was spotted by the men-of-arms of the king of Bohemia; whereupon our men issued out in great haste, and joined battle with them, but were forced to retire. But thanks be to God, the earl of Northampton issued out, and rescued the horsemen with other soldiers; so that few or none of them were either taken or slain (except Thomas Talbot). He chased the enemy within two leagues of Amiens. We took eight of them, and slew twelve of their best men-at-arms. The rest were well horsed, and reached the town of Amiens. After this, the king of England marched toward Pountife on Bartholomew's day, and came to the River Somme where the French king had laid 500 men-at-arms, and 3,000 footmen, purposing to stop our passage. But thanks be to God, the king of England and his host entered the water of Somme without the loss of any of our men. After that, he encountered with the enemy, and slew more than 2,000 of them; the rest fled to Abbeville. In this chase, many knights, squires, and men-at-arms were taken.

“The same day, Sir Hugh Spenser took the town of Croylay where he and his soldiers slew 400 men-at-arms, and kept the town, where they found a great store of victuals. The same night the king of England encamped in the forest of Cressy on the same water, for the French king's host came along on the other side of the town near to our passage; and so they marched toward Abbeville. On the following Friday, the king was still encamped in the forest. Our scouts spotted the French king marching toward us in four great divisions. Then having the information of our enemies, a little before evening we drew to the plain field, and set our forces in array. Immediately the fight began. It was sore, cruel, and long, for our enemies behaved themselves right nobly. But thanks be given to God, the victory fell on our side, and our adversary was discomfited with all his host, and put to flight. Slain there were the king of Bohemia, the duke of Lorraine, the earl of Dabeson, the earl of Flanders, the earl of Blois, the earl of Arcot with his two sons, the earl of Damerler, the earl of Navers and his brother, the lord of Tronard, the archbishop of Meymes, the archbishop of Saundes, the high prior of France, the earl of Savoy, the lord of Morles, the lord de Guis, seignior de St. Novant, seignior de Rosinburgh, with six earls of Germany, and other earls, barons, knights and squires whose names are unknown. Philip (the French king), with another marquess, who was called Lord Elector among the Romans, escaped from the battle. The number of the men-at-arms found dead in the field, besides common soldiers and footmen, was 1,542.

All that night the king of England with his host, remained armed in the field where the battle was fought. On the morrow, before the sun rose, another great army marched toward us, mighty and strong. But the earl of Northampton, and the earl of Norfolk issued out against them in three divisions. After a long and terrible fight, they discomfited them by God's great help and grace (for otherwise it could never have been). They took a great number of knights and squires, and slew over 2000, pursuing them three leagues from the place where the battle was fought. The same night, the king encamped again in the forest of Cressy, and on the morrow marched toward Boulogne. Along the way he took the town of Staples; and from there he marched toward Calais, which he intends to besiege. And therefore our sovereign lord the king commands you to send to the siege, convenient supplies of victuals. For after our departing from Chaam, we have travelled through the country with great peril and danger of our people; yet we always had plenty of victuals, thanks be to God. But now as the case stands, we need your help to be refreshed with victuals. Thus fare you well. Written at the siege before the town of Calais the 14th day of September."

After the siege and winning of Poissy, the 3rd of September 1346, the king through the midst of France, directed his course to Calais, and besieged it. He continued this siege from the 3rd of September till the 3rd of August 1347, upon which day it was surrendered and subdued to the crown of England.

After thus winning Calais, King Edward, remaining in the town, was in consultation concerning his proceeding further into France. But by means of the cardinals, a truce for a time was accepted, and instruments were made that certain noblemen for the French king, as well as for the king of England, should come to the pope, there to debate upon the articles. King Edward, for peace' sake, was not much opposed to this (A.D. 1317).

In A.D. 1350, the town of Calais was, by the treason of the keeper of the castle, almost betrayed and won from the Englishmen. And within the same year Philip the French king died. After him, King John his son succeeded to the crown.

About A.D. 1354, concord and agreement began to come well forward, and instruments were drawn up between the two kings. But the matter being brought to Pope Innocent VI, partly by the quarrelling of the Frenchmen, partly by the winking of the pope (who ever held with the French side), the conditions were repealed. They were these: that to the king of England all the dukedom of Aquitaine with other lands there, were to be restored without homage to the French king. And King Edward in return would surrender to the French king, all his right and title which he had in France. Whereupon rose the occasion of great war and tumult which afterward followed between the two realms.

