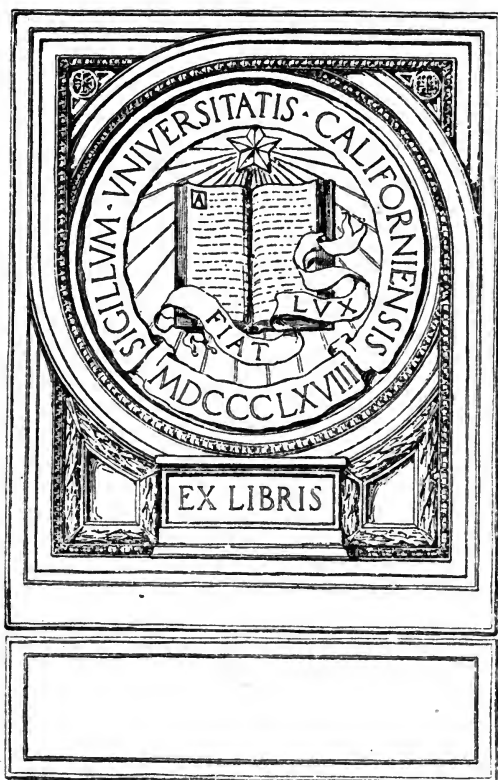


**SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI
AND HIS LEGEND.**

NINO TAMASSIA.



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SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI
AND HIS LEGEND

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI AND HIS LEGEND.

by
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TRANSLATED IN TO ENGLISH

With a short Preface
by
LONSDALE RAGG.



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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE disciples of Karl Müller, and those also who have ever in mind the neatly expressed lines of Léon Le Monnier's book, will doubtless find many deficiencies in these researches of mine. And the readers of the *Vie de S. François*, carried away by Paul Sabatier's charm of style and elegance of conception, will find the present work over-weighted with notes and disfigured with excess of raw material. But I may be permitted to observe, on the other side, that the very special character of the study here presented to the reader demanded a compromise—a compromise between erudition and criticism; between the claims of the expositor's art, and the necessity of giving due place to the actual proofs, which here are all-important.

The mere citation of the titles of works written on Franciscan subjects would of itself have offered material for a book; and it is obvious that he who would speak of the Saint of Assisi must patiently question history in her various departments—civil, religious, dogmatico-theological, juridical and literary—and still more patiently listen to the answers she has to give. But the difficulties do not end there. Generally speaking historians, and still more jurists, have no reputation for keeping their immediate audience awake when they proceed to hold forth; yet suffer from the strange illusion that their wares may be acceptable to folk outside the little circle to which they themselves belong. These very true and just considerations I have borne

in mind all along ; and the fact of my constant endeavour to avoid these pitfalls has itself been the reverse of helpful, for so the work, in addition to its other disadvantages may have suffered also from the hesitation of its author. We are so close to Saint Francis that a humble confession—even of scruples of conscience—is an honorable and a congenial task.

For many years past, in connexion with certain investigations which have no direct relation to the Franciscan movement, I had been collecting and putting aside a series of data which coordinated themselves, as it were, spontaneously, and mutually illustrated one another.

And then, lifting my gaze higher, I seemed to discern, far off but shining clear, the gentle figure of the "Poverello d'Assisi". No one had directed me to him... I considered. To make sure of the most delicate lines of the apparition I must climb higher still, not leaving my old track. There intervened the mist of Thomas of Celano's Legend, insidious and dense : but I had already possessed myself of one secret. That which drew others down from the path served me as guide.

So was the book brought to birth ; and it makes no claim that its lowly origin should be forgotten. Errors and defects it doubtless has ; long-winded discussions, unnecessarily tortuous, were not always avoidable : in any case I know they are to be found in it. Such misfortunes are not incurred by those who take pains to note them in the pages of others. If an author has his head, so to speak, in the right place, he is himself the severest judge of his own work ; hence I do not claim immunity from any form of criticism. Indeed, I believe I shall be found

in perfect agreement with all my critics, when I acknowledge that I may be wrong in many points, but not in the idea of a critical study of the Franciscan Legend free from every sort of preconception.

Sacred are the rights of Truth : we cannot deny them to him who incarnates the idea of evangelical simplicity and superhuman candour.

And now one last word of warning. If I am not mistaken, these researches prove that the Franciscan Legend in its multiform complexity cannot be disjoined from the truly great work of Thomas of Celano. The Saint's biographer has drawn, from certain sources which we shall learn to know, both inspiration and material for his work. With a minimum of conscience and an immense degree of talent he has presented to the Order the real *Speculum Perfectionis*, the Book *par excellence* of the Franciscan Society. Having decomposed this legend into its constituent elements and demonstrated that the two "Lives" betray a profound acquaintance with the dogmatic literature relating to monastic institutions and with the most difficult religious questions of the times, it seemed to me unnecessary to confute one by one the arguments adduced by Sabatier to defend the authenticity of that "oldest Legend" by him attributed to Brother Leo—a Legend which owes its originality and its fame to Sabatier himself. The entire book, directed as it is to the establishing of Celano's part in the formation of the Legend of the Saint, is a continuous refutation of the preconception of which the distinguished French writer, and not a few others with him, have been the victims. Moreover the certainty with which the true sources of Celano's narrative could be indicated, rendered practically superfluous any

preliminary research into the mutual relations between the various existing forms of the Legend itself. For us those critical studies, long and laborious, on the origin and parentage of the MSS. and their different dates, have lost their historical value. When, for instance, we know that a fragment of Gregory the Great, or of the "*Vitae patrum*" passes from Celano into the *Actus*, the *Fioretti*, the so-called *Speculum Perfectionis*, or the "Lives of the Companions" of Saint Francis, and so on, the historical interest, which depended on the supposed originality of the narrative, is gone for ever.

If one wished to write the history of certain famous gems, there would need to be a separate chapter devoted to each of the artistic objects in which, during the course of centuries, those stones have shone. But such labour becomes useless if a most accurate examination permits us to assert of a single stone that it passed from a cross to a sceptre, thence to a reliquary, and from the reliquary to a ring. Such have been the fortunes—if I may so put it—of much of the Franciscan Legend. It shines, indeed, down the ages; and if its brilliance does not always illumine the dark period which saw the rise of that loveliest creation of art, the "Italian Christ", it yet holds the secret of his success.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THE translator, as such, may be accused of presumption if he pose also as critic. Yet his task is one which, if his mind be awake, stimulates and feeds the critical faculty in a measure greater than that enjoyed by the mere reader. For he needs must linger over every page and ponder on each phrase unless he would run the risk of betraying his trust, and proving *traditore* instead of *traduttore*. In one sense, indeed, his attitude would seem to be far enough removed from that of the critic; for if there be a "sincerer flattery" than that which expresses itself in "imitation", it is surely that of the translator, for whose task originality itself is yoked to the plough and made subservient to the mind of another.

Yet it is impossible (be it said with all modesty) that any two minds should think exactly alike in all details, and besides the loyalty which the translator owes to his original, there is a loyalty also due to himself; and all the more if he have given, and be pledged to give again, on his own account, literary hostages to fortune. For this reason the present writer is particularly grateful to the Author and the publisher for the permission to prefix a few words of his own to the translation of a work of which his genuine appreciation makes him glad to be the means of introducing it to a new circle of readers.

There can be but few, even among experts who are qualified to criticise from an equal stand point a work so

full of acumen and so thoroughly furnished with the sinews of a wide and deep erudition. The Author's professional line of study has made him familiar—one might almost say uniquely familiar—with a vast and little-known literature: and he has brought the artillery of his learning to bear on the subject with a skill, and in a volume which, if it do not win him victory all along the line, cannot, at any rate, fail to capture important points of vantage. In his own Preface he tells us the story of the Book's genesis. Steeped in the hagiographical literature of the pre-Franciscan Age, he found himself thinking, as it were, unconsciously, in terms of Franciscan legend: and the fact itself gave food for thought, and became, indeed, the germ of the present study.

In the same Preface the Author invites, and calls for, candid criticism, as indeed does every page of his work, with its formidable array of authorities referred to, and often cited verbally, in the foot notes. If the Translator may for once trespass beyond his province, and accept the Author's genial challenge, he would fain suggest two points from which might well start such candid criticism as the Author himself invites.

First, as to the *fonti*. The Book displays, from first to last, a sincere and zealous effort to trace back this and that phrase or incident to its original source. And this is one of its most important and valuable features. But the Translator cannot wholly free himself from a lurking suspicion that in this matter due weight may not always have been given to the thirteenth-century knowledge of the Bible itself. That heretical movement which figures so largely in the following pages was admittedly marked by an intense devotion to the Holy Scriptures, and a

remarkable familiarity with that vernacular Bible which was one of its most precious fruits. And if, as we know to be the case, the orthodox layman Dante Alighieri possessed a knowledge of the Old and New Testaments which might put to shame not a few Protestants of today; why should not the learned cleric Thomas of Celano have enjoyed a like familiarity with the sacred texts? If this be so, may it not be unnecessary, where the "First" or "Second Life" quotes some well known passage from the Gospels or Epistles, to adduce a previous quotation of the same source from St. Gregory, or Cassian, or Caesarius of Heisterbach?¹ It is however, of course possible that the passage in question, though known directly to Celano, was in the particular instance called to mind in virtue of its secondary association. And furthermore this criticism even if stringently applied, would touch but a few details of the argument, which is built on a very broad basis.

There remains another suggestion which has some bearing on the central argument of the Book. The admitted plagiarisms of Celano—how do they affect one's view of the supposed *facts* of Saint Francis' life? If in describing an incident assigned to that life the biographer can be proved to be employing the very words of the Gregorian Dialogues or of Sulpicius Severus, does that necessarily prove that the incident itself is borrowed?... that it has no rightful place in the biography of the Saint of Assisi? Is there not, on the contrary, an irresistible impulse even for the modern biographer to describe the most solemn moments of his hero's life in terms derived from the classic he loves best, and most of all from Holy Scripture,

¹ I owe sincere thanks to Prof. Tamassia for permission to add a Scripture reference to several of the notes. L. R.

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that unique repository of thoughts and phrases that are of age-long and world-wide applicability? The Age and School for which Celano wrote had a larger Bible than ours, for it included, practically the whole cycle of hagiological tradition.

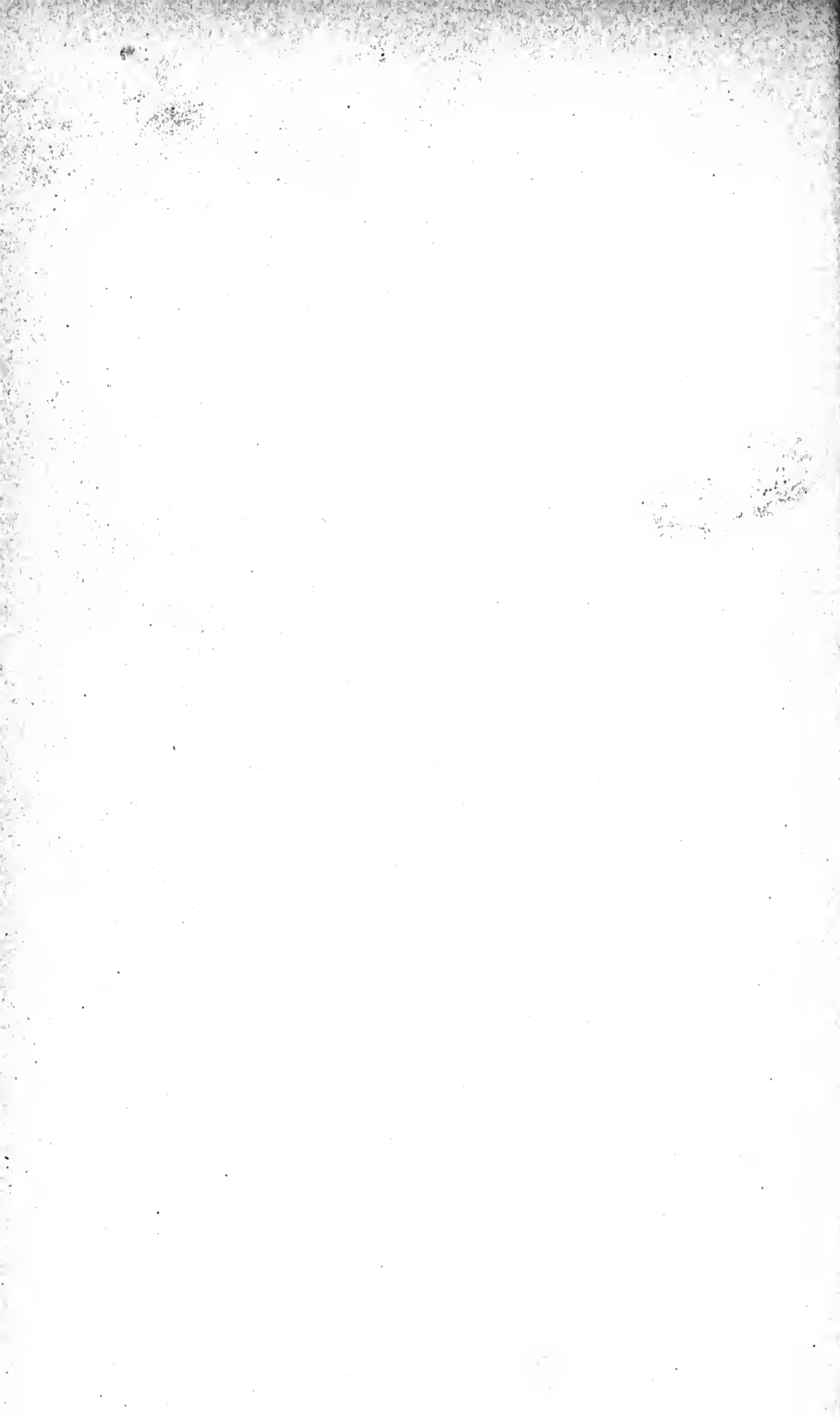
But we may go one step further. If a word or an incident (miraculous or otherwise) attributed to St. Francis can be shewn to have been anticipated exactly in the writings of earlier biographers all down the series, beginning, it may be with the Gospels themselves... does that prove that the thing happened but once? Is it not rather true that a necessary similarity, both in word and in act, in to be expected of those who in successive centuries set themselves to copy a single model? The Saints are above all *imitatores Christi*, alike in legend and in the aim of their own actual lives: and in proportion as their imitation is faithful and successful, their lineaments will become assimilated to one another, and their biographies lend themselves to reciprocal plagiarism.

Such thoughts as these are almost inevitably suggested by the trend of the argument. With such reservations as they imply, we believe that the Author will be found to have proved his point. His main point, after all, is the central position of Celano's work in the formation of the Franciscan Legend, and the very large dependence of that work on certain definite earlier sources. With this falls to the ground the originality and independent historical value of Sabatier's "*Speculum*"; the inimitable Fioretti are shewn to be exceedingly composite in character, and the whose perspective of Franciscan study is materially altered.

Let those who are competent criticise at their leisure the details of the argument, with the help of the ample material

which the Author has so generously provided in his foot-notes. The least that can be said of the work here presented in an English dress to students of Franciscanism, is that it marks a new stage in the progress of that study, and will have to be reckoned with by all who write thereon in the future.

