

THE  
INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

*A COURSE OF LECTURES*

DELIVERED IN THE  
Divinity School of the University of Dublin

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SECOND EDITION

*LONDON*

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET .  
1890

## XXI.

### THE PROGRESS OF ROMAN SUPREMACY.

AT the conclusion of the last Lecture I told you of von Döllinger's theory that Hippolytus was an antipope, claiming in opposition to Callistus the dignity of bishop of Rome. This suggests a point in the controversy which ought not to be omitted, and on which, therefore, I will say something before going further. Supposing it to be proved that in order to avoid all risk of going wrong, Christ had given to His followers this compendious rule to guard them from error, 'Adhere to the bishop of Rome,' still even this simple rule has its uncertainties, for we have first to determine who the bishop of Rome is. Now, in all the time between the third century and the Reformation not a century has passed in which there has not been a schism in the Church on this very point, Christians being perplexed between the contending claims of different pretenders to the Roman see.

I have said something as to what possibly may have been one of the earliest of these schisms; I will now say something as to what is commonly counted the twenty-ninth; not the last, but the greatest and most memorable for its duration, its extent, and its damaging effects on the papal claims. I mean what is commonly called the great Western schism, which began in 1378, on the death of Pope Gregory XI. It lasted nearly forty years, during which time two or more popes disputed with each other the honour of being the rightful successor of St. Peter; and the claims of the contending parties were so evenly balanced that the nations of Western Christendom were tolerably equally divided between them. Very respectable Roman Catholic writers have maintained that it is still impossible to decide with certainty which party was in the right—saints working miracles being numbered among the adherents of either pontiff—and finally (I quote from the Jesuit Maimbourg), even a general council, which had the aid of the Holy Ghost to enable them to decide infallibly, did not venture to solve the question, and had recourse to its authority instead of availing itself of its knowledge,<sup>1</sup> that is to say, instead of informing the Christian world which of the popes was the true one, the council, by virtue of its authority, deposed them all, and set up a new pope of its own.

I must assume that you have a general knowledge of the facts of the case, and will recall to your memory that the death of Gregory XI. was the termination of what has been called the Babylonish Captivity, namely, the seventy years' residence of the French popes at Avignon. It is certain that the temporal interests of the city of Rome suffered greatly from the absence of its spiritual head. The Roman magistrates complained that the faithful

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<sup>1</sup> *Histoire du grand Schisme d' Occident*, p. 3.

were no longer attracted to Rome either by devotion or interest; that there was danger lest the unfortunate city should be reduced to a vast solitude; the sacred edifices left without roof, gates, or walls; the abode of beasts, which cropped the grass off their very altars. Accordingly, the death of Gregory XI.<sup>2</sup> and the election of his successor taking place at Rome—although the cardinals, being French, would undoubtedly, if they had free choice, have elected a French successor, they were surrounded by a violent mob, threatening to tear them in pieces and set the house on fire over their heads if they elected a foreign pope; and although they had at first protested that an election constrained by violence would not give a real pope but an intruder, yet ultimately they gave way, elected an Italian Pope, Urban VI., notified his election as usual to the Courts of Europe, and did not set up the plea of constraint until Urban had showed himself troublesome in the character of reformer of abuses. Then they made a unanimous secession; declared that they had only chosen Urban in the persuasion that he would in conscience have refused the pontificate, his election to which was only due to violence. ‘But he, forgetful of his salvation, and burning with ambition, had allowed himself to be enthroned and crowned; and assumed the name of pope, though he rather merited that of apostate and antichrist.’ And so they set up a French pope, Clement VII.

Now, the schism thus begun lasted longer than what is commonly called a generation of men. A Christian who was of an age to form an opinion on the subject, say twenty-five years of age, when the schism began, might have died in mature age before it was finished: all the time he might have used more care in trying to choose the right pope than most men now spend in choosing the right doctrine; he might have followed the opinion supported by his nation, and backed by a considerable number of men in high esteem for learning and piety; and yet, some hundred years after his death it might be discovered that in spite of all his care he had decided wrongly, and had wandered from the true fold out of which there is no salvation.

It is true that high Roman Catholic authority can be adduced in support of the opinion that either pope might safely be followed; a charitable opinion certainly, but one which can hardly be consistently maintained. For if Christ has given His Church an infallible guide to truth, it surely must be held to be no small sin to forsake that guide and follow an impostor, more especially when the true guide distinctly declares that those who adhere to

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<sup>2</sup> He had come to Rome chiefly on the persuasion of Catherine of Siena, a saint remarkable for having had the marks of the Saviour’s wounds imprinted on her body, as well as for having had an espousal ring with four pearls and a diamond, placed permanently on her finger by our Lord Himself; although, to spare her modesty, these honours were invisible to all eyes but her own (Bolland, *A.A. SS.*, April 30, pp. 882, 901).

the impostor hazard their eternal salvation. This can certainly be proved by contemporary evidence, that whatever may be said now, Christians at the time were held bound to decide the question rightly, as they valued their eternal salvation. In order to prove this I took the trouble to copy some of the curses denounced by each pope against the adherents of the other; but I have not time to read them. Suffice it to say that the two popes were in perfect agreement in informing the Christian world that this was a matter in which a wrong choice would endanger a man's eternal salvation.<sup>3</sup>

Remember that the main argument for the existence of an infallible guide to the Church is that it is inconceivable God could have left Chris-

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<sup>3</sup> The following is an extract from a circular issued by the cardinals (see Baluzius, *Vitae Pontt. Aven.* ii. 847):—Having been appointed watchmen by the Lord God of Hosts, and occupying the highest post next, after the Roman Pontiff, we are bound vigilantly to point out to the faithful the dangers which threaten their souls, and the snares and attacks of the enemy. Whereas, therefore, we have learned for certain that that seducer, Bartholomew, formerly Archbishop of Bari, falsely calling himself Pope, has, as another Antichrist, sent certain false prophets to different parts of the world. whom he alone has constituted Cardinals, together with some other defenders of his wickedness, in order that by false persuasions, and crafty suggestions, they may seduce the Christian people, and may cause them, to the eternal damnation of their souls, to adhere to the aforesaid apostate; and whereas, on this account, our most Holy Lord Pope Clement VII. has desired us, who have perfect knowledge of this matter. to instruct the faithful concerning it: and whereas it pertains to none others than us, next after our most Holy Lord Pope Clement VII. to inform the faithful—who is the true Pope, therefore, we beseech you all, in Jesus Christ, for the safety of your souls to adhere to the same Lord Clement.' &c.