[209] A.D. 1346-1350.

It followed after this (A.D. 1355), that King Edward, hearing of the death of Philip the French king, and that King John his son had granted the dukedom of Aquitaine to Charles his eldest son and dauphin of Vienna, sent over Prince Edward with the earls of Warwick, of Salisbury, of Oxford, and with them a sufficient number of able soldiers into Aquitaine. Being willingly received by some there, he subdued the rest, partly by force of sword, partly by their submitting themselves to his protection.

Not long after this, in the same year, word was brought to King Edward that John, the French king, was ready to meet him at St. Omers, there to give him battle. So he gathered his forces, and set over to Calais with his two sons, Lionel earl of Wilton, and John of Gaunt earl of Richmond, with Henry duke of Lancaster, etc. When Edward had come to St. Omers, the French king with a mighty army, heard of his coming. But the nearer Edward

approached to them, the further back the French retired; wasting and destroying behind them, so that in pursuing them, the English army might find no provisions. King Edward having followed king John for nine or ten days to Hadem (when he could find neither his enemy to fight, nor provisions for his army) returned to Calais. King Edward, seeing the shrinking of his enemy, crossed the seas into England, where he recovered the town of Berwick, which the Scots had gotten before by subtlety.

The same year, when King Edward had recovered Berwick, and subdued Scotland, Prince Edward being in Gascony, made toward the French king. The victorious prince made way with his sword, and after much slaughter of the French, and many prisoners taken, he at length came up to the French king at Poitiers, and with scarcely 2,000 men, overthrew the French with 7,000 men of arms and more. In this conflict, the French king himself, and Philip his son, with Lord James of Bourbon, the archbishop of Senon, eleven earls, and twenty-two lords were taken. Of other warriors and men of arms 2,000. Some affirm that in this conflict were slain 2 dukes, 24 lords and noblemen, 2002 men of arms; and about 8,000 other soldiers. The common report is that more Frenchmen were taken prisoners there, than the whole English army which took them. This noble victory, gotten by the grace of God, excited no little admiration among all men.

It would take too long, and little pertains to the purpose of this history, to comprehend in order all the doings of this king, with the circumstances of his victories, bringing the French king into England, of his abode there, of the ransom levied on him, and of David the Scottish king. Of these two ransoms, the one was rated at 1,000,000 pounds, the other at 100,000 marks, to be paid in ten years.

Remonstrances Against the Pope's Usurpation.

Thus having addressed all martial affairs and warlike exploits in the reign of this king between him and the realms of France and Scotland, we now return to our ecclesiastical matters. It follows to note the troubles and contentions growing between the king and the pope, and other ecclesiastical persons in matters touching the church, taken out of the records in the Tower. In the fourth year of his reign (1331), the king wrote to the archbishop of Canterbury to this effect: that King Edward I his grandfather gave his chaplain the dignity of treasurer of York (the archbishopric of York was then vacant and in the king's hands). The chaplain continued in the quiet possession of this, until the pope displaced him, and promoted a cardinal of Rome to that dignity. The king therefore strictly charged the archbishop of York not to allow any matter to pass, that might be prejudicial to the donation of his grandfather, upon pain of his highness's displeasure.

Similar precepts were also directed to the following bishops: to the bishop of Lincoln, bishop of Worcester, bishop of Sarum, archdeacon of Richmond, archdeacon of Lincoln, the prior of Lewen, the prior of Lenton, to Master Rich of Bentworth, to Master Iherico de Concore, to the pope's nuncio, and to Master Guido of Calma. He wrote letters to the pope consisting of three parts. *First*, declaring and defending his right and title to the donation and gift of all manner of temporalities, offices, prebends, benefices and dignities ecclesiastical, held by him *in capite*,²³³ as in the right of his crown of England. *Secondly*, expostulating with the pope for intruding himself into the ancient right of the crown of England, intermeddling with such collations, contrary to right and reason, and the example of all his predecessors. *Thirdly*, entreating the pope that he would henceforth abstain and desist from molesting the realm with such novelties and strange usurpations. And even

²³³ *In capite*: a type of land tenure where the land is held directly from the sovereign.

more so, because in the parliament recently held at Westminster, it was agreed by the universal assent of all the estates of the realm, that the king should stand to the defense of all such rights and jurisdictions as pertained to his regal dignity and crown in any way.