L. R.



CHAPTER I

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI AND HIS AGE

Principal sources : *S. Bernardi abb. Clarae Vall.* Op. Venetiis 1726. *Berthold von Regensburg*, in Sitzungsber. der k. Akad. d. Wiss. phil. hist. Classe (Wien) Bd. 84, 142, 147. *Caesarii Heisterbacensis*, Dial. miraculorum, ed. *Strange* 1851 & Colon. 1599. *Comba*, Hist. des Vaudois I 1901. *Denifle-Chatelain*, Chart. Univ. Paris. 1889. CV. Corpus Script. eccl. lat. ed. Acad. Caes. Vindob. 1866 seqq. *Döllinger*, Beitr. zur Sektengesch. d. Mittelalt. 1880 [Bd. I Gesch. der gnost. manich. Sekt.]. *Dresdner*, Kultur u. Sittengesch. d. ital. Geistlichkeit in 10 und 11 Jahrh. 1890. *Friedberg-Ruffini*, Tratt. del diritto eccl. 1893; *Hahn*, Gesch. der Ketzer im Mittelalt. 1845-50. *Harnack*, Lehrb. d. Dogmengesch. 1894-7. *Havet*, L' Hérésie et le bras séculier au m. âge (Bibl. de l' écol. des Ch.) 1880. *Hausrath*, Die Arnoldisten 1895. *Hinschius*, das Kirchenr. d. Kath. und Protest. 1869 seqq. *Hurter*, Storia d' Innocenzo III (trad. Rovida). Inn. III, Opera, Venet. 1578. *Kurtz*, Lehrb. der Kirchengesch. 1889. *Lea*, Hist. de l' Inquisition (trad. *Reinach*) I 1900. *Mariano*, S. Francesco d' Assisi e alcuni dei suoi più recenti biografi, 1896. M. C. Monumenta Germaniae Historica. *Müller* (Karl) die Anfänge des Minoritenord. u. d. Brudersch. 1885. Die Waldenser und ihre einz. Gruppen 1880; *Preger*, in Abh. d. bay. Akad. d. Wiss. XIII (1875). Ueber die Verfass. der Franz. Wald. 1890. Reg. Pont. I - Regesta Pontificum (*Jaffé* II Aufl.) Reg. Pont. II Regesta Pontificum (*Potthast*). *Schmidt*, Hist. de la secte des Cathares ou Albigeois, 1849. *Schönbach*, in Sitzungsber. der Wien, Akad. Bd. 142, 147 - (1900, 1903), *Tocco*, L'eresia nel medio evo 1884.

THE mountain peak that soars majestically above lesser summits seems when seen from a distance to stand alone, dominating a vast plain; but on a nearer approach it dwindles gradually, lost among the surrounding hills. So is it with Saint Francis of Assisi, in whose person the religious and social movements of the thirteenth century concentrate themselves, and, in a sense, triumph.

As we draw close to the Umbrian Saint, descending

boldly into the midst of the living memories of his Age, the visage of the faithful Spouse of Poverty seems to change its lineaments, and his familiar accents so sweet and fervent, lose themselves in the confused clamour of other voices no less powerful or pious.

Francis of Assisi—it is a practically general axiom among all the historians who have written about him—cannot be separated from his Age. And that Age must be studied calmly and systematically in its every manifestation. Savants and poets, fervid mystics and cold pathologists contend over the form of the humble follower of Jesus ; yet we possess in point of fact, only such tokens of the Saint as are preserved for us in the historical records which speak of him. And no one has yet given a satisfactory answer to the very simple question : *What credit is to be given to these records ? What are their real sources ?* So far, all the efforts of criticism have been directed towards determining the value, primary or secondary, of this or that historical document. Some critics have not hesitated to reconstruct the sources in accordance with certain preconceptions fatal to a true historical method ; but there has not yet appeared a critical study entirely devoted to the origin of the Franciscan Legend as it is fixed, in its fundamental lines, in the two “Lives” of Thomas of Celano.

The purpose of the present investigation is to shew that in order to study aright the life of St. Francis, one needs to adopt an attitude of extreme diffidence not only on those points which have been provisionally admitted, *faute de mieux* ; but also with regard to all that has hitherto been accepted without question as true.

Before entering upon a detailed comparison of the ancient sources with the Franciscan texts, it will be necessary to say a few prefatory words on the religious and social tendencies of the age of St. Francis. Our aim in so doing is not to focus the light derived therefrom upon the figure of the Saint, but merely to elucidate the technical signification of certain narratives : narratives from which, in turn, we may gain a scientific conception of the principal *criteria* by which the entire Legend is regulated.

The miracle of the *Stigmata* ; the charming ceremony of the "Presepio di Greccio" ; the episode of the impure priest from whom the Saint does not withhold the respect due to his order ; the name itself of the "Ordine dei Minori"—these are not the conventional themes which recur on every page of the hagiological writings of the Middle Ages.

From the two works of Celano there issues a Legend which spreads itself through many other collections gathering riches as it passes from place to place, from age to age, from a generation of more or less trustworthy eye-witnesses to one of visionaries, or of cold and unscrupulous compilers. In this Legend there is enshrined a well-determined nucleus of facts which succeeds in impressing on all the various stories the appearance of a frank, ingenious originality. As soon, however, as the Legend comes in contact with old *motifs*, it seems as though the narrative entirely lost sight of its subject.

This wonderful unity of conception, which the internal tempests of the Order failed to dissolve, might produce the illusion of truth to a reader incapable of penetrating into the secrets of very clever compilation. Francis, alike in the rhetorical images of Thomas of Celano as in the

consummate simplicity of the *Fioretti* seems always to preserve his physiognomy. In many cases, however, under a closer and more careful scrutiny the image of the "Poverello" of Assisi is seen to decompose itself, so to speak, into a number of separate traits that are drawn from other faces—faces that have no relation whatever to our Saint.

Certainly the mosaic is all but perfect. The principal theme, which is followed by the artists is derived from the characteristic note that vibrates in the real soul of Francis; but the inspiration of the great work is perhaps the only thing about it that corresponds to the reality... and this quickly fades away as soon as the Legend is presented in the flashing pomp of images drawn from ancient sources such as the famous "Lives of the Fathers". He who then comes upon the scene is not Francis of Assisi, but an Oriental hermit, resuscitated by the so-called ascetic fervour of the thirteenth century. Many people, up to this day believe that from the mouth of St. Francis issued the words: "*Nos sumus joculatores Domini*".¹ But as a matter of fact the expression originated with a German Frate, as related—or invented—by Caesarius of Heisterbach!²

What remains, then, it will be asked, of the *real* Saint of Assisi? Much more than, to a superficial judgement, would seem likely. The literary frauds—neither strange nor novel in character³—with which we are confronted, are not inspired simply by the desire to increase the vene-

¹ *Sabatier*, *Speculum perfectionis* 1898; 197.

² *Caes.* VI, 8: Ita est de simplicibus (qui) ut sic dicam, *iaculatores Dei sunt sanctorumque angelorum* [ed. *Strange* I 359-60: ed. *Colon.* 418].

³ See, e. g., the Life of S. Remigius written by Hincmar in *MG. SS. Merov.* III, 240.

ration for the saint and add to his fame. The Franciscan movement cannot be disjoined from the heretical one arrested in its victorious political career by Innocent III.

Triumphant Orthodoxy adds to its trophies the meek figure of Francis ; the Legend must bow itself to the exigencies of altered circumstances. And it bows itself to such an extent that it needs but an extremely slight effort of criticism to bring back—not far from the truth—the *official* story.

Once again criticism, with all its reputation for pedantry, transforms itself into an exquisitely delicate psychological research.

To reach Francis of Assisi the road is long and rough. We prefer to follow certain field-paths from which one may enjoy a better view of the landscape of the times ; and the short cut will be a benefit to the wayfarer who cannot transport himself into the days of the Man of God without the annoyance of a little of the dust of erudition.

After the independence of her heroic age, the Church made her peace with the Roman Empire ; but the signing of that treaty was far from giving her internal peace. Her own proper adversaries were at once reinforced by those of the State ; while her close adhesion to the Civil power had the effect of transforming her into a quasi-political organism capable, in virtue of its robust constitution, of taking up, at the opportune moment, the heritage of the dying world. It followed, however, from this that her religious idealism found itself now in continual conflict with worldly anxieties and preoccupations : and the internal uneasiness soon manifested itself in schisms and heresies, in the contempt of monachism for the very institutions of

the Church, and in the ill-omened invocation of the "secular arm".¹

Through the succeeding centuries, with their varied and very intricate vicissitudes; whilst society is painfully striving to reconstruct itself on the ruins of the ancient civilisation and amid the savagery of contemporary barbarism; the separation between the two functions of the Church becomes still more pronounced. Enormous riches stream in upon her, and equally enormous obligations. With the former comes in the germ of corruption; with the latter, that of political dominion. For the defence of that which has become necessary to her, the Church makes ready means of resistance: she transmutes her spiritual arms into weapons of worldly defence; and so her organism becomes assimilated in form and substance to the institutions which make no claim to divine origin or mission. To St. Augustine Catholicism owes its dogmatic unity; to the Papacy, in which lives on the immortal spirit of Rome the Ruler, that cohesion which might best be described as political.²

Thus the increase of civil power obscured the religious character of the institution, till at length—in a stormy age, be it admitted—Gregory the Great could doubt whether he were Shepherd of Peoples, or an earthly Potentate.

Permeating the inmost structure of society; arbiter, and at the same time slave of the destinies of that society, the Church shared the commotions of the world's life—because "nothing was foreign to her"—and in all, consequently, she either suffered or prospered.

¹ *Ruffini*, *La libertà religiosa*, 1901; 38 seqq.

² *Respublica Dei* (Op. Venet. 1744; II, 140), is the apt phrase of S. Peter Damian reviving the idea of the Augustinian *Civitas Dei*.

To the upheavals of the religious conscience she paid no attention ; and these became more frequent and more spasmodic—and more dangerous also—in proportion to the violence of their repercussion and the magnitude of their effects.

During the barbaric age, German victories meant immunity for heretical doctrine : and the Orient, sower of schisms and heresies, rent meanwhile in another direction that ecclesiastical unity which, thanks to the traditions of Rome, had begun definitely to be associated with the Papacy. After countless perils had been surmounted, the Church found itself even more strongly secularised than before. And the worst offender was the Papacy itself, which, having achieved a temporal dominion, proceeded to reconstruct the Empire, reserving to itself the right to debase the same at will, in the sight of Christian Europe.

These conditions prepared—not of course for the rise, but—for the refflorescence of heresy, which is the most spontaneous form of reaction against the Church and against all that is connected with it. In the Middle Ages the character and dogmatic force of heresy are not generally understood, because the religious question is mixed up with problems of theology. Still heresy receives recognition and attracts a following for the sake of the end which it sets before it, and of the fruits which are hoped for from its victory. To be heretics, it is sufficient to have a reason for rebellion against an orthodoxy that contradicts the religious and political sentiment. In a word, heresy ceases at once to be a purely doctrinal matter, as soon as it begins to make headway among the nations and to attract their adherence.

The *débris* of old heretical sects and communities, which Rome had vainly endeavoured to stamp out by harsh

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legislation, exhibit undoubted signs of life, and of a more or less exuberant life, during the period between the last Age of the old Empire and the days of Francis of Assisi. If we would understand the XIIth and XIIIth centuries, we must work our way back through the ages, looking out for causes—proximate and remote—of a practically general movement, which, when it has reached its climax seems to be the immediate outcome of the conditions and circumstances of the Church in those centuries.

Gregory the Great, who died in 604, describes with wonderful precision the tendencies, the dogmas and the customs of the small heretical *nuclei* which the iron legislation of the Roman Emperors had not succeeded in destroying. St. Gregory's narrative brings before us the two great branches of the rebellious plant of heresy: the intolerant Manichean Catharism, and the milder heterodoxy which reappears, centuries later under the name of the doctrine of Valdo.

Already in the sixth century, be it remembered, heretics are to be found in the humblest classes of society. And these while at variance with one another, are bound together by their common hatred of the Church, in an obstinate and perennial struggle against orthodoxy. They study and interpret with absolute freedom the Holy Scriptures and the writings of the ancient Fathers of the Church for which they have a genuine admiration and reverence. Their activity finds self-expression in the preaching of doctrine: hence the great pains they take to become eloquent, persuasive and learned in the Scriptures, in face of catholic ignorance. Modest and pious, to a man, in their demeanour—erring, indeed, by an exaggerated expression of self-humiliation—they exhibit, in contrast to the wealth and

worldly prosperity of the Church, the spectacle of a life exemplarily austere. "In us", they say, "resides the truth: We are the Church of God". They love and practise piety, patience, silence; they rejoice in shewing themselves to the world in garb and demeanour of humility. God is in them: and God speaks familiarly to the faithful.

The utterances of the heretics breathe sweetness, their actions express the evident desire to conform themselves to the pattern of Jesus. *Every one of them gives all to the poor.* Virginity is so highly esteemed among them that many of them absolutely condemn marriage. So ardent is their thirst for martyrdom that they torment the flesh with abstinence and fastings.

The heretics live apart from the orthodox and assemble for religious practices in remote spots: secrecy lends solemnity and reverence to their ceremonies. In their doctrine there is entire disagreement. Some sects dissent in no way from the orthodox, save in their refusal to be included within the unity of the Church; conforming in all other matters to catholic practice and worship. Heretics truly and properly so-called are those who profess dogmatic errors on the subject of the Divinity and Incarnation of Christ; who hold that Hell is a bug-bear, invented to frighten the wicked, and have no fear of the devil.

Such, in brief, are the data offered us by Gregory the Great; and if we make these our starting-point we shall arrive without difficulty at the true and proper heretical movement of a later period.¹ And the period of St. Gre-

¹ S. Greg. M. Opera (ed. Maur.) In prim. Reg. III, 5 n. 31; Super Cant. Cant. Exp. c. III n. 17; Moral. XVII i n. c. 24 Job, n. 65, 66; III in c. 2 Job, n. 46, 49; XVI in c. 24 Job, n. 62; VII in c. 8 Job, n. 62; XII in c. 15 Job, n. 33; III in c. 8 Job, n. 68; XVI in c. 22 Job, n. 7; XVII in c. 28 Job, n. 39; XVIII in c. 27 Job, n. 25; XXXI in c. 39 Job, n. 2;

gory can supply us even with a precursor of the Saint of Assisi.¹ At Rieti the monk Aequitius abandons the life of a humble field-labourer to devote himself entirely to the study of the sacred books: and he receives from an Angel of God the gift of eloquence with an injunction to preach the word of God, layman though he be. Aequitius obeys; and over the mountains and valleys of the Sabine country, riding the most miserable ass of the monastery, clad in hairy skins and almost concealed by two bags containing the divine Scriptures which hang down from him on either side, he passes from village to village, spreading the seed of Gospel preaching.² The Pope sends an *exsecutor* to summon to his presence the suspected proclaimer of the divine word, who arrogates to himself an office which is not his; but God, in a vision, warns the Pontiff not to molest that Brother.