Here it is taught plainly enough that the adherents of Urban periled their salvation; and there certainly is great show of reason in what the cardinals say, viz. that if any doubt should arise as to who the true pope was, no one could be fitter than the cardinals (who are the next highest authority to the pope) to decide it.

Urban's counter-proclamation. which is too long to be quoted in full. will be found in Raynaldus's continuation of Baronius (1477. 1378). He denounces those children of iniquity and perdition, Robert (i.e. Clement VII.) and the other cardinals, who had not only involved themselves in the bonds of sin, but being given over to a reprobate mind, have endeavoured to draw others with them to destruction. He declares that being unable, without grievous remorse of conscience, any longer to tolerate such wickedness, he pronounces that Robert, &c., are schismatics, apostates, blasphemers, and are to be punished as heretics; he excommunicates them, deprives them of all their dignities, confiscates all their goods, declares their persons detestable and infamous, and orders them to be kept by the faithful in close prison. Anyone who should commit their bodies to ecclesiastical sepulture is excommunicated, and can only be absolved on condition of disinterring them with his own hands. Everyone of whatever rank, king, queen, emperor, or cardinal, is forbidden to receive these excommunicated persons into his lands, or to allow them to be supplied with any grain, wine, flesh, clothes, wood, victuals, money, merchandize, or any goods whatsoever. Every private person is excommunicated who shall transgress any of the aforesaid commands, or who shall knowingly call the aforesaid Robert (styling himself Clement) by the name of Pope, or who shall believe him to be Pope, from which excommunication he is not to be freed by any but the Roman Pontiff, except in the article of death. He releases the subjects of the princes who adhere to his rival, from obedience to their monarchs; and he offers to all those who shall undertake a crusade for the extermination of the aforesaid schismatics, and who shall persecute them to the utmost of their power, the privileges and indulgences granted to those who proceed to the succour of the Holy Land.

tians exposed to the risk of error in any matter concerning their eternal salvation. But here we see that the institution of the office of pope does not preserve Christians from such risk of error: that on the contrary Christians were left for several years together perplexed between the claims of two popes, in favour of each of whom so much might be said, and each of whom uttered the most frightful curses against the other and his adherents; and one of the two must have been the real pope, and his curses have had all the efficacy which papal dignity can give. One or other of the two was the infallible guide to Christians, and both agreed that this was a matter on which to decide wrongly would peril a Christian's eternal salvation. The question was an eminently practical one, for if a man happened to be the subject of a monarch who had taken the wrong side, he was released from his allegiance, and incurred the penalty of excommunication if he rendered assistance to his sovereign.

And yet this is a point on which high Roman Catholic authority now holds that both popes were wrong. Maimbourg (p. 57) tells us 'the thunderbolts and the anathemas which the two popes hurled against each other, and against all those who followed the opposite party, did no harm to anybody.' Antoninus, archbishop of Florence, who was canonized as a saint in 1523, writes as follows: "There were among the adherents of either party, all the time the schism lasted, most learned men, and most religious, and what is more, even distinguished by their miracles; and the question could never be so decided, but that there remained a doubt with very many. And though it be necessary to salvation to believe that there is but one vicar of Christ, yet on the occasion of a schism, when several are called popes, it does not appear necessary to salvation to believe that this or that is the true pope, but only whichever of the two was canonically elected, and no one is bound to know who was canonically elected any more than he is bound to be acquainted with the canon law; but the people may follow their princes and prelates.'

In short, provided you believe there is a pope somewhere or other, it is quite unnecessary to know who he is, and you may be quite safe though you adhere to a false pope, and though the true pope be cursing you as hard as he can all the time. Suppose that in Switzerland you had some doubt whether an incompetent guide had not imposed on you by a false certificate, what would you think if, on inquiring at the office for guides, you were told that it was certainly absolutely necessary for you to have the authorized guide, but that if you had duly paid your fee at the office, it was quite immaterial whether you had got hold of the right man or not? In whose interests would you suppose such a regulation to have been framed? If it is asserted then that it is inconceivable that God could leave His Church without some guide able to lead her infallibly into truth, we may

answer that it is just as necessary that God should make men know who that infallible guide is, and that it is indelibly written in the page of history that God did leave the Church for a space of several years in a state in which it was next to impossible to determine who that infallible guide was. And it avails nothing to say that this was 500 years ago, for we cannot suppose that God dealt with His Church by different rules in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries and in the nineteenth. The souls of Christians then were as dear to Him as the souls of Christians now; and it cannot be said that anything is essential to the being of the Church which God did not see fit to give her then.

Before parting with the case of Hippolytus, I have another remark to make on the ignorance of the Eastern world on the subject of his pretensions to be bishop of Rome. If he never made the claim, how came so many in the East to call him bishop of Rome? If he did, how was it that no one in the past should have heard that two rivals contested the see? I must add it, therefore, as a further proof that the bishop of Rome was not recognized as head over the whole Church, that the appointment of that bishop was from early times, and in theory down to the present day, a matter of mere local concern. In early times the election rested at Rome, as elsewhere, with the clergy and people. They did not think of their bishop then as the infallible interpreter of doctrine, but as the administrator of the funds in which that Church was very rich; and, accordingly, when they wanted a bishop they did not look for a learned divine, but for a good man of business. Most commonly the choice fell on the archdeacon, who was habitually the bishop's prime minister. So regular was this, that a story is told, though I own on not very trustworthy authority, that in one remarkable case, the bishop finding the archdeacon to be a man whom he would not like for a successor, was spiteful enough to spoil his chance by ordaining him priest.<sup>4</sup> In theory the bishop is at the present day appointed by the local clergy; for the cardinals are the bishops of the six suburbican sees,<sup>5</sup> the Roman deacons, and the parish priests of the different Roman parishes. In fact, the cardinals are leading Roman Catholic divines of different European countries, and the majority of them do not reside at Rome, and have only a titular connexion with certain Roman parishes. If the bishop of Rome is head of the whole Church, it is quite right that representatives of the whole Church should take part in his appointment. But the titles of cardinals are a standing witness to the present day that the pope is but bishop of a single city,

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<sup>4</sup> This story is told about Cornelius and Novatian by Eulogius of Alexandria (Photius, Cod. 132).

<sup>5</sup> These sees had been seven: Portus, Ostia, Praeneste Sabina, Tusculum, Albano, and St. Rufina; but the last has, for many centuries ceased to exist as a separate see. On the other hand, the Roman deacons, who for many centuries had been only seven, are now reckoned as fourteen.

and that his appointment was a matter with which persons outside that city were not supposed to have any concern.