The tenth year of his reign (1337) he also wrote to the pope to this effect: that whereas the prior and chapter of Norwich nominated a clerk to be bishop of Norwich, and sent him to Rome for his investiture, without the king's knowledge, the pope would therefore withdraw his consent, and not intermeddle in the matter pertaining to the king's peculiar jurisdiction and prerogative.

After this, in the sixteenth year of this king (1343), it happened that the pope sent over legates to hear and determine matters pertaining to the right of patronages of benefices. The king perceived this as tending to no small derogation of his right, and the liberties of his subjects. He wrote to the said legates, admonishing and requiring them not to proceed in this, nor attempt anything unadvisedly, otherwise than might stand with the lawful ordinances and customs of the laws of his realm, and the freedom and liberties of his subjects.

The year following, which was the seventeenth of his reign, he wrote another letter to the pope, against his provisions and reservations of benefices.

The year following, another letter was likewise sent by the king to the pope, on the occasion taken of the church of Norwich, requiring him to cease his reservations and provisions of the bishoprics within the realm, and to leave their elections free to the chapters of those cathedral churches, according to the ancient grants and ordinances of his noble progenitors.

Proceeding now to the nineteenth year of this king's reign (1346), certain legates from Rome came to the king, complaining of certain statutes passed in his parliament, tending to the prejudice of the church of Rome, and the pope's primacy. Namely, that if abbots, priors, or any other ecclesiastical patrons of benefices should not present to the benefices within a certain time, the lapse would come to their ordinary²³⁴ or chapter; or if they did not present, then to the archbishop; if the archbishop likewise failed to present, then the gift would pertain not to the lord pope, but to the king and his heirs. Another complaint was this, that if archbishops were slow in giving such benefices as properly pertained to their own patronage in due time, then the collation²³⁵ of it likewise would pertain to the king and his heirs. Another complaint was, that if the pope were to void any elections in the church of England for any defect found in it, and so had placed some honest and discreet persons in the same, then the king and his heirs were not bound to render the temporalities to the parties placed by the pope's provision. Whereupon, the pope was not a little aggrieved. The king wrote to him, certifying that he was misinformed, denying that there was any such statute made in that parliament. And further, regarding all other things, he would confer with his prelates and nobles, and would return his answer by the pope's legates.

In the twentieth year of his reign (1347), another letter was written to the pope by the king, the effect of which was this: "That in respect to the great costs he had sustained in his wars, he had by the counsel of his nobles, taken into his own hands the fruits and profits of all his benefices in England."

²³⁴ *Ordinary*: a church officer who has power to execute the church's laws. This includes diocesan bishops. They have the authority to make, enforce, and judge laws within their jurisdiction.

²³⁵ *Collation*: The presentation of a clergyman to a benefice by a bishop, who has it in his own gift (paid office).

To proceed to the twenty-sixth year of this king (1353), one Nicholas Heath, cleric, a busy-headed body and troubler of the realm, had procured some bishops and others of the king's council, to be cited up to the court off Rome, there to answer such complaints as he had made against them.

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Whereupon the king commanded that all the ports of the realm, for the restraining of all passengers going out, and for searching and arresting all persons bringing in any bulls or other process from Rome, which tended to the derogation of the dignity of the crown, or the molestation of his subjects.

The same year the king also wrote to the pope's legate resident in England, requiring him to cease from exacting diverse sums of money of the clergy, in the name of "first fruits of benefices."

The thirty-eighth year of his reign (1365), an ordinance was made by the king and his council, and was proclaimed in all port towns within the realm,

"That good and diligent search should be made, that no person whatever coming from the court of Rome, etc., should bring into the realm with him any bull, instrument, letters patent, or other process that may be prejudicial to the king, or any of his subjects; or that any person, passing out of this realm toward the court of Rome, should carry with him any instrument or process that may redound to the prejudice of the king or his subjects; and that all persons passing to the said court of Rome, with the king's special license, notwithstanding, promises and finds surety to the lord chancellor, that they shall not in any way attempt or pursue any matter to the prejudice of the king or his subjects, under pain of being put out of the king's protection, and to forfeit his body, goods, and chattels, according to the statute made in the twenty-seventh year of his reign."