In the *Liber diurnus Pontificum Romanorum*, the ordination of Africans is prohibited on the ground that they are frequently tainted with Manichaeism. This proves the

XVI in c. 22 Job, n. 7, 8; III in c. 2 Job, n. 45; XX in c. 30 Job, n. 18; XXIII in c. 32 Job, n. 15; XX in c. 30 Job, n. 24; XII in c. 15 Job, n. 33; VIII in c. 8 Job, n. 62; XVI in c. 12 Job, n. 20; XXXI in c. 39 Job, n. 10; XXIII in c. 32 Job, n. 15; V in c. 5 Job, n. 49; XVI in c. 22 Job, n. 20; III in c. 8 Job, n. 68; XVI in c. 22 Job, n. 10; XIX in c. 29, n. 27 (Manichaeism); XVIII in c. 28 Job, n. 40; XX in c. 30 Job, n. 24; XVI in c. 22 Job, n. 10; XX in c. 30 Job, n. 33; XVIII in c. 28 Job, n. 41; III in c. 2 Job, n. 52. Manicheans in Sicily: Ep. V. 7.

Solitary tendency of Manicheans: C. Theod. XVI, 5, 9 [582]; Their expulsion from Rome and from Africa ib. c. 18, 35. Even in the sixth century some light experiment was made in the way of religious toleration for heretics. C. l. 1, 5, 12 (a. 527). Manicheans ib. § 2, 3, Cfr. c. 16.

¹ S. Gregor. M. Dial. I, 4; cfr. Cassiod. Var. IV, 23, 24, a. 510-1, For the *exsecutor*, Greg. M. Ep. XI, 58 (MG.) — Bethmann-Hollweg, Civilproz. III, 157.

² Aequitius reminds us of the first Minorites almost as described by Math. Paris. Hist. Angl. in MG. SS. XXVIII, 397: Libros continue suos, videlicet bibliothecas, in forulis, a collo dependentes, baiulantes.

persistence of that heresy beyond the VIIth century :¹ and the formula in which the said prohibition is couched reappears under Nicholas II (1058-61).² Moreover, even if the Muratorian fragment be earlier in date than Lea supposes,³ it is not on that account less important; offering as it does a discursive catalogue of the principal Manichean heresies.⁴

The famous heresy of the Adoptianists who believed that Jesus *as man* was adoptive son of God—the heresy so valiantly combatted by Paulinus of Aquileja⁵—is perhaps at bottom nothing but a reflex of the old doctrine whereby Jesus only symbolically (not to say *juridically*) becomes man. And even as late as the ninth century certain errors survived concerning the Lord's Passion, suffered *secundum deitatem* :⁶ to say nothing of other references which are to be found in all the books in which our subject is treated.⁷ In the eleventh century Heresy pursues its true and proper course; but that course, as we shall have occasion to remark later on, is masked (save to the historian's eye) under the vehement popular movement against the corrupt clergy. For the moment, indeed, the heretical movement coincides in its line of action with that of the reforming party within the orthodox Church.

¹ *Lib. diurnus pontif. rom.* ed. Sickel, 1899. No. 6 (6-7). The Africans, driven out by the fury of the Vandals, took refuge, in large numbers, in Italy: *Corpus inscr. Lat.* V. No. 818, 1703; XI No. 2054; Nov. Valent. III T. 12, 33. *Cassiod. Var.* XI. 9.

² *Reg. Pontif. I.* No. 4442.

³ *Muratorii Anecd. ex Ambros. Codd.* [1697]; 112.

⁴ Cfr. *Conc. Bracar. II*, in *Mansi*, *Conc. Coll.* IX, 775 a. 563; c. 4 seqq.

⁵ *Op. ed. Madrisius*; contra *Felicem*, 99 seqq.

⁶ *Conc. Rom. a. 862*: *Mansi* XV, 182, 611 & *Hefele*, *Conciliengeschichte* (II ed.) IV, 260, 272. *Reg. Pont. I* 344-5.

⁷ *Lea*, I, 100; *Harnack*³, I, 785 seqq. *Döllinger*, I passim; *Tocco*, 73 seqq. *Dresdner*, 121 seqq. *Kurtz*, I, §§ 21, 25, 26.

So then, vital germs of heresy were not lacking in Italy and beyond, but especially in France and Spain. When the storm of barbarism had been overcome, the Church and the Church's head, intent on consolidating the temporal power with its centre in Rome, made unlimited claims over the Romano-German Empire. She frees herself from the insidious bonds of feudalism; and finally proclaiming by the mouth of Gregory VII that the hour has come for internal reforms, and that the rule of kings is an invention of the devil,¹ she carries with her in an access of enthusiasm the very asceticism of the heretics, and gives a vigorous impulse to the new-born liberties of the Communes; taking care, at the same time, to divert from turbulent Europe, by means of the Crusades, the great masses of restless spirits, and to curb the fell prowess of overbearing might by imposing now and again a "Truce of God".²

Without, magnificently strong and majestic, the ecclesiastical organism is constantly threatened from within by the malignant cancer of corruption and simony—an evil against which the force of reforming Popes and the assiduous labours of certain solitary preachers³ are alike unavailing. And now all those who had themselves conceded a truce to the Church, begin to return more passionately than ever to their old ideals. Heresy assumes once more a valiant activity, strong in the alliances which

¹ *Greg. VII, Ep. VIII, 21. Cfr. Honorii Augustod. Summa gloria, in MG. Lib. de lite imp. et pontificum, III, 75.*

² *Reg. Pontif. I, No. 4521 (Alex. II). Huberti, Gottesfrieden und Landfrieden 1892; § 13.*

³ Even in 1294 an ecclesiastic was compelled on pain of a fine of 4 ounces of gold, to refrain "*de cetero*" from keeping a concubine in his house. *Cod. Dipl. Barese, II, No. 44.*

it finds along its path, among the political adversaries of Papal Rome. It was useless for the Church, with consummate courage to expose her own wounds, one by one, in her councils and in papal letters, in language every whit as biting as that of the bantering songs of poets and jesters.¹ Bernard of Clairvaux, no less gentle and winning than the heretical preachers,² remained unheeded; the very utterance of Innocent III which condemns the unworthy life of the ecclesiastics, attests the powerlessness of the labours and aspirations of the reforming party.³ The papal phrase which recurs again and again in the Bulls—that “the Church has come to her eleventh hour”—is more than a mere rhetorical expression.

The Church of Jesus had all but disappeared. That of Rome recalled, to the instructed mind, in its constitutional outlines, the old magistracies of the Roman Empire;⁴ to the less learned it was simply a gigantic system of oppression.⁵ To the corrupt orthodox clergy even the orthodox laity refused homage and tithes. This refusal was discussed as an elegant case of juridical controversy in the greatest university of Italy, at Bologna, where the wretched morals of the clergy were described with smart

¹ Concil. Rem. a. 2229 c. 1 seqq. Trec. a. 1127 c. 7; Rotomag. c. 2; Rem. a. 1131, 1148, c. 4 e 2. Turon. a. 1143 c. 5; Monspell, a. 1214 c. 7 seqq.; *Mansi*, XXI, 238, 356, 375, 459, 714, etc.; XXII, 940 seqq. Conc. Later. a. 1123 c. 1 seqq.; a. 1139 c. 16, 21; a. 1179 c. 3; 10, 11, 20; a. 1215 c. 19, 34, 63, 64 seqq. *Mansi*, XXI, 282 seqq.: 531 seqq.: XXII, 1007, 1022, 1051, seqq. etc.

² Quando oramus? quando docemus populos? Quando aedificamus Ecclesiam? - De Consid. I, 7 (Op. II, 416).

³ Sermo in consecr. pontific. 184-5. In die ciner. - Sic iam ornati prodimus, ut magis sponsi quam clerici videamur.

⁴ *Odofred* C. Haec quae nec. Dig. I, 13, 1, *Tamassia*, Odofredo 1894; 144-6.

⁵ *S. Bern.* De consid. I, 7 (II 418): Quid falcem vestram in messem alienam intenditis. De Convers. ad cler. c. 19, 22 (II, 498, 500).

ingenuity by the professors before an audience of thousands of scholars.¹

Inveterate as was the antipathy for *frati* and ecclesiastics,² the feeling against Roman prelates was stronger still. Contemporary documents dwell on the obesity of their persons and the hoarseness of their voices painfully unfitted for the preacher's task.³ What respect (it was asked) is due to churchmen shamelessly living a life of concubinage, adultery, buffoonery, jesting: forgers, men surrounded by bravoos and immersed in ignorance and debauchery?⁴

The inferior clergy, abased by the pride of ecclesiastical patrons, who treated them like so many agricultural labourers;⁵ abandoned by the bishops who, having squandered their diocesan patrimony, had nothing left to give to others:⁶ strove to gain a miserable pittance by the sale of masses and absolutions;⁷ profiting by the vogue of

¹ *S. P. Damiani*, Op. III, 292; cfr. Odofredo, 149: Only rustics seem to have been still ready to pay tithes.

² Hom. de sacril. ed. *Caspari* (Christiania 1886) 8; *Jacques de Vitry* Exempla No. 268 [p. 112]; ed. *Crane* 1890; (p. 250 note). *Folgore*, Sonetti, in *Scelta di curiosità lett.* No. 172 [65]. *S. P. Dam.* III, 270 (opusc. 30 c. 3).

³ *Pasqui*, Doc. per la storia della città di Arezzo, nel medio evo, 1899 [No. 389; a. 1177-1180]. (521,528-9,552). One might adduce also the *sermon de la patharellei* (ib. No. 389) of a bishop who did not know how to roll his tongue properly.

⁴ Reg. II (Inn. III): clerical murderers; No. 380, forgers No. 532, 574, 1184, 1276, 1283, 2055, crudentes bullas novas; luxurious, debauched, undisciplined, ignorant ecclesiastics. No. 519, 620, 835, 896, 382, 2933 etc. Odofredo, 149: Clerici maioris ecclesie, qui vadunt ut laici, et qui tenent palafredos et accipitres et assecinos. Cfr. *Jacques de Vitry*, Exempla No. 2, 4, 5, 6, 17, 18, 20, 22, 210, *Hist. Ierosol.* (in *Gesta Dei per Francos*, Hanoviae 1611; I, 1087) c. 70-71. Dec. Greg. IX, V, 26: De excess. prael. Cfr. III, 2, 3.

⁵ For private churches, see: *Stutz*, Gesch. der kirch. Benefizialwesens 1895; *Galante*, Il beneficio eccl. 1895. Decadence of the canons: *Hinschius*, Kirchenr. II, § 80. Attempts at reform: *Ughelli-Coleti*, Italia Sacra; Firenze a. 1231, II, 110.

⁶ *Dresdner*, 328 seqq.

⁷ *Caes.* III, 35, 40; cfr. III, 39 (ed. 1599); IV, 41, 42, 44.

some more or less authentic saint to place images of the same in their churches, with a view to attracting men and money. Ignorance, abject degradation, hatred and imperious necessity drove them even into open crime.¹ Higher up the scale things proceeded no better. The episcopate, embroiled in politics, had no longer much trace of the sacerdotal character about it. With terrible calm a monk of Clairvaux sums up in few words the condition of the Church in the opening years of the XIIIth century: "The Episcopate", he says, "leads straight to Hell—and the Church has the bishops she deserves".² Still higher, the Pope and his Curia labour to destroy by their deeds the effect of the good proposals formulated in their utterances.³

An iron fiscal system extinguishes all sense of pity and of evangelical duty.⁴

There is no human activity over which the imperial sway of the Papacy does not extend. The pontifical jurisdiction, vexatious and tyrannical, not content with trenching upon the independence of Kingdoms, interposes—sinister ally of the "Don Rodrigo" of those times—to prevent the nuptials of the poor.⁵

¹ *Salimbene*, Chr. (ed. Parmae 1857) 274-5; *Luc. Tudens*. Bibl. max. vet. patrum XXV, 13. *S. Bernard*. De consid. I, 7 (II, 418).

² *Caes*. II 28. St. Peter Damian used to say that the *barbirsium* alone (Ep. I, 15 Op. I, 12) distinguished the ecclesiastic from the man of the world; he refers to the *clean-shaven face*; but some historians have not properly understood the phrase.

³ Some one says to Pope Innocent III: *Os tuum os Dei est, sed opera tua sunt opera diaboli*: *Caes*. II, 30.

⁴ *S. Bern*. De consid. III, 3 (II, 437): Quando hactenus aurum Roma refugit? *Pastor*, Hist. des papes depuis la fin du moyen-âge I (trad. franc. 1888) I, 10 seqq.

⁵ *S. Bern*. De consid. III, 2 (II, 435): Parata omnia, invitati multi; et ecce homo concupiscens uxorem proximi sui, in vocem appellationis inopinatae prorumpit, affirmans sibi traditam prius... sacerdos non audet progredi...

Caesar of Heisterbach has a charming story in which he recounts how a husband, unjustly desirous of divorce, accepted the offer of the devil's help. The fiend carried him to the papal Curia, where he made an effective oration and gained his point, obtaining the Bull of divorce-ment. But the good devil, more righteous than the Pope, made his client, by dint of a fantastic journey, forget Pope, Bull and divorce, and brought him back to his spouse loving and loved again.¹

A plain indication of the popular feelings towards the Ecclesiastics is afforded by that particular protection of the clergy which the Councils sanction in the XIth and XIIth centuries, under the name of "Privilege of the Canon".² As for the monastic Orders, they had increased enormously, and as they increased, so their decadence proceeded, side by side with that of the secular clergy.³ Finally the constitution of new Rules was rigorously prohibited; but neither this prohibition, nor the energetic measures of the Papacy availed to heal the incurable evils of the time.⁴ For some time past Monachism—which, in order to keep itself alive assumed even the knightly habit in the Military Orders—had been in full course of decadence. It no

¹ V, 37 A splendid story well worthy of the author of the Decameron. A knight (cfr. V, 36) enjoys many services at the hands of a *good* devil, who accepts as compensation a small sum of money, and restores even that at once, on condition that the knight employs it to buy bells for a poor, abandoned church.

² This measure protects, under pain of *excommunicatio latae sententiae*, every tonsured person from unjust acts of violence: it originated actually in connexion with heretical persecutions. *Decr. Grat. C. XVII, 4, 29* - Conc. Lat. II a. 1139. Cfr. Conc. Clerm. 1130 and Pisan. 1135: *Mansi*, XXI, 439, 490. *Hinschius Kirchenr. I § 16* (1869): *Friedberg-Ruffini*, Trattato, 241.

³ Reg. Pontif. II, No. 2454 (Inn. III). Bull. ed. Taur. III, 192. Conc. Lat. IV c. 13: *Mansi*, XXII, 1120.

⁴ Reg. Pontif. II, No. 15; 57; 158; 166; 392; 578 (Montecassino), 888; 1154; 1734; 1772; 1828; 1843; 2554; 3313; 3791 (Farfa); 3576, 4680 etc. (Innoc. III).

longer responded to the needs and aspirations of the age. Political dominion, and the riches on which the *frati* set such store, gave rise to intestine discords; the envious eyes of the laity were cast upon the wealth of the Monasteries; within the cloister, discipline was relaxed and shameless luxury reigned, and, as a result, Monachism became the butt of general and open derision.¹

Not seldom the cloisters were turned into mere "houses of correction", arousing a sombre horror by their sinister ceremonies of Profession. A motley company assembles within their walls, whither drift in troops the disappointed, the victims of parental greed, or of their own illusions; visionaries, men of infamous character, and simple spirits diabolically seduced by the coaxing promises of monasticism.² And from these elements—vitiated, marred, or diseased—are distilled influences of disquietude, of incredulity, of material and moral disorder, of jesting scepticism.