I return now to carry a little further down the history of the Roman claims. In the last Lecture we found that up to the end of the second century the importance of the bishop of Rome is subordinate to that of the Church of Rome. Just at the end of that century the Clementine fictions were brought to Rome, and it is not till then we hear anything of the succession from St. Peter.

Now, when you see Patristic evidence produced in proof of papal supremacy, you must be always careful to examine who it is that is cited. I have not now in my mind merely that ordinary caution which distinguishes the scientific from the controversial use of authorities. With Romish controversialists of the less instructed sort the pre-scientific use of authorities still prevails. With them a Father is a Father. If they can find, in any of those to whom that name is given, words resembling some assertion which they wish to have believed, his name is clapped into a list of witnesses (which sometimes they print in capital letters) all seemingly counted of equal value. Such a list, however imposing it may appear to the unlearned, is only glanced at with contempt by one who understands the subject, and who knows that some of the writers cited say nothing really relevant to the question on which they are appealed to, and that others are persons whose unsupported statements have no weight. For, with increased knowledge of ancient documents, we are now able in many cases to compare the statements of Fathers with the sources whence they derived them, and in this way to form a judgment how far the reporters are trustworthy. And the result is that, as might have been expected, the Fathers are in this respect found to be men of very unequal merit; and the historical student is forced to discriminate, building nothing with any confidence on the assertions of some, who are habitually wanting in that care and caution which we find in others.

But the point which I now wish to urge is the necessity of discriminating authorities geographically; for the geographical test is as effective as the chronological in showing that the notion of the Petrine supremacy is a development and not a tradition. Whatever doctrines were delivered to the Church by our Lord and His apostles must have been held by the Church at all times and in all places. Now, it is owned that the doctrine of Roman supremacy was not held by the Church in all times; for it has to be confessed, as Newman does in passages which I have quoted, that such a form of Church government was altogether unsuited to the condition of the Church in the first ages. But we argue further that if our Lord had put His disciples under the government of a single head, Christian missionaries, wherever they went, would have carried with them the knowledge who their appoint-

ed ruler was, and would have taught the Churches which they founded to obey him. There would have been no difference between East and West as to the meaning of the texts which settled the constitution of the universal Church. The teaching of the Church on this point would have been in all places the same; for this is not a subordinate doctrine, a true tradition concerning which might conceivably have been lost. The doctrine is a fundamental one; and those who had ever known and received it must have kept up the memory of it by perpetual practical application of it.

What we actually find is very different. The Gospel, you know, contains a system of truths first promulgated at Jerusalem, and which starting from that centre has been propagated all over the civilized world. Now, nothing is more certain than that the notion of Roman supremacy did not start from Jerusalem as its centre, but from Rome as its centre. In tracing the history of the growth of the empire of heathen Rome, we find the city first battling with the neighbouring Italian towns; then, when it had established its dominion in Italy, crossing the sea, and making conquests in foreign countries. At length its expansive power reaches its limits: it gains some temporary victories in Parthia and Germany, but never makes a permanent conquest of these countries. In like manner, in tracing the history of the growth of the ecclesiastical empire of Rome, we find that the movement began at Rome itself: that it was at first resisted in its own immediate neighbourhood; that by degrees it triumphed over that opposition, and extended itself over all the West. But in the East, though it occasionally gained temporary victories, their fruits were always short-lived; and ultimately the attempt to bring the East under the dominion of Rome utterly failed.

Bearing all this in mind, you will see the necessity, when any ancient writer is quoted as asserting the right of the bishop of Rome to rule over other Churches, of inquiring who it is that says it. I might tell you, for example, that several eminent authors assert that Paris is the capital of the civilized world, the centre of European thought and culture. But you would smile at me if, when asked who these eminent authors were, I had to reply Victor Hugo, Comte, and other enthusiastic Frenchmen. In like manner we can but smile when Romish divines, who have undertaken to adduce evidence in proof of the papal claims, tender to us the assertions of popes, or of papal legates, or of Roman presbyters. Such evidence is only good to show what Rome would like to have believed, but determines nothing as to what really was by Christ's appointment the constitution of His Church.

It is much more to the purpose when they adduce Eastern evidence; but such evidence always turns out to be, not spontaneous acknowledgment of the justice of the Roman demands, but temporary acquiescence in them by persons at the moment badly in want of Roman assistance. For the cause of



Rome was greatly helped by Eastern divisions. Arianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, were all Eastern questions; nor did the Western mind of that age appear to possess the subtlety necessary for the originating such disputes. Neither, again, was the Latin language adequate to express all the subtle distinctions and shades of thought for which the copiousness and flexibility of the Greek tongue easily found expression. But each of the contending parties in the East were always glad to get the West on its side; and the party successful in this endeavour could not afford to be critical if there was too much arrogance in the tone which the Roman supporters adopted. Thus the Easterns were in danger of finding the fable realized of the horse triumphing over the stag by the assistance of the man, and finding when his victory was won that he had permanently a rider on his back. Actually, however, they shook the rider off after he had served their temporary ends. For though in politics a party, not the strongest, will sometimes succeed in attaining its ends through the alternate assistance given it by two other rival parties bidding against each other for its support, yet it loses its advantage if it demands more than either of the rivals will grant. The Romans demanded more than any Eastern would concede, and so there ensued that schism between East and West which continues to the present day.

The earliest bishop of Rome whom I can find to have claimed privileges as Peter's successor was Stephen in his controversy with Cyprian, about A.D. 256, at which time the story told in the Clementines had had some fifty years of acceptance at Rome. I have already (p. 144) quoted some of Cyprian's language, from which you will have seen that, though he did not dispute the assertion that Stephen sat in the chair of Peter, he did not by any means regard the bishop of Rome as the Church's infallible guide, nor even as a competent witness to apostolic tradition if his testimony seemed to conflict with what was found in the written word.