Sundry Eminent Writers Against The Pope.

And thus much concerning the letters and writings of the king, with such other domestic matters and troubles as passed between him and the pope, taken out of the public records of the realm, by which I thought to give the reader to understand the horrible abuses, the intolerable pride, and the insatiable avarice of that bishop, who was more like a proud Lucifer than a pastor of the church of Christ, in abusing the king, and oppressing his subjects with immeasurable exactions. The pope not only exercised his tyranny in this realm, but also raged against other princes, both far and near, among whom he did not spare even the emperor himself. In the history of the Emperor Louis, whom the pope excommunicated on Maundy Thursday, and the same day placed another emperor in his place, mention was made of certain learned men, who took the emperor's part against the pope. In their number was Marsilius of Padua, William Ockham, John of Ganduno, Leopold, Andrew Landensis, Ulric Hangenor, treasurer of the emperor, Dante, Aligerius, etc.

Of these, Marsilius compiled a worthy work entitled *Defensor Pacis*, written on the emperor's behalf against the pope. In this work (both godly and learnedly disputing against the pope) Marsilius proves that all bishops and priests are equal, and that the pope has no superiority above other bishops, much less above the emperor. That the word of God ought to be the only chief judge in deciding and determining ecclesiastical causes; that not only spiritual persons, but also laymen who are godly and learned, ought to be admitted to general councils; that the clergy and the pope ought to be subject to magistrates; that the church is the university of the faithful, and that the foundation and head of the church is

Christ; that He never appointed any vicar or pope over his universal church; that every bishop ought to be chosen by their own church and clergy; that the marriage of priests may lawfully be permitted; that St. Peter was never at Rome; that the clergy and synagogue of the pope is a den of thieves; that the doctrine of the pope is not to be followed, because it leads to destruction; and that the corrupt manners of Christians spring and flow from the wickedness of the spirituality (clergy). Moreover, he argues in another work, free justification by grace, and extenuated merits, saying that they are not efficient causes of our salvation. That this is to say, that works are no cause of our justification, yet our justification does not go without them. For this doctrine, which is most sound and catholic, he was condemned by the pope, A.D. 1324 (by the pope's decree *Extravagant, cop. Licet inter doctrinam*). Concerning this man and his doctrine, I thought it good to commit this much to history, to the intent that men may see that those who charge this doctrine now taught in the church, with novelty or newness, are ignorant of the histories of past times.

In the same number and catalogue comes William Ockham, (A.D. 1326), who likewise wrote in defense of the emperor against the pope; and also in defense of Michael, general of the Greyfriars, whom the pope had excommunicated and cursed as a heretic. Several treatises were published by Ockham, of which some are extant and in print, and some are extinct and suppressed. Some again are not published under the name of that author, but as a dialogue between the soldier and the cleric, in which it is to be conjectured what books and works this Ockham had collected against the pope. John Sleidan in his history mentions Ockham to his great commendation. His words are these:

“William Ockham, in the time of the Emperor Louis IV, flourished about A.D. 1326. Among other things, he wrote of the authority of the bishop of Rome. In this book he handles these eight questions very copiously:

First, whether the administration of both the bishop's office and of the emperor's, may be in one man?

Secondly, whether the emperor takes his power and authority only from God, or else from the pope?

Thirdly, whether the pope and church of Rome have power by Christ to set and place kings and emperors, and commit their jurisdiction to them?

Fourthly, whether the emperor being elected, has full authority upon his election, to administer his empire?

Fifthly, whether other kings besides the emperor and the king of the Romans, in that they are consecrated by priests, receive from them any part of their power?

Sixthly, whether the kings in any case are subject to their consecrators?

Seventhly, whether if the kings were to admit any new sacrifice, or take to themselves the diadem without any further consecration, they should thereby lose their kingly right and title?

Eighthly, whether the electors of the seven princes give as much to the election of the emperor, as succession rightfully gives to other kings.'