Relic of an antique asceticism, running its degenerate course amid miserable entanglements and fantastic elaborations, oscillating between sceptical irony and the twilight of a dying religious sentiment, Monachism was an incubus upon the Church. Its intrusions into the ecclesiastical sphere caused her constant annoyance, as did also its evil living, which called down a storm of reproach and contempt that was an astonishment to the Church herself.³

¹ Reg. di Farfa; (Roma 1892) V, No. 1229; a. 1119, 1125 (318 seqq.): Nonnulli etiam - nos deridebant et cibos delicatos ac pigmentorum potus, in precipuis sumptos solemnibus, ad memoriam subsannando nobis deducebant.

² Places of punishment: *Iust. Nov.* 123, 134; *Greg. I*, Ep. I, 49; V, 5; V, 17; VIII, 48; of refuge for delinquents: *Greg. M.* Dial. I, 4. Mem. e doc. Lucchesi, V, 2 No. 309 a. 803 etc. *Caes.* I, 29, 30, 31, IV, 37; cfr., IV, 1. - Decr. *Greg. IX.* V, 3, 25. Moral outrages and reasons for taking the veil: *Caes.* I, 8, 18, 19, 24, 28 etc. etc. Horror of the tonsure: *Caes.* IV, 51. Fetters for those who try to leave the cloister: *S. P. Dam.* Op. II, 212.

³ Corruption: *S. Bern.* Apol. ad Guill. ab. c. 21 seqq. (Op. II 541);

But the Church is staggering under other and fiercer blows: She feels herself losing the monopoly of knowledge. Culture and the ecclesiastical life had been regarded by the early Middle Ages as one and indivisible;¹ but now, in the Universities where knowledge is concentrated, the desire for freedom of thought is not to be curbed. Paris refuses to obey the suspicious admonitions of the papal authority,² and from the Aristotelian books, in vain proscribed, flash forth the first gleams of modern science.³ The divine simplicity of the school of Jesus is lost in the wearying mazes of the syllogism,⁴ and the clever logician who reasons and disputes subtilly of God despises the miserable dialectic of the "piccolo Gesù".⁵

Such was the condition of the Church in the age of Francis of Assisi. Sombre though they be, the colours of

Joachim abb. In Apocal. (Venet. 1527) 189, 190. *Mittarelli*, Ann. Camald. IV app. 323 a. 1213. *Jacques de Vitry*, Exempla No. 47, 59, 69 etc.

In ancient times the monasteries in Italy, were genuine hospices which catered by contract: R. Arch. Neapol. Mon. I, n. 30; Cod. Cavensis Diplom. I, n. 108; Reg. Neap. n. 123, 129: X and XI centuries; cfr. *Reg. Pontif.* I n. 4269 (Leo XI) a. 1051.

Ancient - and less ancient - scandals, in Mem. Lucc. V, 2 n. 803; R. Arch. di Stato di Lucca, Reg. Vol. I n. 186 sec. X. - "Certe si in rebus meis habuissem prosperitatem, numquam venissem ad Ordinem!" exclaims a sincere frate: *Caes.* I, 28.

Right of admission into monasteries purchased in ringing coin paid to the convent: *Decr. Greg.* IX, V, 3, 19. Cfr. *Jacques de Vitry*, Exempla n. 221.

Incredulity: Words of a nun driven to desperation by her vows. "Quis scit si Deus sit, si sint cum illo angeli, animae vel regnum coelorum? Quis ista vidit?" - *Caes.* IV, 39.

Contract for a farm-tenancy . . . and for the tonsure for his children! in *Fantuzzi*, Mon. Ravenn. II, n. 48 a. 1108.

¹ « Et si surrexerit ex nobis doctos aut scientes homines Deum timentes, qui ipsa ecclesia ordinaverint » say certain founders of churches in the tenth century: Cod. Cavensis Dipl. II n. 231.

² Chart. Paris. I n. 12, 20 (a. 1210-1215).

³ *Caes.* V, 21. Cfr. Chart. Paris. I, 272-5.

⁴ Read the lament of an ascetic in Chart. Paris. I n. 19. a. 1164.

⁵ Mon. Germ. Hist. SS. XXVIII, 116: ex *Math. Paris.* Cron. maior.

the picture are not exaggerated. We have not interrogated either professional satirists, or heretics, or schismatics: the entire account is derived from orthodox sources—from popes, bishops, friars, preachers, who have said nothing but what gave them grievous pain, forced to reveal the truth because every attempt to conceal it would have been ridiculous and useless. And if the Church did not perish, she owed her preservation—paradoxical as it may seem—to the same cause from which her trouble sprang. It was the constant relations of her religious life with that of the civil power which prevented the assaults of heresy from achieving a victory. The rest was accomplished by the dauntless energy of Innocent III. The Franciscan episode is all but lost in the bloody repression of the great heretical movement; but not even the days of the great German Reformation were so big with threats and dangers as those which saw the Saint of Assisi.

Let us consider that movement a little more closely, alike in its causes and in its immediate effects. Among the graver consequences of the corruption of the clergy, we must give the first place to the absolute alienation from the Church of the lowest classes in the social scale. The utter impoverishment of the ecclesiastical treasury rendered increasingly difficult, if not impossible, the continuance of that public beneficence for which the Church's treasures were intended, being, in Tertullian's memorable phrase, *deposita pietatis*:¹ and the hardship of this fell especially upon the parochial clergy who were left almost entirely to their own resources—and the more so since the rapacity of the bishops had been reinforced by that of the laity great and small.²

¹ Apolog. c. 39.

² Pasqui, Op. c. No. 61, sec. X. Quia Tuscis consuetudo est, ut, recepto

Meanwhile in the ecclesiastics themselves the sense of evangelical piety and gentleness grew feebler and feebler. Saint Bernard saw in the impudent luxury of the bishops a deadly insult to the unspeakable misery of the humbler classes.¹

Finally, the language of the priest loses all trace of a popular tone, and stereotypes itself in forms suggested by a revived scholastic rhetoric. Saint Peter Damian destroys the austere poetry of the Crucifixion with arid juridical discussions in which Christ figures as advocate and judge on the wood of the cross; while Innocent III when he would expound the Law of God, takes as his starting point the definition of a Roman *testamentum*.²

In general, the clergy—with certain notable exceptions, many of whom do not belong to Italy—suffer from lack of the nourishment of a deeply Christian culture and piety; and religious instruction and the practices of worship are reduced to stupid formalities.³ God Himself is taken away from the soul of the faithful, and His place filled by whole armies of saints with their miraculous relics: articles of commerce—of a sceptically calm commerce—in the greatest of the maritime cities of Italy!⁴ And these saints reflect

ab Ecclesia libello, in contumaciam convertantur contra Ecclesiam, ita ut vix aut numquam reddant census, Privilege of Ugo and Lotario to the Church of Arezzo.

¹ De moribus episcoporum c. 2 (II, 470): Clamant vero nudi, clamant famelici, conqueruntur et dicunt: numquid aurum a freno repellit frigus, sive esuriam?

² S. P. Dam. Op. II 27 seqq, Inn. III, Op. 171 (Sermo in Eccl. 45). It was the "Populares Sermones" of St. Ambrose that were responsible for the conversion of St. Augustine: Confess. VI, 4.

³ Confessions *en masse*, and recitation of the sins by the Confessor himself, who gives to all the penitence of *the preceding year!* Caes. III, 44, 45. Before Gregory IX, the canons of Mantua spread out the blood-stained tunic of their murdered bishop demanding vengeance: *Salimbene*, 4.

⁴ Odofred C. I, 2, 3: Mercatores veneti et Janue - vadunt per mare et in urbe Constantinop. emunt reliquias apostolorum et martyrum et aliorum sanctorum, et portant et vendunt... (174). Innocent himself forbids the sale of certain *conchae*

the soul of their devotees and of the age. What they desire is external reverence, the formal homage of believers; and they are ready to lend themselves to pious frauds, and to work advertisement-miracles in order to save the life, the honour and the good name of those who confide themselves to their patronage.¹

Within the cities, within the very circle of family and clan, strife rages, furious and incessant. The authority of Church and State imposes truces and peaces which no one observes. The weakest are at the mercy of any one who has the power and audacity to play the tyrant, and to put himself in the right always and at all costs. In vain the oppressed look for comfort and aid from the Church, for the Church has not the independence of that which transcends all mundane parties and interests. Nay, she is mixed up herself in the great and little contests; judge and interested party at the same time, she is bound by common material interests to the oppressors, from whom, therefore she can neither demand nor request pity for the miserable.

The communal movement represents political heresy, that is, conscious separation from the general constitution of the State; the religious movement, which is in substance also heretical, developes along lines parallel to the political, and the two tendencies unite, up to a certain point, in their quest of a remedy, material or moral, for the intolerable disorder which prevails. This is the reason why heresy has so much vitality from the XIth century onwards, and a character so special in Italy. Where the murmur of

belonging to the sanctuary of St. James of Compostella: Ep. X, 78 (ed. Balut. II, 44). *Salimbene*, 39, makes fun of the gross vanity of self-named Saints who gave their own clothes away as relics.

¹ *Caes.* VII, 44. Cfr. *Jacques de Vitry*, *Exempla* No. 282.

citizen liberties is less powerful than in Italy, heresy finds its support in other political and social circumstances, as is not difficult to discern in the most conspicuous events of the XIIIth century.

That century was preparing for the Church a state of things far from pleasant. There were the disasters of the crusades and of the contests between Church and Empire during the reigns of Philip of Swabia, Otto IV, Frederic II and Louis IX of France; there was the embitterment of civil strife due to the astute policy of the Swabian Emperors; and the vigorous resumption of temporal policy by the Roman See, in the definite constitution of the States of the Church, in opposition to the Empire, the free cities and the *Signorie* of central Italy. And as though all this were not sufficient, the will of the Empress Constance gave over southern Italy into the hands of the Pope during the minority of her son. Under the accumulated burden of so many grave demands, it is not difficult to understand how the Church for a moment, feared she would be overwhelmed by the forces of victorious heresy.

Caesarius of Heisterbach who, behind the light mystic veil of his visions, offers to view also the things of this world as they really are, is right in putting among the principal events of the period the remarkable success of the Albigensian heresy. This movement, according to him, conquered nearly a thousand cities and would have subjugated the whole of Europe, but for the tongue of Innocent III and the sword of Simon de Montforte.¹

The slaughter of the Albigenses was, then, no merely meaningless atrocity. The "Inquisitio haereticae pravitatis," with the aid of the secular arm and of the zealous measures

¹ V, 21.

of the Preaching Friars and of the Inquisitorial police succeeded, says a XVIIth century witer, in extinguishing with fire and sword the most dangerous centres of infection.¹

Later on there came a breath of scepticism which cooled the ardour of propaganda and of faith, and the political activities of the popes assumed a correspondingly milder form. In the XIVth century the daily and hourly crusades against heresy evoked no longer the solemn and dignified response of a martyr's heroism. Scorn and satire succeeded to tears and blood; and the Italian spirit issued from those trials endowed with new gifts—the serene indifference and the gay irony that sparkle on many pages of Giovanni Boccaccio and Franco Sacchetti.

But we must hark back a little. Heresy was not only contested in the open field as the perennial foe of Christianity: attempts were also made, and made with a gentleness that was largely sincere, to bring back into the orthodox fold some of the less *intransigentes* of the sects. Memorable instances are those of Valdo, Durandus of Huesca, Bernardo Primo and their companions. Among the most innocent, but but by no means the least efficacious, of the allies of orthodox repression, is to be noticed the delicate cultivation of religious art and sentiment in the atmosphere of a kind of literary Renaissance which was the prelude to the later Humanism. This is a point of some obscurity in the history of the period and one which, I am persuaded, has been greatly neglected.²

¹ Decr. Greg. IX; V 5, 7, 13 - Conc. Lat. IV. c. 3. *Hinschius*, V § 259. For lay legislation, see *Ficker*, in *Mitth. des Inst. für oesterr. Geschichtsforsch.* I, 2. (1880): *Die gesetzliche Einführung der Todesstrafe f. Ketz.* 179 seqq. *Kohler*, *Das Strafr. der ital. Statuten*, 1897; 596 seqq. *Legislaz. imperiale*: MG. *Leges* II, 252, 282, 287, 326; *Const. Regni Sic.* I, 1.

² See the two monographs on the subject: *Hauréau*, *Mém. sur les recits*

The apocalyptic inspiration of the Abbot Joachim is not the only fruit of the sincere commotion of so many souls sincerely devoted to orthodoxy—a commotion free from the taint of shameful impurities. An entire literature appears which is marked by a return to the old popular and mystical sources of the ancient Church. The “*Vitae Patrum*,”¹ the works of Sulpicius Severus, of Gregory the Great and of Gregory of Tours, the dogmatic encyclopaedia furnished by the writings of Saint Augustine, the moving pages of Saint Ambrose, the monastic conferences of Cassian:—all these come to life again in the treatises, the fairy-tales, the visions of a later Age, clothed in a garb more congenial, less rigidly ascetic.

The outcome of these imitations is twofold. On the aesthetic side we have a literary product endued with all the beauty and charm of Art, and a subtle and delicate humour which springs from the serenity of the Art itself; on the practical side, it subserves a serious purpose and reveals a definite aim. These miraculous narratives, these pious stories and examples, are a vehicle for the diffusion of sound ideas, to counteract the wicked sentiments inspired by heresy, or the very unfortunate impression produced by all that was known of Church or Cloister.

To this class of literature belong the sermons of Jacques de Vitry, the stories of Caesarius of Heisterbach, and also—let us say it at once—no small part of the Franciscan Legend.

If the preacher's desire is to combat heretical doctrines

d'apparition dans le moyen-âge; Mém. de l'Inst. nat. de France XXVIII, 2 (1876) 238 seqq. & *Schönbach* in *Situungsber. der k. Ak. Wien*, Bd. 139, 1 seqq.

¹ On this book, see *Preuschen*, *Palladius und Rufinus*; *Beitr. zur Quellenkunde des ält. Mönchtums*, 1897; 205 seqq. *Kurtz*, I § 102.

hostile to the sacrament of the Eucharist, a learned theological discussion on the subject of transubstantiation would provide him with an opportunity merely of boring his audience to no purpose; but a miracle of the type of the famous miracle of Bolsena immediately arouses wonder and attention whenever it is related with unctuous eloquence.¹

The heretics held, as we shall see shortly, that Jesus was a fantastic apparition: and so the miraculous vision of the Virgin Birth, or the image of the Crucified dripping with blood and tears—such narratives offer the most vivid and realistic confutation of the heretical error. We are now, obviously, very near to the ceremony of the Presepio di Greccio and the miracle of the Stigmata;² a form of literature which, with its light and almost gay tone, varied with a charming playfulness so unlike grave works of theology, is adapted to every end. From it the preacher will draw his examples; from it the man of the cloister will select his friar types—simple or learned, touchy or placid—for the instruction of the novices; the popular theologian and the moralist will find here their best stories, stories which illustrate more aptly than any doctrinal commentary the virtue of the Christian. All, in fact, have in their hand the secret of unfailing success, which consists in making oneself understood, while avoiding tediousness. It was natural that the legend of a Saint like him of Assisi should be embroidered with popular themes—themes which, though popular, are none the less intimately related to the theological and dogmatic discussions of the period. Round the

¹ For the doctrinal basis of the question in the Middle Ages, see *Ernst*, *Die Lehre d. hl. Paschasius Radbertus von der Euch.* 1896: *Michaud*, *Étud. Eucharist. Rev.-Int. de théol.* 1895.