Now, Roman Catholics may say that in the controversy as to the validity of heretical baptism, Stephen was right and Cyprian wrong. I do not know whether they are quite consistent in saying so; for of late years, I suppose in order to frighten waverers, they have taken to the profanity of reiterating baptism in the case of perverts from our communion, a profanity only partially mitigated by the device of conditional baptism, which was not invented until some centuries after the time of Stephen and Cyprian. Nor shall I inquire whether Stephen, in his acknowledgment of heretical baptism, was not more indiscriminate than the Church was afterwards, which always has been careful to distinguish between different classes of heretics, and to examine whether the baptisms which it acknowledges have been duly made in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.<sup>6</sup> But for my

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<sup>6</sup> See the 8th Canon of the Council of Arles.

present purpose it is quite irrelevant to discuss whether Stephen or Cyprian was right. If I were to propose the question to you whether in their parliamentary disputes Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli had been in the right, I dare say you would be far from unanimous in your answer. But if I asked whether Mr. Gladstone acknowledged Mr. Disraeli as an infallible authority or vice versa, you could be unanimous in answering that question. We may be as willing to do honour to the memory of both Stephen and Cyprian as Walter Scott, in the introduction to *Marmion*, was to the memory of both Pitt and Fox. But certain it is that Cyprian showed that he felt himself as little bound to follow the ruling of Stephen as Fox was to follow the ruling of Pitt. If the dispute about the validity of heretical baptism had not been quelled by a timely persecution there was danger that it might have caused a serious schism in the Church. Cyprian was not only unanimously supported by a council of eighty-seven African bishops, but he had enthusiastic allies in the East.<sup>7</sup> Chief of these was Firmilian of Cappadocia, at that time one of the most illustrious of Eastern bishops. There is extant a Latin translation of Firmilian's letter to Cyprian; and we need not doubt that the translation was made by Cyprian himself, though some of the first editors of Cyprian's works were minded to suppress the letter altogether on account of the great disrespect with which he treats the bishop of Rome. Certainly it is not surprising that Roman Catholics should have found matter of offence in Firmilian's letter. He begins by congratulating himself that through Stephen's 'inhumanity' (in breaking communion with those who rebaptized converts from heresy) he had had experimental proof of Cyprian's faith and wisdom. But, he adds, that for this benefit resulting to him from Stephen's conduct, Stephen himself was no more entitled to gratitude than Judas Iscariot was entitled to our gratitude for the benefits which resulted to the world from his treason to our Lord. This is pretty strong to begin with; and he follows up with charges of 'audacia,' 'insolentia,' 'imperitia,' 'aperta et manifesta stultitia': Stephen is 'haereticis omnibus pejor'; 'was not Stephen ashamed to say this'; 'he had the impudence (ausus est) to say that'; 'he defamed Peter and Paul by the sentiments which he attributed to them.' But Stephen appears to have given much occasion for this asperity of language; for Firmilian quotes him as having called Cyprian 'false Christ, false apostle, deceitful worker.' We must regret that men for whom we feel so much respect should have treated each other with so little; but the reason for producing these controversial amenities is that Firmilian tells us that Stephen had boasted of his succession from Peter: 'de Episcopatus sui loco gloriatur et se successionem Petri tenere contendit,' 'per successionem cathedram Petri se tenere praedicat.' What privileges exactly Stephen claimed on the

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<sup>7</sup> On the part taken by Dionysius of Alexandria, see Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 5, sqq.

strength of this succession they are not informed; but both his antagonists treat the connexion with Peter and Paul as only aggravating his fault if he does not harmonize with them in doctrine. Other evidence of the arrogance of Stephen's claims is suggested by Cyprian's language in addressing his African council: 'None of us sets himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying; inasmuch as every bishop, in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of forming his own judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another.'

The result is that we may name the episcopate of Stephen as the time when, out of the fiction that Peter had been bishop of Rome, his supposed successors began to develop the consequence that they had a right to rule other bishops; but we find that this development was at the time not only scouted in the East, but was violently resisted in the neighbouring province of Africa.

A somewhat earlier incident in Stephen's history will show how far the supremacy of the pope was from being then established. Two Spanish bishops, Basilides and Martial, had denied Christ in time of persecution, and had therefore been deposed by their brethren, and two others, Felix and Sabinus, consecrated in their stead. Basilides, however, went to Rome, and there obtained recognition as bishop from Stephen. The clergy and people of the towns over which these men had presided sent to Cyprian, who, assembling thirty-seven bishops in council, decided in a synodical letter that the deposition of Basilides and Martial was right, and the election of Felix and Sabinus canonical. Cyprian says: 'Nor can it rescind an ordination rightly performed that Basilides, after his crime had been detected and his conscience laid bare even by his own confession, canvassing to be unjustly restored to the episcopate from which he had been justly deposed, went to Rome and deceived Stephen our colleague residing at a distance, and ignorant of the real truth. The effect of this is not to efface, but to swell the crimes of Basilides, in that to his formed guilt is now added the guilt of deceit and circumvention. For he is not so much to be blamed who through negligence was imposed on, as he is to be execrated who through fraud imposed on him.' Now, if a Roman Catholic maintains that his present Church system is conformed to primitive usage, let him imagine a parallel case happening now. Let him conceive two Spanish bishops deposed by their neighbours, and others elected in their place without consulting the pope. The deposed bishops appeal to Rome and are acquitted. Meanwhile the Spanish clergy send the intruding bishops as a deputation not to the pope, but let us say to the archbishop of Paris, who, assembling a provincial synod, decides that the former bishops had been rightly deposed, and the new canonically elected, and that 'the appealing bishop had only aggravated his

guilt by deceiving Pio Nono our colleague; but excusing Pio Nono in that he is not so much to be blamed who through negligence was imposed on, as he who through fraud had imposed on him.<sup>8</sup>

This history shows that in the third century the Christian Churches formed one great community. No Church was completely isolated from the rest: if disputes took place in it their brethren elsewhere would take an interest in it, and would use their influence in bringing about the triumph of right. That the great Roman Church should possess influence of this kind was a matter of course. But we see now that the possession of such influence was no exclusive prerogative of that see. Other Churches, too, claimed the right to make their voices heard, and had no scruple in taking a side opposite to that taken by the bishop of Rome.

When the Empire became Christian it was more impossible than ever for one Church to be independent of others; for certain privileges and immunities were immediately given to the Christian bishops and clergy; and if there were any controversy as to the occupancy of any see, it was necessary for the civil authorities to know who was recognized by the Church generally as the rightful possessor. When Constantine obtained undisputed possession of power, he found a violent controversy raging, no less a question being involved than who was the rightful head of the great Church of North Africa, the consecration of Caecilian as bishop of Carthage having been pronounced invalid by the party which soon came to have Donates as its leader. Constantine would, no doubt, be anxious to make himself acquainted with the rules established in the Christian Church for regulating the decision of such controversies; but he never appears to have heard from anyone that it would suffice to get the decision of the bishop of Rome. On the contrary, the order of the steps taken in this Donatist controversy was exactly the reverse of what, according to later theory, it ought to have been. There was first a decision by the bishop of Rome; then an appeal from the pope to a council; lastly, neither pope nor council having succeeded in making a settlement, the matter was taken up by the emperor personally. And when I say a decision by the bishop of Rome, you must not suppose that that prelate, great and influential as he was, had taken on himself on his own authority to pronounce judgment on the question. He interfered only as commissioned by the emperor; and in this commission<sup>9</sup> he was not alone: three bishops are joined with him in it by name; and actually some twenty took part in the investigation. How ill it would have fared with the bishop of Rome if he had acted alone appears from the next stage of the proceed-

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<sup>8</sup> Pusey's *Eirenicon*, p. 705.