“Upon these questions he disputes and argues with many arguments and various reasons, on both sides. At length he decides the matter on the part of the civil magistrate; and by occasion of this, he enters into the mention of the pope's “*Decrees extravagant*,” declaring how little force or regard is to be given to it.”

Trithemius mentions one Gregory of Arimini, a learned, famous, and right godly man, who lived around the time of Ockham (about A.D. 1350). He disputed about the same doctrine of grace and free will as we do now, and dissented in this from the papists and sophisters, counting them worse than Pelagians.

What should I say about the duke of Burgundy, named Eudo? At the same time (A.D. 1350), he persuaded the French king not to receive into his land the newly founded constitutions, decretal and extravagant, nor to allow those within his realm, whose sage counsel, then given, still remains among the French king's records.

Dante, an Italian writer,²³⁶ a Florentine, lived in the time of Louis the emperor (A.D. 1300), and took part with Marsilius against three sorts of men who he said were enemies to the truth: the *first* is the pope; *secondly*, the order of monks and friars, who count themselves the children of the church, when they are the children of the devil their father; *thirdly*, the doctors of decrees and decretals. Certain of his writings are still extant, in which he proves the pope is not above the emperor, nor has any right or jurisdiction in the empire. He proves that the "donation of Constantine" was a forged and feigned thing (see p. 72), for which he was thought by many to be a heretic. He complains very much that the preaching of God's word was omitted, and instead of it, the vain fables of monks and friars were preached and believed by the people. And so the flock of Christ was not fed with the food of the gospel, but with wind. "The pope," he says, "from a pastor is made into a wolf, to waste the church of Christ, and to procure with his clergy, not the word of God to be preached, but his own decrees." In his canticle of *Purgatory*, he declares the pope to be the whore of Babylon.²³⁷

[211] A.D. 1350-1360.

Here may be added the statement out of the book of Joraand, imprinted with Dante, that because antichrist does not come before the destruction of the empire, those who strive to make the empire extinct, are forerunners and messengers of antichrist. "Therefore let the Romans and their bishops beware, lest the priesthood be taken from them by the just judgment of God, their sins and wickedness so deserving. Furthermore, let all the prelates and princes of Germany take heed," etc. Because our adversaries object to the "newness" of our doctrine, they will see and perceive the course and form of this religion now received, has not been either such a new thing now, nor was it so strange a thing in times past.

I will add to these men cited above, Master Taulerus, a preacher of Argentine in Germany (A.D. 1350), who contrary to the pope's proceedings, taught openly against all human merits, and against the invocations of saints. He preached sincerely of our free justification by grace, referring all man's trust only to the mercy of God, and he was an enemy to all superstition. With him may also be joined Francis Petrarch, a writer of the same period (about A.D. 1350), who in his works and Italian verses, speaking of Rome, calls it, "The whore of Babylon; the school and mother of error; the temple of heresy; the nest of treachery; growing and increasing by oppressing others." He says further, that Rome extols herself against her founders, that is, against the emperors who first set her up and enriched her. He seems to plainly affirm that the pope is antichrist, declaring that no greater evil could happen to any man, than to be made pope.

About the year (A.D. 1340), in the city of Herbipoli, Master Conrad Hager, who (as it appears from the old bulls and registers of Otto, bishop of the city), maintained and taught

²³⁶ Dante Alighieri (c. 1265-1321).

²³⁷ Dante's *Purgatorio* is the second part of his *Divine Comedy*, following the *Inferno* and preceding the *Paradiso*.

for twenty-four years, that the mass was no sacrifice; and that it does not profit any man, either quick or dead, and the money that the dying give for masses, are very robberies and sacrileges by priests. He said too, that if he had a store full of gold and silver, he would not give one farthing for any mass. For this doctrine, this good preacher was condemned and imprisoned. But what became of him afterward was never heard.