² On the doctrine of Radbert (expounded in his book *De partu virginali*) and that of Ratramnus, see, for the literature, *Kurtz* I § 92.

central figure of Saint Francis arise, one by one, the secondary forms of his "Companions", immortal creations of mediaeval art, like Giovanni and Ginepro, the "simple" friars, whom we shall see again under other names and in other places; or Egidio, ("Bro. Giles"), who repeats, as enigmas, the *Verba Seniorum* from the "Lives of the Fathers". Every friar is the incarnation or personification of some one virtue of the Saint. Around the meagre historical reality of the "Companions" of Francis, the current of legend builds up a picture, with forms drawn from the old and inexhaustible store which might truly be designated "The Legend of the Ages". By the appeal of his preaching and of his triumphs Saint Francis has attracted to himself the wandering story in search of a concrete home in which to settle; the special circumstances of the Age have added, besides the outer shell of the legend, that unity and special character which it presents to him who studies it.

Meanwhile we must not forget that the Age of Saint Francis was that which saw the fiercest assault of heresy in Italy: a subject which cannot be entirely passed over without damage to the whole argument.

During the XIth and XIIth centuries the heretics increase in boldness and in energy. The "Vulpeculae" labour to destroy the Vineyard of the Lord,¹ against which they wage a truceless war. Active in their preaching,² in their pursuit of knowledge (especially at the University of Paris),³

¹ Already by Gregory the Great the heretics are called *vulpes*—the same name that was given them in the later age. Super. Cant. Cant, Expos. c. III No. 17. Cfr. Decr. Greg. IX V. 7.10 — Reg. II. No. 643 (Inn. III); *Jacques de Vitry* No. 304.

² Hence the prohibition of lay preaching. Decr. Greg. IX V. 7, 9 (Lucius III a. 1184); V. 7, 8 — Conc. Lat. III (a. 1179) c. 27; Decr. cit, V, 7, 11 e 13 — Conc. Lat. IV, etc. *Caes.* VI, 20, 21; Tacco, 178.

³ *Math. Paris.* in MG. SS. XXVIII, 231 a. 1242.

in political intrigues,¹ in mutual succour,² in the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular;³ they present an united front to the enemy, while yet profoundly divided in the matter of their tenets. They change their names and their doctrines; the latter they are prepared to relax or even to modify entirely if circumstances demand it.

A complete classification of the heresies is still to be made.⁴ Those which present themselves under the name of Valdo have tendencies less radical than the rest. These latter, which are followed by the Cathari, recall more distinctly the ancient Manichaeism. The Cathari predominate over all the others, and are themselves subdivided into a number of different sects.

After the middle of the XIIIth century we have a description by Berthold of Regensburg of the heretical doctrines as generally held in common by the mass of the heterodox; and it is observable that the differences which he notes between sect and sect are by no means grave.⁵ This is a clear indication that, if repressive measures had not supervened, some more robust group would have imposed a certain unity upon the beliefs, the variety of which was

¹ They beg the Saracens to aid them against the catholics: *Joach.* in Apocal. (ed. Ven. 1527) 134; Or is it a calumny, like the "obscene orgies" which certain Italian historians have adduced, forgetful of the accusations brought against the early Christians (*Justin.* Apol. I, 27, 5)? On their depraved characteristics: *Moneta*, advers. Cath. et Vald. (Romae 1743) 545 seqq. *R. Sacconi* in *Martène et Durand*, Thes. novs. V, 1767; *Schönbach*, in Sitzungsber. Wien XLVII, 62.

² The heretics of Milan send victuals to those of Brescia, *Caes.* X, 49.

³ *Inn. III*, Ep. II, 140-1 (ed. *Balutius* I, 432); *Hurter*, III, 45-6, Metz, who does not accord to the Pope even in the days of Gregory VII the right to excommunicate the Emperor. (Reg. II N. 5000). And these translations prove their study of the texts. Tract. de Haer. Paup. de Lugd. in Thes. cit. V, 1777; *Azonis*, ad sing. Leges Cod. Comm. (Lugd. 1596) I, I, 1 [7].

⁴ *Schönbach* l. c. 8, 32; *Tocco*, 186 seqq.

⁵ Names: Decr. Greg. IX, V, 7, 9. Reg. II No. 891; Stat. Syn. Tull. in *Mansi* XXII, 650 (1192); *Sacconi* in Bibl. Max. Vet. Patrum, XXV, 262, e in Thes. cit. V, 1763; *Berthold of Regensburg* speaks of 200 heresies: *Schönbach* l. c. 108.

proportioned to the greater freedom of the internal constitution of the heretics.

From the Alps to Sicily the serpent of infection trails its course through the principal cities. The leading part among all is taken by Milan, which seems to fill the place occupied in the previous century by Florence.¹ Still, even after the middle of the XIIth century, there was living in the Valley of Spoleto—in touch, therefore, with Assisi (which in the first years of the XIIIth century welcomed as its ruler a heretical podestà) a heterodox community of a hundred persons.²

The principal dogmatic errors can be deduced from the recantation (cleverly transmuted into a profession of orthodox faith) of Bernardo Primo,³ who belong to the group of Lombard Waldensians;⁴ and for commentary on these tenets and illustration of them we need only go to the polemical writings of the Inquisitors.⁵

Bernardo and his companions *now* (that is, after their recantation), acknowledge the Old Testament as the Law of God; the mission of the prophets and of the Baptist; the divinity and the humanity of Jesus; the unity of the Roman Church; the validity of the Sacraments even if administered

¹ *Hurter*, III, 13 seqq. *Schmidt* I, 69 seqq. *Tocco* 111 seqq. *Reg.* II No. 268,643,684,891,2704,2709,2710,2932,3666,4944 (*Inn.* III) *Caes.* VII, 23. *Math. Paris.* I. c. 231. For Sicily: *Inn.* III, Ep. I 509. *Inn.* III, Ep. XII, 17. *Reg.* II No. 3694. Milan had granted a meadow for the meeting of the "*Poveri Lombardi*" even before their abjuration.

² *Reg.* II No. 2237 a. 1204; *Sacconi*, *Thes. cit.* 1768.

³ *Inn.* III. Ep. XIII, 94 (ed. Balut. II, 458): *Reg.* II, No. 4014 a. 1210.

⁴ *Haupt*, in *Sybel's Hist. Zeitschr.* N. F. XXV, 49-55.

⁵ We must not stray into dogmatic exposition, a subject on which there is a literature which grows year by year. A *small* part of this is referred to at the beginning of the Chapter. Nor do we propose to return entirely under the escort of Karl Müller, to the subject of the relations between the heretical movement and the Franciscan. The sole purpose of our researches is to give materials for a just appreciation of the tendency of the Franciscan Legend: no more, and no less.

by an unworthy priest (so be he orthodox); the Sacrament of the Eucharist whereby, after the consecration, the bread and wine are the Body and Blood of Christ; matrimony after the teaching of Saint Paul; all the ecclesiastical orders—to whom honour is to be paid,—and the efficacy of intercessions for the souls of the departed. The converts, mindful that faith is dead without good works, have given all to the poor, and wish to be poor themselves: *quae habebamus, velut a Domino consultum est, pauperis erogavimus; et pauperes esse decrevimus*. They propose to abjure all anxiety for the morrow, and while remaining in the world to follow as precepts the counsels of the Gospel. If we add that the recantation touches on the principle of the right of the public authority to shed blood in virtue of the punitive power that belongs to it, we shall have gathered from the famous document that which throws most light on the heretical dogmas and principles.

After their conversion the Lombard Waldensians renounced the absolute liberty of preaching, and devoted themselves to it only when the permission of the Church had been previously obtained. In a word, we have here over again the lines laid down for the group of *Pauperes Catholici* under the leadership of Durandus of Huesca, which had so meagre a success in the world of orthodoxy.

The doctrines of the Cathari, on the other hand, are more radical. Throughout their diverse gradations there can be discernibly traced as a constant factor the collection of precepts known as the "Three Signs" (whence are derived the obligations of abstinence, virginity and purity) that is characteristic of the heresy—or, if we may so call it, the religion—of Manichaeism, so strangely confounded with Christianity.

The sects are distinguished by dogmatic divergences as regards for instance, the conditional recognition or the absolute condemnation of the priesthood and the sacraments. But though little in harmony with one another in other respects, they are all characterised by a profound and predominating aversion to the Roman Church. The Church of Rome is Babylon; the Pope is Antichrist—the successor not of Christ but of Constantine:¹—in the bosom of that Church none may hope for salvation. Fanatical, indomitable hatred reacts on their very beliefs. These beliefs claim to start from the ancient ideas of the primitive Church, but are marked by a certain embittered violence and are accompanied by a rigorous asceticism intolerant of all those relics of paganism that had survived in Christian dress.

Places of worship and sacred images are condemned;² the Madonna is an object of derision.³ Manichæan dualism treats the impure body very harshly, while pouring itself out in a kind of pathological tenderness for the things created by the Good God. The divine creation ought not to be polluted by the touch of a sacrilegious hand.⁴ That which exists has a right to live. Love, which, in the austerity

¹ *Muratori*, *Antiq. Ital. M. Aevi V*, 123. *Moneta*, 409, 431. *Schoenbach*, l. c. 4, 19. *Thes. cit. V*, 1779 etc. etc. *Caes. V*, 22: Dicebant enim quia Papa esset Antichristus, et Roma Babylon. *Fumi. Cod. Dipl. di Orvieto* (1884); No. 439.

² Contempt of the *aedes sacrae*: *Arnob.* *adv. nat.* VI, 1 (CV. 214); of images *ib.* & *Greg. I*, Ep, IX, 208 (Marsilia); *Mansi XII*, 1060, a. 785. Prohibition of swearing: *Hist. Lausiac.* c. 49; *Vita Posthumii* c. 6 (*Migne, Patrol. lat.* LXXIII, *Vitae Patrum* [*Rosweyde*] 1153, 432. Errors as regards the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist: *Migne*, l. c. 978-9; *Rosweyde*, 635. Even the form of cross adored by the heretics (the T-shaped) is not a fraud but a return to archaic traditions; *Luc. Tud.* in *Bibl. max. vet. patr. cit.* XXV, 224.

³ *Thes. cit. V*, 1764; *Bonacorsi*, in *D'Acbery Spicilegium* (17-23) I, 208; so too the angels, *Schoenbach*, l. c. 3. 6. *Muratori*, *Ant. It. m. aevi V*, 250 [*Op. Greg.*].

⁴ On the *bonus et malus Deus*: *S. Greg. M. Moral.* IX in c. 10 Job; n. 74. *Caes. V*, 21; *Hamack*, I, 735 seqq. *Schoenbach*, l. c. 3, 6.

of the heretical system, is devoid of smiles, expands itself unchecked in adoration and in the contemplation of the beauties of the Eternal. The gentle error of Saint Augustine's youthful Manichæan phase is revived—the temper that weeps in sympathy with the fruit plucked from its parent stem.¹ Satan is not the enemy of God and man,² eternally damned. He penetrates, humble and sighing for pardon, even into the cloisters of the orthodox, in search of a confessor;³ but Saint Michael, to whom he owes his fall, does not find favour with the heretics.⁴ Jesus is a shadow. He has suffered nothing upon earth. His birth took place in an entirely special way; and the “fantastic” conception of the Redeemer figures even in the sermons of Innocent III where the horrible heresy is combated. Hence arises also the kindred error on the Body of Jesus in the Eucharist, which makes it a mere sign and figure of the “fantastic” flesh assumed by the Saviour.⁵

Throughout, the inquisitors are at one in recognising the gentleness and austerity of the heretics' lives, the persuasive sweetness of their preaching, and their intrepid and unflin-

¹ Condemnation of marriage: *Eckbert*. in Max. Bibl. cit. XXIII, 601; Concil. Tolos. (a. 1119) c. 3; *Mansi*, VII 226. *Schoenbach*, l. c. 9, 63. Abstinence from certain kinds of food *Schoenbuch*, l. c. - *S. August.* Confess. III, 10; VI, 7. CV. 59, 125-6.

² *Schoenbach*, l. c. 9, 21: Quod iniuste sit ejectus Lucifer et orant et jejunant et se cruciant pro illo. Si Lucifer malus fuit, quid ad Michaelem?

³ *Caes.* III, 26.

⁴ See note 2.

⁵ *Mansi* l. c. Conc. Tol. c. 3. *Alanus*, *Migne* Patrol. lat CCX, 321; *Paschasius*, *Migne* CCXX, 1259 seqq. *Schoenbach*, l. c. 16, 25, 63, 67, 76. *Innocenzo III*: Reg. II No. 3684; Op. (Ven. 1578). There is a reference not yet observed in *S. Pier Damiano*, II, 162: Theotocos quia Deum veraciter genuit. The Eucharistic heresy is clearly expressed in the “Verba seniorum”: *Migne* LXXIII, 978 - 9 (*Rosswyde* V. P. 635): Dicebat non esse naturaliter corpus Christi panem, quem sumimus, sed figuram eius esse. The miracle supervenes to convince the “simple” heretic. For other identical miracles see *S. P. Damiani*, Op. III, 294; *Caes* IX, 23; IX, 41.

ching courage in the face of death.¹ The continual oscillation of the various beliefs makes it difficult to discern beneath the piety of an heretic, the inner poison of the doctrine² that has made headway especially among the poor, the unfortunate and the destitute.³

This is not the place to treat of the "*Consolamentum*" which is the most important of heretical ceremonies:⁴ but it will be well to bear in mind that in that ceremony the Gospel of Saint John—always a favourite in heretical circles—plays a leading part.⁵

Another point noted by Berthold of Regensburg as a peculiar gift of the heretics is the knowledge of many languages. This may probably be due to the frequent relations between groups belonging to different nationalities; Berthold characteristically attributes it to Satanic agency.⁶

Of the modest merchant class—sure channel of Albigensian doctrine⁷—in a city far from friendly to that sacerdotal authority which steered tenaciously its cold political course regardless of *Signorie* or free communes;⁸ amid a whirlwind of doctrines and of conflicts; in an atmosphere where the ecstatic tenderness of heresy was further sweetened

¹ *Muratori*, l. c. 98; *Thes. cit.* V, 1780; *Caes.* V, 18, 19, 20 etc. "*orationes dulces*": *Schoenbach*, l. c. 18. For the prohibition to kill animals etc. *Thes. cit.* V, 1780.

² A long trial was necessary to discover whether Pongilupi of Ferrara was a heretic or not: *Muratori* l. c. 191 seqq.

³ *Math. Paris.* in *Mon. Germ. Hist.* XXVIII, 231 (mercatores); *Schoenbach*, 120: workmen, rustics, slaves, *Luc. Tud.* *Bibl. cit.* XXV, 242: nisi ab aliis accipiant eleemosynam, vel nisi propriis manibus operantur, non habent unde pascantur; cfr. *Caes.* V, 21.

⁴ *Doellinger* II 39.

⁵ *Doellinger* I, 119; *Schoenbach*, l. c. 93,94.

⁶ *Schoenbach*, l. c. 20,23; et ille diabolus scit quatuor vel decem linguas.

⁷ *Math. Paris.* in *MGH. SS.* XXVIII. 331.