<sup>9</sup> It is given by Eusebius (*H. E.* x. 5), where also is to be found the summons to the Council of Arles addressed to Chrestus, bishop of Syracuse. Chrestus is therein authorized to demand a public conveyance, and to take with him two presbyters and three servants.

ings; for the Donatists treated a council of even twenty bishops (the bishop of Rome being one of them) as too small to overrule the decision arrived at by seventy bishops in Africa; so they were granted a rehearing of the case, which took place before a larger body of bishops assembled at Arles. Even this did not prove decisive, and the case had to be tried once more by the emperor himself. The whole history shows how completely undeveloped at that date was the whole idea of Papal supremacy, even over the Western Church.

The course of events, however, was favourable to the development of Roman claims. In the Arian controversies which soon followed, depositions of bishops were frequent: some were formally deposed for alleged heretical doctrine; others were exiled, and lost their sees on charges which only made express mention of offences against the State, however much we may believe them to have been prompted by doctrinal enmity.

Now, it was in the very nature of things that a person who thought himself aggrieved by the action of his immediate Church superiors, should seek for sympathy and redress outside. The Churches in the near neighbourhood would naturally be first appealed to; but what I have already told you of the relations of Rome with all parts of the Christian world ought to prepare you to expect that the intercession of this powerful benefactor would have prevailing influence with every Church, and therefore would be eagerly sought. With the growth at Rome of ambitious ideas there sprung up a desire to convert this power of friendly remonstrance into a legal right; and I have now to speak of the occasion when the sanction of a council was first given to the interference of the bishop of Rome with regard to the deposition or restoration of bishops outside his immediate jurisdiction.

In the latter half of the fourth century there were together at Rome two prelates, concerning whom the judgment of posterity has been different, both deposed by their nearer neighbours, both trying to enlist on their side the bishop of Rome. I mean Athanasius, whose name needs no explanation, and Marcellus of Ancyra, a strenuous opponent of the Arians, whom therefore the orthodox party were reluctant to condemn, but who is now generally owned to have made dangerous confusion of the personalities of the Father and the Son. Athanasius, exiled from the Eastern Empire, was driven to the West. He and Marcellus each protested his innocence to the Roman bishop, who, on their instigation, wrote to their accusers, challenging them to come to Rome and there establish their charges; and when, after a year and a half, the challenge remain unaccepted, Pope Julius pronounced the accused parties innocent.

It remained to be seen what a general council would think of this acquittal, and one was arranged to meet at Sardica. But when the Eastern representatives came thither, they inquired whether Athanasius and Marcellus

would be treated as deposed, or whether they would be permitted to take their seats as members of the council; and on finding that the latter was intended, the Easterns separated in a body and held a separate council at a place called Philippopolis; so Sardica was purely a Western council, and strongly anti-Arian.

You will understand how important it was then in the interests of orthodoxy to give a right of appeal to Rome. The Arians were in the ascendant in the East, and when they got a good pretext, deposed orthodox bishops. Not long before, a semi-Arian council at Antioch had made canons prohibiting all appeals beyond the Metropolitan of the province. It was manifestly in the interests of orthodoxy that redress should be obtainable from the bishop of Rome, who might be trusted to be on the right side. So the Council of Sardica decreed that if a bishop thought he had good reason to appeal from a provincial judgment of his case, he might demand a new trial, 'Let us, if you please, honour the memory of the Apostle Peter, and let him write to Julius, bishop of Rome, who, if he thinks fit, may order the case to be tried again, and appoint judges to try it.' You will observe that what this council granted to the bishop of Rome is much short of what has been claimed for him in later times. It only gives him appellate jurisdiction in the case of a bishop who conceives himself to have been unjustly treated, but it gives no power of original jurisdiction to the Pope, no power to evoke causes to Rome, or set aside the judgment of councils. And the power of appellate jurisdiction is shown to be not an original possession of the see, but one given it then for the first time. We shall see presently in a remarkable case that the Roman bishops claimed the right of appeal solely on this ground that a council had bestowed it on them. The Greek Canonists, when they accepted the decrees of Sardica, held that the limited power of receiving appeals then granted to Rome did not extend to the whole Church, and that the patriarch of Constantinople had equal power in his own province. I think myself that the Council of Sardica intended to give the bishop of Rome this power over the whole Church, for the cases at issue at the time were Eastern cases; but it is obvious that this council of Western bishops had no power to bind the Eastern Church or deprive them of any portion of their independence. The truth, however, I believe to be not so much that the East rejected these Sardican canons, as that for some centuries people in the East knew nothing about them. That the original of the canons was Latin, not Greek, appears from the fact that the three oldest Latin texts are in strictly verbal agreement, although in the case of other canons, whose original is known to have been Greek, they give independent translations. These canons are unknown to all the early Greek writers who might have been expected to show acquaintance with them; they were not mentioned either at the second general council, that of Constantinople, nor in the

fourth, that of Chalcedon, although these councils dealt with the same subject; nor do the Greek Church historians, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, make any mention of them when relating the transactions at Sardica.<sup>10</sup>

As I have had occasion to speak of the Council at Antioch in 341, I may add a few words as to what there took place. You will observe that we have now got half way through the fourth century, and that by this time Roman pretensions had very much advanced. However, the bishop of Rome was still contending not for a right of deciding Eastern questions, but only for that of being consulted about them. The Council of Antioch demanded that the bishop of Rome should acquiesce, without further inquiry, in the conclusions come to by Eastern councils with regard to the deposition of certain bishops, on pain of excommunication himself if he held communion with bishops who had been deposed. On that occasion twenty-nine useful canons were passed, which were afterwards, at Chalcedon, adopted into the code of the Universal Church. Pope Julius protested against these canons on the ground that he had not been summoned to that council, and that by Ecclesiastical law no canon was binding on the Church which had not received his assent. I don't know that we ought to allow Julius to be witness in his own cause; for this whole history is one of claims made by popes, at first meeting no recognition elsewhere, but by dint of pertinacious repetition at length obtaining more or less acceptance. The Greek historians, Socrates (ii. 8, 17) and Sozomen (iii. 10) appear simply to repeat what Julius had said. But if his words are fairly weighed, they seem to me to imply no more than this, that the bringing in new canons for the government of the whole Church was not proper to be done merely by local councils: 'Judgment ought to be given according to the canon of the whole Church, and not so as you have given it . . . . You ought to have written to all of us that so we might have decided what was just.' And the first place in such a consultation, he maintains, is due to the bishop of Rome, especially in a matter relating to the see of Alexandria, which, according to Roman ideas, had been evangelized from Rome, viz. by Peter's 'interpreter,' St. Mark.