Among other old and ancient records of antiquity belonging to this time, is a certain monument in verses poetically compiled, but not without a certain moral. It is entitled "Poenitentiarius Asini," *i.e.* The Asses' Confessor, dated A.D. 1343. This treatise presents the wolf, the fox, and the ass, coming to confess, and doing penance. First, the wolf confesses to the fox, who easily absolves him from all his faults, and also excuses him in them. In like manner the wolf, upon hearing the fox's confession, showed him like favor in return. After this the ass comes to confession. Its fault was this: that being hungry he took a straw from the sheaf of a man who went on a pilgrimage to Rome. The ass, repenting of this act, and thinking it was not so heinous as the faults of the others, hoped more for his absolution. But what followed? After the silly ass had uttered his crime in auricular confession, the discipline of the law was immediately executed upon him with severity; nor was he judged worthy of any absolution, but was apprehended, slain, and devoured. Whoever the author of this fabulous tale was, he had a moral in it. For by the wolf was meant the pope; but the fox represented the prelates, courtesans, priests, and the rest of the spirituality. The pope is soon absolved by the spirituality, and in return, the pope soon absolves them in like manner. By the ass is meant the poor laity, upon whose back the strict censure of the law is executed. Especially when the German emperors come under the pope's inquisition, to be examined by his discipline, there is no absolution or pardon to be found, but in all haste he must be deposed, as may partly appear in these preceding histories.

Not long after this (about A.D. 1350), Gerhard Riddler wrote a book against the monks and friars, entitled, "*Lacryma Ecclesiae*" (Tears of the Church) in which he disputes against the order of the begging friars. He proves that this kind of life is far from Christian perfection, being against charity to live upon others when a man may live by his own labor. It affirms they are hypocrites, filthy livers, and those who, for man's favor and lucre's sake, mix fables, apocryphas, and dreams of vanity, with true divinity. Also that under pretense of long prayer, they devour widows' houses, and trouble the church of Christ with their confessions, sermons, and burials. And therefore he persuaded the prelates to bridle and keep short the inordinate license and abuses of these monastical persons, etc.

As yet I have made no mention of Michael Sesenas, provincial of the Gray Friars, nor Peter de Corbaria, both of whom Antonine writes about, saying they were condemned in the "Extravagant" of Pope John, with one John de Poliacco. Their opinions, says Antonine, were these: That Peter the apostle was no more the head of the church than the other apostles; and that Christ left no vicar behind him, nor head of His church; and that the pope has no authority to correct and punish, nor to institute or depose the emperor; also, that all priests, of whatever degree, are of equal authority, power, and jurisdiction, by the institution of Christ. But by the institution of the emperor, the pope may be superior, who may be revoked again by the same emperor. Also, that neither the pope, nor the church, may punish any man with bodily restraint or compulsion, unless they receive the license of the emperor. This Michael Sesenas, about A.D. 1322, wrote against the tyranny, pride, and primacy of the pope, accusing him of being antichrist, and the church of Rome of being the whore of Babylon, drunk with the blood of saints. He said there were two churches, one of the wicked, which was flourishing, and in which the pope reigned; the other was of the godly, which was afflicted; also, that the truth was almost utterly extinct. It was for this reason that he was

Bk. IV. Wm. the Conqueror to Wycliffe (1066-1364)

deprived of his dignity, and condemned by the pope. Notwithstanding, he stood constant in his assertions. Sesenas left behind him many favorers and followers of his doctrine, of whom a great part were slain by the pope: some were condemned, such as William Ockham; some were burned, such as John de Castilione and Francis de Arcatara.

About this time the nuns of St. Bridget's order first began. Also about this time, the Queen's College in Oxford was built by Queen Phillippa, of England, wife to King Edward III (about A.D. 1360).

To make an end of this Fourth Book, it now remains to list the archbishops of Canterbury contained in this Fourth Book, beginning where we left off earlier (page 108), at Lanfranc.

A Table of the Archbishops of Canterbury, contained in the Fourth Book.

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| 34. Lanfranc. | 45. Edmund, of Abingdon |
| 35. Anselm. | 46. Boniface. |
| 36. Radulph. | 47. Robert Kilwarby. |
| 37. William Curboil. | 48. John Peckham. |
| 38. Theobald. | 49. Robert Winchelsey. |
| 39. Thomas Becket. | 50. Walter Reynald. |
| 40. Richard. | 51. John Stratford. |
| 41. Baldwin. | 52. John Offord. |
| 42. Hubert. | 53. Thomas Braidwarden. |
| 43. Stephen Langton. | 54. Simon Islip. |
| 44. Richard Magnus. | |