⁸ *Ficker*, *Forsch. zur Reichs-und Rechtsgesch. Italiens*, 1869 II § 281,364,370. Ancient struggles between bishop and people in Assisi: *S. P. Dam.* II, 87.

by the mild Italian temper; in days when the name of Jesus, symbol of peace and love, was invoked alike by him who was condemned and succumbed, and by him who condemned and triumphed—arises Saint Francis of Assisi.¹

¹ Born between 1181 and 1182—died in 1226.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLIEST BIOGRAPHER OF ST. FRANCIS: THOMAS OF CELANO THE FIRST LIFE.

BETWEEN 1228 and 1229 Thomas of Celano, by express command of pope Gregory IX, wrote the "First Life" of Saint Francis, and between 1246 and 1247, commissioned by the General Minister of the Order, he completed the other work commonly known as the "Second Life."¹

If we are to credit a note attached to a famous manuscript, the "First Life" will have had the solemn approbation of the Pope.² As for the second, the importance of which, in so far as relates to the development of the legendary cycle, has been pointed out quite recently by a

¹ *Sabatier*, *Vie de s. François* [1905] XLV seqq. For the enormously diffuse literature on the *fontes franciscani* I content myself with a single reference: *Goetz*, *Die Quellen zur Geschichte des hl. Franz von Assisi* [Gotha 1904] 56 seqq. The First Life is quoted from the text of the Bollandists: *Acta Sanctorum*, T. II Oct. 683-723; the "Second", according to the MS of the *Legenda antiqua*, published by *Rosedale*, *Legenda s. Francisci auctore Thoma de Celano*; [London, Dent] 1904. The edition of Canon *Leopoldo Amoni* (Roma Tip. della Pace 1880) has been followed only in the division of the parts and chapters. The letter *R* followed by a number refers to the page in *Rosedale's* text. The text itself has now been corrected according to the edition of *P. Eduardus Alenconensis*, *S. Francisci Assisiensis Vita et miracula auctore Fr. Thoma de Celano*. Romae, 1906.

² *Rosedale* XXVI, MS. Paris. lat. 3817: But the remarks of *Tilemann Spec. perfectionis und Leggenda trium sociorum* (diss. di Laurea) 30-31 must not be neglected.

most acute writer on Franciscan subjects,¹ we shall see very soon what place it takes in our researches.

Of the man to whom the papal authority entrusted this very important task we do not know very much. Until G. Voigt published the *editio princeps* of the chronicle of Giordano da Giano,² nothing was known of Thomas except those feeble glimmerings that had been passed on to us, directly, from his own works and those of the writers of the XIIIth and XIVth centuries.³ One point was indisputable, namely that the First and second Life were his; but his personality remained in considerable obscurity.

Thomas relates how the Good God, who was pleased of His sole bounty to be mindful of him and of "many others," prevented the Saint from reaching Marocco, and called him back from Spain to Assisi.⁴ In these somewhat enigmatic terms the biographer alludes to his own conversion; which would thus have occurred between 1213 and 1216—at the period, that is, of the projected mission to Marocco which was never fulfilled.⁵ The months which preceded and those which immediately followed this date are notable for the large accessions to Saint Francis' band, of laymen and ecclesiastics, learned and ignorant, noble and simple, all alike fleeing from the world and the temptations of the devil. "But the most noble and discreet soul of Francis," Thomas adds, "did not fail to distinguish between the

¹ *Ortroy*, *Analecta Bolland.* XIX, 136 seqq. A more radical demolition of the Legend of the Three Companions could not be conceived.

² *Die Denkwürdigkeiten (1207-1238) des Minoriten Jordanus von Giano* in Bd. V der *Abhandl. der phil. Hist. Classe der k. Sächsischen-Gesellsch. der Wissenschaften*, N. VI, (Leipzig 1870) 423 seqq.

³ *Salimbene*, Chr. 60; *Analecta Franciscana* (1885 seqq.), III, 666. (*Bernardus de Bessa*).

⁴ I Vita 56.

⁵ *Goetz*, 60 note 5.

antecedents of the various persons who joined him; and to each he accorded the respect that was due to his rank".¹

Among the lettered and noble men who attached themselves to the Saint on his return to the Portiuncula, Thomas himself must be placed; for there is every reason to suppose that he belonged to the learned and aristocratic class. Sabatier infers from Thomas' narrative that the biographer of Saint Francis was *probably* son of that Thomas, count of Celano who is so often mentioned by Richard of St. Germain and in the letters of Frederic II to Honorius III.² He observes, however, that the history of the Celano family is somewhat involved. They not only gave Innocent III and his successors much trouble in the South,³ but also played a notable part in the events of central Italy.

When Otho IV took away the Marca d' Ancona from the rebellious Azzo VI of Este he bestowed it on a certain Pietro da Celano who died in 1212. The descendants of this man were zealous supporters of the Imperial cause, and unsuccessfully disputed the possession of the Marca with the Pope, who had restored the investiture to Aldobrandino, Azzo's son. In 1214 Innocent III excommunicated them, and they were subsequently defeated by the Lord of Este.⁴ Perhaps this double disaster may explain Thomas' resolution, for certainly the date of the disasters of the House of Celano would seem to correspond with that of the entrance into the Order of the future biographer of Saint Francis. We are, of course, in the region of hypotheses—not improbable

¹ I Vita 56, 57.

² Vie de s. François, LIII note 1.

³ Reg. II N. 1537, 2926; MG. Ep. Pontif. Rom. Saec. XIII, I, N. 223, 296, 370, 371, 399. Cfr. for the history of the family, *Ughelli-Coleti*, Italia Sacra, I, 904-7 (doc. a. 1178-1179).

⁴ Hurter, III, 430-1, *Ficker*, Forsch. cit. II § 371: *Muratori*, Antiq. Est. I, 417-19; Ann. Patav. in MG. SS. XIX, 151.

ones, but still hypotheses. Nor would the name itself prove much. We know that the Frati Minori, like the rest, used to change their name at their profession.¹

I should attach more importance, however, to the narrative which appears in the "Second Life", where it is recorded that *apud Celanum* the Saint made a present of cloth to an imprudent old woman.² Did not Thomas wish by means of this narrative, to link the name of his own native place to one of the many glories of Saint Francis?

But the two Lives, when studied as fine literary and dogmatic elaborations of a single principle which animates the whole, tell us something more. They tell us, above all that when Thomas entered the Order he had already attained a remarkable degree of culture, and that therefore he was no longer a mere boy. Admission into the Order was possible at fifteen years, ere the famous Pythagorean "parting of the ways"³ had been fully attained; but at fifteen one's stock of knowledge is scanty. And after Thomas had donned the serge of the Franciscan, the first fervour of the monastic life, and then the missionary labours which followed, would have left him no leisure to devote himself assiduously to studies.⁴ Probably—it is a word that we shall necessarily repeat with some frequency—probably when Thomas became a Minorite he was already

¹ *Salimbene*, II. St. Francis himself gives the name "Pacifico" to the famous *Rex versuum* when he receives him in the Rule: II Vita, III, 49; *Rosedale*, 58.

² II Vita III, 10; *R*, 48, 49. Cfr. *Sabatier*, *Speculum perfectionis seu Franc. Assis. Legenda antiquissima* (1898) c. 29; 58 nota 1. St. Francis is also made to lay at Padua the first stone of the monastery of Cella; *Lib. regim. Padue ed Bonardi* (1899) 79, indeed the chroniclers cause him to go to every place where they desire the Saint's presence to lend solemnity to the events which they record.

³ *Salimbene*, 10-1: cfr. 120: The phrase is typical of the Middle Ages.

⁴ The *Studi* of the Order flourish at a much later period. *H. Felder*, *Geschichte der wiss. Studien im Franziskanerord*, 1904. 32 seqq.

a cleric. At any rate Giordano does not put him among the lay brethren.¹ If he did belong to a noble family, he would have found time to attend some school or celebrated University² while his people were immersed in political life. His deep culture is, however, in itself no real proof of noble birth. The aristocratic classes had, in general, no consummate familiarity with the alphabet,³ though frequent exceptions are not lacking. The south took its share in the scientific and literary development of the rest of Italy without distinction of classes.⁴

An attentive observer of minutiae might find faint indications of noble lineage in the not unfrequent allusions to the nobility and its various grades, so inappropriate in the Life of such a Saint as Francis of Assisi.

The notices of our biographer, properly so called, come, all of them, from Giordano di Giano. As has already been said, when the second mission to Germany was decided upon, in 1221, it was left to the freewill of those who should volunteer to take part in it, seeing that grave peril was to be faced. In the famous chapter of 1221, in which we see Saint Francis abandon himself almost entirely into the hands of Bro. Elias,⁵ the most vivid picture of the

¹ Voigt, 526 c. 19.

² The liberal studies were followed by theology: Chartul. Univ. I N. 26; a. 1160 c.

³ Odofred, 170; C. I 46; de off. iudicum. S. Petri Damiani, Op. II, 208.

⁴ Ugbelli-Coleti, Italia sacra, VII, 209; Salimbene, 64, 66, 141, Mon. Neapol. Reg. Neap. II, 1 ed. Capasso pag. 59; a 1181; Cod. Dipl. Barese V, N. 144, 158. Cfr. Huillard-Bréholles, Hist. dipl. Frid. II; IV, 1, 383. Siragusa, Il regno di Guglielmo I; I, 139.

⁵ Voigt, 524, c. 17: Et beatus Franciscus, sedens ad pedes Helye fratris, traxit eum per tunicam; and this because *b. F. tunc debilis erat, et quidquid, ex parte sui, capitulo dicendum erat frater Helias loquebatur*. On Elias there is a monograph by Lempp, (T. III de la Coll. d'études etc. sur l'hist. religieuse et lett. du m. âge); but the interpretation there given of the character of the famous frate is open to doubt.

primitive Franciscan Society comes before us. It embraces already representatives of the various regions of Italy and of Germany; nay, there is a Hungarian also, and there figures here that Giovanni da Piano dei Carpini about whom there has been so much discussion.¹ A thrill of adventurous and very joyous asceticism animates the great assembly,² which has assumed the character of the chapters of the Missionary Orders.³

We have already observed that our biographer gave in his name to the head of the German expedition, Caesarius of Spire, who collected a band, of twenty-five Minorites, partly laymen, partly ecclesiastics, including some excellent preachers and men of noble birth. Giordano does not record the aristocratic origin of Thomas of Celano, as he actually does, for instance, of Simone Tosco; but to Thomas' name he appends that Brother's greatest title to fame—*Tomaso de Zelano, il quale poi scrisse la prima e la seconda leggende di S. Francesco*.⁴

At the moment when the future biographer of the Saint set foot in Germany, Caesarius of Heisterbach was publishing his famous "Dialogue on Miracles", which Thomas was to remember later on.

In 1223 Caesarius of Spire as provincial minister entrusted to Thomas the *custodia* of Mayence, Worms, Cologne and Spire, and the government also of the whole province during his absence.⁵ Thomas' office came to an end with the despatch from Italy of the new provincial minister Albert of

¹ Voigt, 465 seqq.

² Voigt, 524-5: an entire chapter (18) is devoted to the cheering little story of Bro. Palmerio of Monte Gargano!

³ See the episode of the Life of S. Romuald in S. P. Damiani Op. II, 218.

⁴ Voigt, 516; c. 19.

⁵ Voigt, 531-2; c. 30, 31.

Pisa.¹ Giordano did not see him again till 1230, when he received from him, at Assisi, a miraculous relic of the Saint.²

We know nothing more of the biographer. That which he narrates in the First and the Second Life, in the capacity of an eyewitness and an intimate friend of Saint Francis, must be received, as we shall presently demonstrate, with considerable diffidence.³ But nevertheless the fact of his presence at Assisi in 1230 would shew that during the last years of Francis' life Thomas had some influence among those who formed the Saint's immediate circle. To the learned group belonged also Caesarius of Spire, who adorned the simple Rule with flowers culled from the gospel;⁴ and if the cautious protector of the Order turned for the compilation of the "Legend" to another member of the learned nucleus, Thomas of Celano, he undoubtedly had his reasons for doing so. Such a task could not be imposed upon the latest comer. When Nicholas IV wished to establish the certainty of the miracles which God had wrought through the merits of Louis IX of France, he sent thither a man of great renown, Maestro Rolando da Parma, who returned with the most exquisite proofs of some eighty miracles, and was rewarded by the Pope with a bishopric.⁵ What reward was given to Thomas of Celano I do not know; but we may be sure that the service rendered to Gregory was quite as good as that which Nicholas received. The Pope formally canonized the Poor Man of Assisi; the

¹ Voigt, l. c.

² Voigt, 543; c. 59.

³ Vita II Prol. R. 8.

⁴ Voigt, 522 c. 15. The final Rule was edited directly by Gregory IX in person.

⁵ Salimbene, 351.

rhetorician of Celano canonized him in literature. The nimbus of the Saint intervenes to interrupt our view of the figure of the man who approached so near, in sweetness of character, to his Master; and the luxuriant rhetorical foliage of the First Life scarcely allows any outlet for the subtle perfume of that mystic flower which opened on the serene Umbrian hill.

There is a complete library, for those who care to consult it, on the tendency and value of the two Lives of Thomas of Celano. The First Life is recognised as the principal source for the history of Saint Francis. Its style may be at times tediously rhetorical, and the aims of the writer obvious and by no means above suspicion; but the fact remains that without Thomas one cannot write about Francis. If there is any hope of obtaining a less obstructed view of the figure of St. Francis, the slender thread by which that hope is suspended leads up to the work of Thomas of Celano, the influence of which lies heavy upon all the subsequent literature on the subject whether historical or legendary. And here it is not easy to reject the weighty arguments adduced by Ortroy for the demolition of the "Legend of the Three Companions".¹ The majority of the early Franciscan documents have as real a dependence on Thomas' work as a full flowing river has upon its remote source; and that in spite of the various storms which convulsed the Order. Hence the practical uselessness of any laborious and intricate study, however learned, of the various modifications of the narrative, which has not its eye always upon the original sources. From the two "Lives" issue the subtle threads which lead to the tendencies of the various

¹ Anal. Bollandiana XIX (1900) 119; 126, 140 seqq.

groups and individuals. An episode that has become stereotyped in monastic and dogmatic traditions, grows living and fresh as the old slumbering ideas awake to life, and presents itself with characteristics that suggest the most consummate originality.

How many eulogies, for instances, have been evoked by the "ingenuous charm" of the *Fioretti*? An historian, who is endowed also with some of the finest gifts of the artist, sees in the *Fioretti* a portrait of the Italian spirit, and does not hesitate to affirm that "Without the *Fioretti*, if we had only Thomas and St. Bonaventura to turn to, there would have been one name the more to add to the "Common of Confessors not Bishops" with St. Dominic and St. Anthony of Padua, but we should have lost a figure unique in the annals of the Christian Church."¹

How many revelations, again, are we expected to draw from the *Speculum Perfectionis*, attributed to the good Brother Leo!