I may remark, in passing, how what I said already as to the precedence of sees being merely determined by the civil greatness of their cities is confirmed by the instance of Antioch and Alexandria. In ecclesiastical associations Antioch was far the superior. It was the older Church, and claimed to

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<sup>10</sup> I do not go so far as a learned writer in the *Church Quarterly Review*, April, 1881, p. 189 who, on the grounds stated above, and for other similar reasons, has grave doubts whether these Sardican decrees are not altogether a Roman forgery; for he himself gives good reasons for thinking that a forger would have proceeded differently, and for example would have claimed for his canons some higher origin than Sardica. Besides, as I have pointed out in the text, the Sardican decrees correspond well to the circumstances of the time to which they are attributed.

have been presided over by St. Peter, while Alexandria only pretended to have been evangelized later by a disciple of Peter. But Alexandria was far the greater city, and so its bishop came to hold the second place after Rome; and accordingly, the trial of the case of Athanasius at Antioch was open to the objection that it seemed to subject the greater see to the less, besides that the place of trial was so remote from that where the facts to be investigated occurred. But to return to the claims made by Julius, while he protests against new canons made at Antioch without his knowledge and consent, he gives no intimation that he thought that new canons could have been made at Rome either, without the consent of other Churches.

Having spoken of Sardica, I may as well go on to speak of the well-known Roman attempt to pass off the decrees of that council at Nicene. The case of Apiarius is likely to be familiar to you. He was an African presbyter, excommunicated for misconduct by his bishop. He went to Rome, and prevailed on Pope Zosimus to take up his cause with some warmth. The pope's interference and the claims on which it was founded were the subject of discussions in at least three African synods. Zosimus, you know, founded his right to interfere on the Sardican canons of which I have been speaking; but which he quoted as Nicene. The African prelates, in council assembled, declared that there was no such canon in their copy of the Nicene code; and they begged the pope to write to Constantinople and Alexandria, requesting that the Greek copies there might be collated, in order to ascertain whether the disputed canons had really been passed at Nicaea. The Papal legates begged hard that the council would be content with this request to the pope to examine into the matter for himself; but the council very wisely determined to send messengers of their own to the East to get copies of the Greek version of the canons of Nicaea. The result of the mission appears from the final letter of the African bishops. In this, after giving a short account of what had been done, they request that the pope will not in future receive persons excommunicated by their synods, this being contrary to the canons of Nicaea. They protest against appeals to foreign tribunals; they deny the pope's right to send legates to exercise jurisdiction in his name, which they say is not authorized by any canon of the Fathers, and they request that the pope will not send any agent or nuncio to interfere with them in any business for fear the Church should suffer through pride and ambition. In fact, we can plainly see that the arrogance of the Papal representatives in Africa contributed greatly to the soreness which was felt at Roman interference.

In defence of the false quotation of the Sardican canons as Nicene, it is alleged that it was the practice in books of canons to add to the earlier councils those of later, those of Sardica following next after the Nicene, and therefore quoted under the same heading. That the mistake was not



purely accidental (as far as the Roman scribes were concerned) is made likely by a Roman manuscript of the canons still extant, in which the name Julius, which occurs in the Sardican decree, and which determines their date to that episcopate, is deliberately altered to Sylvester, who was bishop at the time of the Council of Nicaea. In the absence of any evidence to connect Pope Zosimus himself with this fraud, I willingly acquit him of deliberate forgery, and charitably believe that he erred in honest ignorance, having been imposed on by some too zealous subordinate; and the same excuse may be made for the papal use of the forged decretals of which I shall speak in another Lecture. But these instances show how absurd it is to claim for the pope immunity from error in his declarations of doctrine, while he is allowed to be liable to error with regard to matters of fact. How can we put confidence in the judgment of one who is mistaken as to the facts which ought to guide his judgment? When a bishop of Rome has to decide what rights he shall claim for his see, it is surely important for him to know what rights early councils had recognized and what rights his predecessors had exercised. If a pope should be entirely misinformed on these points, it is quite to be expected that he should form a false estimate of the rightful claims of his see. Of course if a person is determined to believe in Infallibility he will do so in defiance of all reason. I have already told you that there are those who have no difficulty in believing that the decisions of a council are infallibly true, even when it has been shown that the arguments which induced the council to come to these decisions are hopelessly bad. Such persons will not be shaken in their belief in the correctness of the pope's decisions by any proof that he has been led to them on false information. Yet if any one tells us that it is incredible that God would leave His Church without an infallible guide, we can reply that it is quite as incredible that He would permit His appointed guide to proceed by such methods as ought, without a miracle, to lead him to false conclusions, and would take no heed to guard him against giving credence to forgery and lies.<sup>11</sup> At

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<sup>11</sup> The use made of this distinction in the Jansenist controversy is well known (see p. 201). In 1653, five propositions, said to have been extracted from Jansen's book, were submitted to pope Innocent X., who condemned them as heretical. The Jansenists, when called on to subscribe to this condemnation, found themselves able to do so without giving up their allegiance to their master. "The propositions, no doubt, were heretical, since the pope declared them so, but they had never been asserted by Jansen, at least not in the sense in which they were heretical." The Jansenists were deprived of this evasion 1656, by a new condemnation obtained from Innocent's successor, Alexander VII., in which not only were the five propositions declared to be heretical, but it was expressly stated that Jansen had asserted them in the heretical sense. The Jansenists then declared that the question whether the five propositions were heretical was one of doctrine, on which they were bound to submit to the pope's decision but that the question whether Jansen had asserted them was one of fact, on which the pope was liable to be deceived by false information; and, therefore, that before they could accept his ruling it was necessary that the passages should be produced where Jansen had made the alleged erroneous assertions. The distinction relied

all events the case of Apiarius shows clearly that the right of receiving appeals was not an original possession of the see of Rome. Zosimus claimed it as a privilege bestowed by the great Council of Nicaea: the African bishops were ready to concede it if it had been so bestowed, but asked for proof that it had been. That it belonged to the see by divine right does not seem to have been dreamed of on either side.