It will be better to look at things calmly. Let us take the sources as we find them, not suspecting erasures, suppressions, corrections in the records in order to give ourselves the opportunity of reconstructing them in what may seem to us to have been their original state. To give way to such ideas is to fall into a confused muddle from which it is

¹ *Sabatier*, *Floretum s. Francis. Assis.* (1903) VI-IX. The most recent editors of the text of the *Fioretti* (*Fornaciari*, Fir., Barbera 1902; 421, and *Pas-serini*, Fir. 1903; 247-8), have constantly reproduced Cesari's readings, not observing that now and again the halting sense is due to the fact that the translator had before him a corrupt Latin original. I cite a single example. In the chapter of the Doctrine of Bro. Giles "*della oziositate*" (*Cesari*, 173), *non porre mai pentola vuota al fuoco, sotto la speranza (!!) del tuo vicino*, is a phrase which makes utter nonsense. In the true Latin text (*Acta SS. T. III Apr. 229*) we read *ad sepem vicini tui non ponas ollam ad ignem*. An old translator read "*ad spem*"; and after him every one has reproduced the strange blunder.

difficult to extricate oneself. But criticism itself has surprises to offer which are not invariably of the unpleasant kind. And if we demonstrate that the most prolific of Franciscan sources is not original, and cut away from the form of the Saint the literary incrustations that have gathered round it, we may perhaps succeed, by dint of very patient labour in reaching the truth. If we do, we shall find something very far removed from the fantastic creation with which art has made us familiar—a phantasm that cannot bear the weight of serious scientific investigation.

Our study of Thomas of Celano will, then, subserve the double purpose of detecting the all too vivid literary reminiscences with which his biography abounds, and revealing the design which is its inspiration—two matters which are intimately and psychologically connected with one another.

Let us penetrate into the biographer's mind; and when the works to which he has recourse are known to us the truth will become obvious. If—to give one or two examples—Saint Francis had not spent a more than careless youth, Thomas would not have been reminded of the conversion of Saint Augustine. Again when he describes the death and apparition of the Saint almost in the exact words of Sulpicius Severus, we perceive at once that Thomas has transformed himself into a biographer of that Saint Martin who appears to Sulpicius “borne up of a white clond” simply to recompense him for the trouble of having written his Life: so much so that Saint Martin, suspended smiling between heaven and earth, displays to Sulpicius the book containing that Life. Further, the thorough acquaintance which Thomas shews With the works of Gregory the Great serves to explain many enigmas of the Life, and perhaps also of the Franciscan Rule; since the environment

saturated with dogmatic and theological literature of which Thomas is the principal specimen, is precisely that in which Saint Francis' activities were manifested.

The man of God, great in his simplicity, was surrounded by those who set themselves to conform his acts and words to the correct type of the normal saint. He himself was writing his own life, as it were, day by day, as he followed the track that was marked out for him to attain to canonization; though not without a sigh of regret for the ideal which was losing itself in the dark mists of monasticism. The group that was guiding the Saint up to that Calvary—guiding him without realising his greatness¹—included in Thomas of Celano, a man supremely capable of delineating his master's likeness as those in high places wished it to appear. The companions of Francis, witnesses to the outraged truth, even when unable to reconcile themselves to the official biography, were forced to make it their starting-point. Bro. Leo certainly author of the Life of Egidio² (though not in the precise form in which it has come down to us), was perhaps the most effectual *verbal* redactor of the pontifical Legend: and what was gathered from his words and what was added to them, was attributed to him—with a certain mystery which, on a close scrutiny, recalls

¹ I Vita 54: *Habentes cognoscere non curavimus . . .* (I).

² *Salimbene*, 322-3. On the *rotuli* and the *cedulae* of Bro. Leo, which remind me, as I have remarked above, of the writings concealed in Archbishop Riculf's desk (*Hinschius*, *Decr. Pseudo-Isid.* (1863) I, CLXXXIV), see *Sabatier*, *Spec. perf.* LXXX seqq. and the just scepticism of *Della Giovanna*, who applies quite other laws than those of the life to the history of the sources: *Giornale storico della Lett. it.* XXV (1895) 46 seqq.

For the correction of, and allusions to the First Life of Celano, cfr. *Vita Aeg. Acta SS.* T. III Apr. 224 n. 11. "*Penetrans intima cordis*" is however a phrase of Thomas'; on the episode in I Vita 46, we shall have occasion to dwell later on. Cfr. *Lemmens*, *Doc. ant. franc.* 1901 I, 11 seqq. (*Scripta Fratris Leonis*).

that of the celebrated ecclesiastical forgeries of the IXth century. At all events it is evident that Thomas of Celano—alike in his truths and in his falsehoods—is part and parcel of the Franciscan literary movement: nay, he initiates it and sums it up, he dominates it alive and dead.

So too the *Speculum Perfectionis* draws from him its original matter, even if it deviates purposely from the precise signification borne by the words and deeds in the Second Life. But instead of wasting time in further dogmatising, let us draw closer, and study the First Life, *intus et in cute* with the critical methods already suggested.

The favourite theme of mediaeval literature is hagiography. In the Life of a Saint the writer seeks and finds a way to exhibit his fine qualities of artist and believer, and there is nothing to prevent him from putting into it whatever he likes—sacred or profane, fanciful or real—provided only it be not uninteresting. Frequently the real hero in a work of hagiography is the author himself, who now conceals and now displays himself according to circumstances, converging on his own person a little of that light which he has diffused on the saint whom he is celebrating. But this is not all: his own hero must needs be superior to the rest; and therefore reality is helped out by imagination to the limit of credibility according to the ideas of the time.¹

Nothing could be more rigidly stereotyped than this kind of literature. Its inspirations come straight from the Gospels, because every saint is a pale reflection of Christ. The old Acts of the Martyrs, the epic of monachism collected in the Book of the *Vitae Patrum*, certain typical

¹ But even then not *everything* was believed: *Sulp. Sev. Dial.* I, 26; (CV. 178).

pages of the ecclesiastical writers most in vogue—Sulpicius Severus, Gregory of Tours, Pope Gregory I—each of these in turn supplies material, ever old and ever new, for the entire hagiography of the Middle Ages. That hagiography has its laws, its canons, from which the writer never deviates. This is the best explanation of the fact that saints are so remarkably like one another.

Already in his prologue, by the customary promise to tell the truth, and the conventional excuses for his own unworthiness, Thomas displays his knowledge of the rules of the art.¹

There is another truth which it was incumbent on the biographer of Saint Francis to disclose; and it is a very simple matter. From the first moments of the Saint's vocation to the time of his submission to the Holy See²; from the day which was marked by the intervention of large numbers of the learned clergy, and the diplomacy of Cardinal Ugolino of Ostia, up to the last hours of Francis' life—the entire life of the "poverello d'Assisi" must be shewn to have been a continuous and unmistakable application in practice of the principles of the Rule approved by Honorius III. Francis, to adopt the old

¹ Compare the following passages: Vita Pachomii c. 54, *Migne* LXXIII, 272; *Paulini*, Vita s. Ambros. (Op. s. Ambros. Venetiis 1781) VII p. I. Ea quae a probatissimis viris... didici...; non magis phaleras pompasque verborum, quam virtutem... spectare conveniat; *Rufini*, Hist. mon. *Migne* XXI, 388: non tam ex stylo laudem requirens; *Widrici*, Vita s. Gerhardi (c. a. 974): rimari verborum faleramenta. S. P. *Damiani*, Vita Odilonis, Op. II, 193, V, s. Romualdi II, 201; cfr. III, 433, II, 52. Fausti R. Op. CV. N. S. VI, 195 etc. etc. Cfr. *Caesarii Heist*. Praef. Testis est mihi Dominus nec unum quidem capitulum, in hoc dialogo, me finxisse etc. An ancient and very remarkable type occurs in the Life of Severinus written by *Eugippus* (II Ed. MG. 1898); and in that of Saint Martin (*Sulp. Sever.* CV., 109 seq.).

² *Regula antiqua* (The epithet is convenient for the avoiding of all controversy) c. I. cfr. Reg. 1223 c. I. It is a principle very religiously observed in the Order. *Salimbene*, 119.

philosophic phrase, had been the "living Rule"; in the Rule there was nothing that had not been found first in him. All the characteristics of the last years of that most pious existence, (when, as a matter of fact, it had lost its early freedom); all the events which were believed to have followed on his death—all must be expounded as willed and thought out by the Saint in his first moments of inspiration... yes, even to the "confutation of heretical depravity", a field open first to the Dominicans and afterwards to the Minorites.¹

The close and suffocating atmosphere which the monastic life exhales, miserably ruined as monasticism is by the rigour of traditional formality, penetrates into the first, and still more into the second of Thomas' biographies.

None has ever set himself more determinedly than Thomas of Celano to conceal in the obscurity of the cloister the form of the man who had such a strong feeling for the poetry of the universe; of the man who—rare example indeed in the annals of monasticism!—would have no houses for the brethren; whose mission was to renew the world by poverty and love, not to corrupt it by the example of idleness and vice.²

All this we shall have occasion to remark as we follow the biographer's narrative.

After an eulogy of Gregory the IXth and the cardinals

¹ *Salimbene*, 35 a. 1233. The Milanese Bro. Leo is described as "magnus persecutor haereticorum et confutator et superator".

² *Thom. de Eccleston*, in *Mon. Germ. Hist.* XXVIII, 561. In capitulo generali... praecepit s. Franciscus destrui domum, que fuerat edificata propter capitulum... a. 1221. The *Speculum*, which partly copies the *Secunda Vita*, is of so late a date that its compiler no longer understands the true signification of *militēs* (i. e. the noble classes, as opposed to the *populus*), and makes them *gendarmes* or town guard, called in to maintain order during General Chapter. Cfr. Götze, 165.

who have canonized the Saint, Thomas enters upon his theme.

Obviously the wild youth of Saint Francis was still vividly present to the memory of those who subsequently venerated, in the former prodigal, the spouse of evangelical Poverty. The biographer is conscious of the difficulty of his subject. It was not till later that the so-called "Legend of Peace"¹ (as though facts had the ductility of opinions and could be made to accommodate themselves to times and men!) should dare calmly to alter the truth. Thomas, however, does not lose courage. He has composed his two first paragraphs with ideas, phrases and words that are *most indubitably* taken from Saint Gregory the Great, Juvenal, and Saint Augustine. His first inspiration comes from the characteristic opening of Gregory's Life of Saint Benedict. The sad end of the child accustomed to blasphemy recorded in the same writer's Dialogues, and the Conversion of Saint Augustine, with a sprinkling of classical reminiscences from the Satiric Poet—these complete the picture.² As it was not open to the biographer to be silent or to lie, he was constrained to explain and to justify. The saint, he urges, was not to

¹ So says Lemmens, *Doc. ant. franc. Spec. perfect.* (1901) 11, à propos of the official Legend of St. Bonaventure. Cfr. *Sabatier, Vie*, 9.

² I Vita 1: *Vir erat etc.* *Greg. M. Dial.* II, 1 *Fuit vir etc.* I Vita 1: *remisse nimis et dissolute filios suos studeant educare.* *Dial.* IV, 18: *nimis carnaliter diligens, remisse nutriebat.* The ref. in the Dialogues is found also in *Jacques de Vitry, Exempla* N. 294. The typical 'rake' is also described in *Boetb. De discipl. schol.* (Basil. 1570) 1279; c. 2: *Qui discurrit per vicos et tabernas etc.* The verses of Juvenal to which Celano alludes are to be found in *Sat.* XIV 3 seqq. cfr. v. 38... *ne crimina nostra sequantur* (Tom. a pueritia nos omnia mala sequantur). The passage of S. Augustine (*Confess.* II, 3; CV. XXXIII, 34) is as follows; *ego ne vituperarer, vitiosor fiebam, et ubi non suberat, quo admisso aequarer perditis, fingebam me fecisse quod non feceram, ne viderer abiectior, quo eram innocentior, et ne vilior haberer, quo eram castior. Ecce cum quibus comitibus iter agebam platearum Babyloniae et volutabar in*

blame for his own unfortunate bringing-up; it was the Age that was responsible, with its degenerate traditions of child-nurture. In other words, Francis was the offspring of the century in which he saw the light; though no small proportion of his faults are to be laid at the door of the father who was utterly careless about the Christian education of his son. The rest of the narrative represents the logical development of the profound antagonism between father and son, which finds its climax in the dramatic ceremony before the bishop of Assisi.

From the wordly life of the Italian youth,¹ gay and reckless as that of the *brigata spendereccia* of Siena, Thomas leads Francis on to the critical moment of his conversion, drawing his inspiration once more from Saint Augustine. Augustine is converted by a book, Francis by an unnamed friend; and the Augustinian phraseology again peeps out from the biographer's mosaic²; but the grotto and the friend that turn the Saint's footsteps to the path of the "vita evangelica"—to sell all he has and give all to the poor—these savour of heresy.

The enthusiasm that burst forth in the description of

caeno. Compare with this I Vita I: *Simulant miseri plerumque se nequiora fecisse quam fecerint, ne videantur abiectiores, quo innocentiores existunt . . . Iter agens per medium platearum Babyloniae etc.*

On the evil of youthful corruption *Greg. M. Moral. XV in c. 20 Job*. For the "vitiata radix", see *S. P. Dam. Op. II, 21*.

¹ *Buoncompagni*, Cedrus, in *Quellen zur bay. und deutsch. Geschichte IX*, 1863; 122: *Fiunt etiam in multis partibus ytalie quedam iuvenum societates etc.* Even that of the "Round Table" is not wanting.

² Vita 3: *Sicque diu infirmatus - cum - paululum respirasset - sed pulchritudo agrorum vinearum amoenitas, et quicquid visu pulchrum est, in nullo enim potuit delectare - coepit se ipsum vilescere sibi*; *Confess. V, 9 (103)*: *et ecce excipior ibi flagello aegritudinis* - *Confess. IV, 7 (73)*: *non in amoenis moribus, non in ludis atque cantibus etc.* *Horrebant omnia*; *III, 4 (48)*: *ille vero liber mutavit affectum meum - Viluit mihi repente omnis vana spes etc.*

that most beauteous bride, evangelical Poverty¹ seems to me to have some relationship with the splendid dream of Joannes Eleemosinarius,² whose Life, translated into Latin, was considerably diffused in the Middle Ages.

Strange that the fervour of Saint Francis should have had, according to Thomas, so peculiar a way of expressing itself! The Saint, newly recruited into Christ's army, enters into the ruined church of Saint Damian, and devoutly kisses the 'sacred' hands of the poor priest, offering him such money as he has with him. Already we begin to discern the outlines of the thesis which will shortly come before us in more clear and definite form.

Meanwhile Thomas does not forget his authorities for a moment: the tumult and anxiety of mind that are the normal accompaniments of contrition, are described in a clever paraphrase of a passage from Saint Gregory.³

More attention is due to that culminating point in Francis' life where he breaks off, once for all from his family and from the world: I mean the scene that is enacted in the presence of Guido, bishop of Assisi. Here Thomas' narrative is not over-consistent, with regard to the jurisdiction of the bishop of Assisi; for that prelate had not the double

¹ I Vita 7. - Jordanus (*Voigt*, 516, c. 1) says that Francis at first lived *habitu heremitico* (a. 1207?).

² Vita Joannis Eleem. c. 7; *Migne* LXXIII, 345: Video una noctium, in somnis, puellam quamdam, cuius species supra solem splendebat - aestimavi esse mulierem... Ego sum prima filiarum Regis... *Compassio ac Eleemosyna*.