Thus we see that even in the West at the beginning of the fifth century the pre-eminence of the bishop of Rome implied no right of absolute dominion, but was subject to strict constitutional limitations. The East had showed its independence still more plainly a little time before at the second general council. That council was, as I have already said, a purely Eastern body; and its decrees were made not only without Western assistance, but also in some points in opposition to Western opinion. I refer particularly to disputes at the time as to who were the rightful occupants of the sees of Antioch, Constantinople, and Alexandria, when the competitors who had the strongest Western support were rejected. And yet the time was one when the voice of the West was likely to be listened to with unusual respect; for the Easterns had been under obligations to the West, both politically and ecclesiastically. They had quite lately been obliged to cry out for Western help when their Emperor perished at Adrianople in the most disastrous defeat the Roman arms had experienced since Cannes. And the orthodox Eastern bishops, whom the death of the Arian Emperor had restored to ascendancy, could not but gratefully remember what faithful support the West had given them in the time of the Arian domination. If the West was to be praised for having disregarded the decisions of Eastern councils which had deposed Athanasius and other orthodox bishops, how, in consistency, could

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on by the Jansenists is absolutely necessary to save Papal Infallibility on the Pelagian question, for the only defence that can be made for Zosimus is to assert that the pope's doctrine was sound all along, and that he was merely deceived as to the matter of fact whether Pelagius and Caelestius had contravened it. Yet if the Jansenist position be tenable, any heretic might safely disregard condemnation by the pope.

The Jansenists, persecuted in France, found shelter in Holland, where they flourished for a time, and have preserved to our day a succession of bishops, which enabled them to consecrate a bishop for the 'Old Catholics.' The late Dr. Tregelles, in his little book on the Jansenists, gives an account of an interview he had in 1850 with Van Santen, the Jansenist archbishop of Utrecht, who gave him particulars of an attempt made by Pope Leo XII. soon after his accession in 1527, through his legate, Cappucini, to obtain his submission. The most interesting thing in it is Cappucini's reply to Van Santen's plea that he could not subscribe the formulary which declared that the condemned propositions were in Jansen's book, because he himself had read the book, and knew that the propositions were not there.

'Pope Urban VIII. [the same who condemned Galileo] had by his bull, *In eminenti*, condemned Jansen's book, and forbidden the reading of it. In reading it at all you were doing a forbidden act, and could not expect God to give you clear light when you were thus acting in presumption. No knowledge, therefore, that you imagine yourself to have obtained in this unlawful way, can conflict with the clear duty of implicit obedience to the Holy Father.'

they be denied the right to revise other Eastern decisions? Accordingly, this was what the West claimed to do; though it is to be remarked that the leader in the movement was not the bishop of Rome, but Ambrose of Milan. He appears not to have had much independent knowledge of Eastern transactions, but simply to have adopted the view of them taken at Alexandria. That he should have regarded Paulinus as the rightful bishop of Antioch is not surprising, but we are somewhat astonished to find that in the contest for the see of Constantinople Ambrose gave his adherence to the Egyptian competitor, Maximus the Cynic, who, if the accounts that have come to us are to be trusted, was a disreputable person quite unworthy of the office. Ambrose in his own name, and that of other Western bishops assembled with him in council, wrote two urgent letters to the Emperor Theodosius, asking him to assemble a council to decide on these disputed elections. At first he proposed that the place of meeting should be Alexandria; afterwards, growing bolder, he asked for Rome. But he is careful to protest that he claims no right to determine the matter, but only desires that the bishop of Rome and the other Western bishops should be consulted in the matter. It is significant that in this Western attempt to interfere in Eastern concerns no special claim is made for the bishop of Rome, nor is any right to decide on such disputes claimed for his see. In fact, the bishop of Rome appears to have been no party to this movement, for he was not an adherent of Maximus. The Eastern replied with the utmost civility,<sup>12</sup> but refused to go to the other end of the world to settle their domestic affairs; and actually arranged them with complete disregard of Western opinion. In this decision the West was forced to acquiesce.

What has been said sufficiently exhibits the necessity of classifying our witnesses geographically: for moderate as were the Western claims towards the end of the fourth century, as compared with what they afterwards grew to, they evidently found no justification in Eastern tradition. We have a graphic picture of Western contempt for the Easterns in a contemporary letter written by Jerome from Syria to Damasus of Rome. He had found the orthodox Church at Antioch greatly distracted not only by the rival pretensions of different claimants of the see, but also by disputes on the subject of the Trinity, though these, as it would seem, merely verbal. The question related to the use of the words *υποστασις* and *ουσια*; and it was disputed for instance whether it was proper to say that there are in the Godhead three ‘hypostases.’ On these questions Jerome has evidently very strongly made up his mind; but he is anxious to be able to produce an authoritative ruling in his favour by the bishop of Rome. So he writes a flattering letter to Damasus (*Ep.* 15), expressing the utmost scorn for the wretched Easterns. In

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<sup>12</sup> Theodoret, *H. E.* vii. 5.

the West the Sun of Righteousness was rising; in the East Lucifer, who had fallen, had set his throne above the stars;—in the West was the fertile land bearing fruit a hundredfold; in the East the good grain was overrun with tares and darnel;—in the West were the vessels of gold and silver; in the East those of wood and earth, destined to be broken by the rod of iron, or consumed with eternal fire. Jerome affects to be quite indifferent to the Eastern disputes. Paulinus, or Meletius, or Vitalis were all alike to him; all he cared for was to adhere to the chair of Peter, the Rock on which the Church was built. Let Damasus only tell him which competitor he ought to adhere to, and how it was right for him to express himself. Damasus, who no doubt well knew that Jerome had no need to be enlightened as to which candidate was recognized at Rome, appears to have been in no hurry to reply. So Jerome has to write again, more urgently imploring the shepherd to have pity on the perplexities of his wandering sheep. Jerome, as he got older, and learned to know the East better, abated a good deal of his youthful ‘Chauvinism’; and his amusing letter would not need much notice if this specimen of Western conceit were not frequently cited as truly illustrating Patristic opinion as to the rightful claims of Rome.

If we want to know the true tradition of the early Church, we have no better evidence than the general councils; so with a few remarks on their canons having reference to the present subject, I will conclude this Lecture. I may take for granted that you are familiar with the celebrated Nicene canon: ‘Let the ancient customs prevail; with regard to Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, that the bishop of Alexandria should have authority over all these, since this is also customary for the bishop in Rome; and likewise in Antioch and the other provinces that the prerogatives of the Churches be preserved; so if any be made bishop without the consent of the metropolitan, the council adjudges him to be no bishop.’ The cause of this canon was certain schismatical proceedings on the part of an Egyptian bishop, Meletius. It is evident that the council regarded the supremacy of Alexandria as then an old thing; and secondly, that the council treats this supremacy as quite parallel to that exercised elsewhere by the bishops of Rome and Antioch. There could not be a stronger implicit denial of the right of Rome to rule the whole Church, or to enjoy an exclusive privilege, than the use of such an argument as, The bishop of Rome has such and such powers in his neighbourhood, therefore the bishop of Alexandria ought to have the like in his. At the same time the right of Rome is acknowledged to rule the Churches in the immediate neighbourhood.

How far did that right extend? Rufinus, who translated these canons towards the end of the fourth century, says, Rome has the care of the suburbicarian Churches. Commentators differ as to what exactly this means. It is clear, however, that Rome had not patriarchal authority as yet over the

whole West, as indeed is proved by the case of Apiarius, which has been already discussed. I have not time to tell at length of the struggles made by Rome from time to time to enlarge the bounds of her patriarchal authority. It may, however, be mentioned that the great schism between East and West grew out of disputes as to whether certain provinces belonged to the patriarchate of Rome or Constantinople. The two patriarchs felt a natural shame to confess that the cause of their solicitude was the money that would be diverted from their coffers if these provinces should be lost to them. Consequently differences of ritual or of doctrine, on points on which previous generations had been content to differ, were now first represented as soul-destroying errors; and the disputants declared themselves each to be solely moved by solicitude for the souls that would be imperilled if they were placed under the teaching of his rival. But all these struggles to increase the part of the Church over which Rome was to hold sway are perfectly inconsistent with her modern claim to dominion over the whole Church. The man who asked our Lord to command his brother to divide the inheritance may have been covetous and grasping; but by the very words of his petition he precluded himself from asserting that he was the sole heir. If you complain that your share is not as large as it ought to be, and try to make it larger, you still own that you are entitled to a share, not the whole. Accordingly, at the present day Romanists do not count Rome as among the great patriarchates of the Church, and they are quite consistent in not doing so, and in treating the patriarchal office as inferior to that held by the pope; but the ancient Church, even when it came to recognize the bishop of Rome as the great patriarch of the west, implicitly denied his jurisdiction over the whole Church.

To pass now to the second general council. One of the Constantinopolitan canons forbids the bishops at the head of the great ecclesiastical divisions to meddle out of their own provinces, or throw the Churches into confusion; but that according to the canons the bishop of Alexandria should alone administer the affairs of Egypt, the bishops of the East those of the East, and so on. No mention of Rome is made in this canon, which deals only with Eastern affairs: but Roman claims to Eastern dominion are sufficiently condemned by the silence of the canon, there being apparently no necessity even to reject such pretensions.

What the council would be willing to grant to the bishop of Rome appears from what they granted to the bishop of Constantinople. They did not give him any right to meddle out of his own province, but they said that he should have precedence of honour (τα πρεσβεια της τιμης) next after the bishop of Rome, 'because this city was new Rome.'

This decree of Constantinople was read at Chalcedon, and the council voted, 'We recognize the canon just read, and de ourselves adopt the same

determination respecting the precedence of the most holy Church of Constantinople, new Rome, for the Fathers naturally assigned precedence to the see of the elder Rome, because that city was imperial; and taking the same point of view the one hundred and fifty pious bishops awarded the same precedence to the most holy see of new Rome, judging with good reason that the city which was honoured with the sovereignty and the senate, and which enjoyed the same precedence with the elder imperial Rome, should also in matters ecclesiastical be dignified like her, as being second after her.' So far the decree might seem to give but honorary precedence, but it went on to say, 'so that the metropolitans of Pontus, Asia, and Thrace, should be ordained by the archbishop of Constantinople, these metropolitans to ordain the comprovincial bishops.' When this canon was proposed the Roman legate, evidently discerning that it would not be liked in Rome, said that they had had no instructions from home on this subject, and therefore withdrew; but the canon was passed in their absence. When the legates next day protested, and asked that the decree should be rescinded, their demand was refused. When word was brought to Rome of what had been done, Leo was exceedingly angry, and refused to recognize the new canon, professing great solicitude for the dignity of the ancient sees of Alexandria and Antioch—founded, as he said, the one by Peter's disciple Mark, the other by Peter himself, before he went to Rome,—a line of argument which effectually maintained the superior claims of Rome itself. In his resistance the bishop of Rome might count on sympathy not only from these sees, but also from those whose metropolitans were in future to be consecrated in Constantinople instead of in their own province. It is worthy of remark that the ground on which Leo asserts the nullity of the canons is not their having been passed without his consent, but their being in opposition to the decrees of Nicaea, which he said would last to the end of the world, and which no subsequent assembly of bishops, however numerous, had power to alter.<sup>13</sup> But in spite of Roman protests the canon remained firm; Constantinople retained the rank assigned to it, and after long unavailing struggle Rome was forced to recognize the existing facts. The Quinisext Council, 681, confirmed all the Chalcedon canons without exception, and the Council of Florence formally renewed the order established by Chalcedon, with Constantinople second.

To what a height Constantinople grew may be judged from the title of Ecumenical or universal bishop, about which there was such amusing con-

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<sup>13</sup> Leo, in like manner, rejected the ambitious claims, already mentioned of Juvenal of Jerusalem, on the ground that they were an infringement of the Nicene canon. But though Juvenal did not succeed in obtaining everything he had wished for, the question of the claims of Jerusalem was dealt with as an entirely open one by the Council of Chalcedon, and that see then permanently secured a higher position than Nicaea had given it.

troversy at the end of the sixth century. In the grandiloquent language of the East it did not mean all that the word would in strictness convey; and the bishop of Constantinople would probably have allowed that there might be more universal bishops than one; but Gregory the Great, taking it literally, was shocked at what he called a proud and foolish word; declared that the assumption of it was an imitation of the devil, who exalted himself above his fellow angels; that it was unlike the behaviour of St. Peter, who, although first of the Apostles, did not pretend to be more than of the same class with the rest, and that this piece of arrogance was a token of Antichrist's speedy coming. I call this amusing on account of the laughable shifts to which Roman divines are reduced in their efforts to reconcile this language with the assumption of the same title and all it denotes, by Gregory's successors.