³ Vita 6: — corde quiescere non valebat. *Cogitationes* variae sibi invicem succedebant, et ipsarum importunitas eum duriter perturbabat. *S. Greg. M. Moral.* IV in c. 3 Job. n. 32: Cum enim ad mentem male gesta poenitendo reducimus, gravi moerore confundimur, perstrepat in animo turba *cogitationum*, moeror conterit, anxietas devastat, in aerumnas mens vertitur. - The phrase of Celano (16): ardebat intus igne divino; et conceptum ardorem mentis celare de foris *non valebat*, recalls the identical words of St. Bernard, *Sermo* LXVII (T. II, 781): Sic flagrans ac vehemens amor, praesertim divinus, cum se intra cohibere *non valet*, non attendit quo ordine, qua lege, quave serie, seu paucitate verborum ebulliat.

power, spiritual and temporal, such as belonged, for instance, to the see of Fermo.¹ And Francis, and although he proposed to take up the life of a hermit, was still in lay communion: and not only so, but he did not belong to any Rule. In a case that is in some ways analogous, but more serious than this inasmuch as the Order had already been constituted, Salimbene's father applies directly to the imperial authority for a rescript when he desires to recover his son who has been received by the Minorites.² But Bernardone had no need at all to call in the bishop's intervention; so much so that the so-called "Legend of the Three Companions", taking up the argument much later, makes the father bring an action against his son, guilty of having carried off the money from his house, before the consuls; and it is the consuls who summon Francis. And only when the son pleads that he is already a Servant of God, is Bernardone obliged to renew his plaint before the bishop.³ Since, therefore, the said "Legend" is undoubtedly derived from sources more recent even than that of Saint Bonaventure,⁴ one is tempted to see in this more diffused narrative an attempt to explain the fact—in itself irregular from the legal point of view—of the action before the bishop. Even those who have made no special study of the history of Law are aware that, in the matter of jurisdiction, the Italian Communes made an extraordinarily vigorous stand against ecclesiastical pretensions⁵; and the relations of Assisi with the Papacy

¹ II Reg. No. 2657. Inn. III.

² *Salimbene*, 10-12.

³ *Leg. trium sociorum* (ed. *Falock-Pulignani* 1898) 19 (39).

⁴ *Ortroy*, l. c. Götz 140 seqq. *Minocchi*, in *Arch. Stor. It.* 1899; 281.

⁵ *Salvemini*, *Studi storici* (1901); 42 seqq. Cfr. *Pivano*, *Stato e Chiesa negli stat. com. italiani* (1904); 17-8.

make it far from improbable that, even in 1205—but a short time before the date of the conversion—the city may have been devoted to the cause of Philip of Swabia.¹

It is possible that the bishop may have taken some part in the events which decided the Saint's vocation; but an intervention of the kind of which Thomas speaks raises more than one doubtful question. The biographer, with his intimate knowledge of ecclesiastical institutions, is aware that the subject of the first chapter is 'conversion'.² And conversion without the canonical element would have presented a strange and unusual appearance, and one out of harmony with all that was to follow.³ In the church of Saint Damian, Francis takes his first step, towards the poor priest whose hands he kisses; before the bishop Guido, he takes the second and more decisive step—towards his new life.

One is almost sorry to destroy the historical reality of a scene which has inspired so many artistic pages; but truth, also, has its rights, and they are stronger than those of beauty.

Francis flees from home in order to free himself from carnal subjection to his father; he takes with him money, which is the most precious symbol of worldly things. Father and money alike he renounces.⁴ All this—what is it but the solemn *abrenuntiatio* of the novice?

¹ *Böhmer*, Reg. imp. 1892-4; V, 1791.

² *Caes.* I, 1 seqq. Cfr. *Ioh. Cassiani, Conlationes mon.* CV. XIII, 73; III, 6 seqq.

³ So St. Dominic is received by the Bishop of Osma with his Canons: *Quetif et Echard*, SS. Ord. Praed. Lut. Paris. (1719); *Jordan.* c. 6; I, 3.

⁴ *Cassian.* Op. c. III, 6 e 7; De duobus enim patribus, id est sive de illo qui deserendus, sive de eo qui expetendus est... de domo prioris nostri parentis egressi, quem ab exordio nativitatis nostrae, secundum veterem hominem, quando eramus filii irae (*Paul.* Eph. II, 3) etc.

Francis takes off his garments, casts them away, restores them to his father, and the bishop covers him with his own mantle and embraces him.¹ I translate from the "Lives of the Fathers"² and from the "Monastic Institutions" of Cassian³ the two passages that follow. "A young man desired to renounce the world, but was surrounded by demons; with all possible speed he undresses himself, casts away his garments and runs naked to the monastery, God commands the abbot: 'Arise and receive my champion who comes to thee'".

"Whosoever is received divests himself of all that he heretofore possessed, and he is not permitted to retain even the garment wherewith he is clad. The novice advances among the monks who gather round him; he divests himself of his clothes and receives in turn those of the monastery by the hand of the abbot".

In the rest of the passage Cassian is careful to supply an interpretation of the symbolic meaning of the ceremony: *noverit etiam, omni fastu deposito mundiali, ad Christi paupertatem descendisse*, which the rhetorician of Celano sums up in the phrase: *depositis omnibus, quae sunt mundi, solius divinae iustitiae memoratur*.

In place of the abbot we have the bishop, who opens his arms to receive a naked Francis, and covers him with his own robe, *which is thus the first Franciscan habit*. The Order, brought into being by the inspiration of the Poor Man of Assisi, takes refuge, at the moment of its

¹ I Vita 12-15.

² Migne, LXXIII, 772.

³ Inst. coenob. CV. N. S. II; IV, 5 (50-1). St. Guido in like manner, *distractis vestibus pretiosis, quibus indui solebat, pretioque earum pauperibus dato, pannosus ac nudus, clam Ravenna egressus, Romam rudis peregrinus tendit, ibique clericatu suscepto etc.* Acta SS. III Mart. 902.

birth, beneath an episcopal mantle. It is the Church, kind and pious Mother, that welcomes the future father of the Minorites; it is the Church that consecrates and gives first aid to the designs of Francis.

That bishop of Assisi who kept so sharp an eye upon the man of God,¹ even at Rome, was verily gifted with a marvellous power of *clairvoyance*! Here we see Thomas' design coming out clearly in all its delicate lines. The decisive moment for Francis, as it appears in the official biography, is inspired by what is simply the significant introduction of a monastic ceremony; and has nothing historical about it. If any one still hesitates to give Thomas the name he deserves, he will shortly see that criticism has quite other points to note.

No sooner is Francis loosed from the bishop's embrace than he is encircled at once with the aureole of sainthood, a radiance which shall have something also of the red glow of martyrdom. His first encounter with robbers in the forest, as he is singing the praises of the Lord in the French tongue,² is destined to play a remarkable part in legendary lore, and to become an essential element in all the stories of the saints.

¹ I Vita 32. The grudge between the Regular and secular clergy is one of old standing: *S. P. Dam.* III, 261 seqq. and the conflict is renewed in later days; *Salimbene*, 210.

² On the familiarity with the French tongue which Francis seems to have possessed, see the full and excellent passage in *Della Giovanna*, l. c. 8-26. The present writer is haunted by a lingering doubt that the French language was specially known to Francis not only on account of his father's relations with France, but also because of those which subsisted between our Italian heretics and their French brethren, as is suggested by the fact of the Congress of Bergamo in 1218 (see *Tocco*, 183). And international language, (which must have been French), was certainly used in the watch-words that served for mutual recognition among the heretics of the north and those of the south of the Alps; *Math. Paris.* in *Mon. Germ. Hist.* SS. XXVIII, 231 e *Thes. cit.* V, 1794; *Schönbach*, *Sitzungs.* CXLVII, 121.

To the robbers who question him Francis replies : "*Praeco sum magni Regis ; quid ad vos ?*"¹ The answer is suggested by the mission which the biographer immediately assigns to his hero ; the office of herald belongs, in fact to those "Shepherds of souls who go before and announce the advent of the severe Judge".² But the robbers make sport of him, and following up mockery with blows, cast him into a ditch full of snow. Extricating himself from the ditch Francis at once goes on serenely with his singing, taking up the hymn to God at the point where it was interrupted by the encounter. He wanders about for days clad in his shirt alone, and from the rather meagre hospitality of certain monks obtains shelter for a short time, and a scanty diet of broth as a servitor³ in the monastery kitchen. In the little picture one discerns suggested in foreshortening, an instance of the avarice which prevailed in the cloisters of the day : the kitchen is always the humblest place, even in a monastery.⁴

But there is far more than that. Francis is mocked by the robbers, as was Jesus by the two that were crucified with him,⁵ one of whom however, recognising his Redeemer, was subsequently converted and saved.⁶

Even so Saint Martin stands up undaunted before the robber who threatens him with an uplifted axe, troubled

¹ I Vita 16.

² *Greg. M. Moral.* XXII in c. 31 Job, n. 53 : *Quid ad haec nes pastores dicimus, qui adventum districti iudicis praecurrentes, officium quidem praeconis suscipimus . . . ?*

³ *Garcio*, in the sense of waiter or servitor cfr. the 'ragazzo' of *Dante*, *Inf.* XXIX.77.

⁴ Fior. ed. *Cesari Verona* (1822) No. 12 ; *Actus B. Francisci* (ed. *Sabatier*) No. 12 & *Vita fr. Mass.* in *Anacleta franc.* III, 115-6 ; cfr. *Migne*, XVIII, 949, 951, 984. For the avarice of the *Frati* : *Caes.* IV, 68, 72.

⁵ *Math.* XXVII, 44 ; *Marc.* XV, 27.

⁶ *Luc.* XXIII, 32, 39-45.

only by the thought of the damnation of the *latro*, who is very speedily converted.¹ And a similar incident occurs in the Life of Saint Hilarion, written by Saint Jerome, and in other chapters of the "Lives of the Fathers".² Hermits are invariably successful in evoking remorse from the hearts of robbers, who then become (we need hardly say it!) perfect "*Frati*". Saint Martin, again, is beaten till his blood flows by the officials of the treasury, who may well be compared to brigands: he offers his back to their scourges, and finally falls to the ground as one dead.³ The idea which emerges out of the legend is that meekness is the speediest way to change the life of reprobates.⁴ In the narrative of Gregory I we are shewn the picture of Isaac the servant of God who when robbers assail his poor little garden, offers to give them with his own hands all that they want, thus demonstrating the harm and uselessness of evil-doing⁵; while the monk Libertinus when his ass is stolen hands over the whip also to the thieves, that they may have *qualiter hoc iumentum minare*.⁶

From the mere sketch of the robber incident in the First Life the later Franciscan legend, enriched with learned and more striking reminiscences, draws out finally the story

¹ *Sulp. Sev. V. Mart.* c. 5; CV. 116.

² V. S. Hilar. c. 12 (Op. Ver. 1735 II, 17, 18). *Migne*, LXXIII, 934, 974. Macarius helps the robber *ad carricandum* the things he has stolen; another saint runs and fetches for the thief a sack that has been overlooked; *ib.* 793. Cfr. *Venant. Fortun.* in MG. SS. antiquiss. IV, 2; 59 (Vita S. Amant.).

³ *Sulp. Sever. Dial.* I (II, 3); CV. 183.

⁴ *Migne*, XXI, 415, 416, 421.

⁵ *Dial.* III, 14: *Nolite malum facere, sed quoties de horto aliquid vultis, ad horti aditum venite, tranquille petite, cum benedictione percipite, et a furti pravitae cessate. Quos statim, collectis oleribus, onustari fecit.* - No one can deny to the story that "Franciscan savour" which has so often led astray those who do not look beyond the Saint of Assisi—or rather beyond those who have been pleased to honour him with these miracles.

⁶ *Dial.* I, 2.

which we read in the *Speculum Perfectionis*,¹ in the *Actus B. Francisci et Sociorum eius*² and in the *Fioretti*.³ As it stands (except for the vision of the converted robber, which comes from other sources)⁴ the charming page which has been called by Sabatier a commentary on the seventh chapter of the Old Rule, repeated in poetical language in the fascinating story of the Wolf of Gubbio,⁵ is due not to the pen of Bro. Leo, but to that of Jacques de Vitry.⁶ Sabatier is mistaken as regards the moral interpretation of the narrative. It is not a question merely of giving a practical example of the Rule: "*Quicumque ad eos venerint, amicus vel adversarius, FUR vel LATRO, benigne recipiatur*", but rather an attempt to prove that the conversion of sinners is effected more easily by gentleness than by severity. The head-line in the chapter of the *Speculum* is most exact. When we compare the words of Jacques de Vitry with the two Franciscan narratives, we are forced to admit that the figure of the abbot who boldly faces the wicked robber is much more vivid and striking than that of Francis; while the variants of the *Actus* and the *Speculum* taken together demonstrate in-

¹ Ed. Sabatier, (1898) 126 No. 66.

² Ed. Sabatier, (1902) 97 No. 29.

³ Ed. Cesari, No. 26.

⁴ The bridge under which flows the infernal river is in the vision of the soldier: *Greg. M. Dial. IV, 36*; The wings sprouting on the *Frate's* shoulders are recorded in the vision of the hermit John: *Migne, LXXIII, 983 (V, 17)*: Et facta est vox ad eos ex alia parte litoris, dicens: accipite alas igneas et venite ad me. Et duo quidem ex eis acceperunt alas et volaverunt ad aliud litus, unde facta est vox. Tertius vero remansit et flebat et clamabat fortiter. Postea vero datae sunt sibi alae sed non igneae, sed infirmae, et debiles, etc. For the *visio Pauli*, read the note in *Novati, Attraverso il medio evo, 1905*; 98-99.

⁵ This story as we shall see in the Appendix No. III has another—which is the primary—signification.

⁶ *Exempl. (ed. Crane) No. 68 (29-30)*; For the further diffusion of the legend, see the notes of *Crane, 164-5*, which are not, however, always complete.

disputably the derivation of these two from the "Example" of the French prelate.¹

From the robbers Thomas passes on to lepers. The loving Saint, pattern of humility, sets himself to minister to these poor sufferers and to wash their sores with every token of pity. And he makes mention of them also in his Testament.²

These unfortunates have left in the memorials of the time more than one trace of their incomparable wretchedness. On the one hand there is the pitiless harshness of the human—or rather inhuman—laws³; on the other, a compassion that lifts itself up to sublime heights in a triumph of sympathetic service. Jesus, who is Sorrow personified, transforms himself into the victim of this horrible malady; whoso ministers to the leper, ministers to Christ⁴; and whosoever would walk in the path of sainthood, will find in the leper's company his safest guide.

Amid the general shuddering, Saint Martin kisses and blesses a leper whose face is horribly eaten away.⁵ If the vile world flies from infection,⁶ charity defies it.

¹ Exmpl. No. 68. In the Appendix are reprinted the three narratives accordings to the text of Jacques de Vitry, of the *Actus* and of the *Speculum*.

² I Vita 17, 103.

³ Lev. XIII, 44; Edict. regis Roth. c. 176; Capitol. a. 789 etc. *Pertile*, Storia del dir. it., II Ediz. III, 259.

For the period of the Communes two representative references will suffice: the ancient statutes of Padua (ed. *Gloria*, No. 479), and those of Pisa (ed. *Bonaini*, I 37). Even the church gives lepers a wide berth: Stat. a. 1204, in *Martène et Durand*, Nov. Thes. IV, 12.99. Conc. Lat. III: *Mansi*, XXII, 330 c. 23.

⁴ *Caes.* VIII, 29 seqq. (*Strange* II, 104 seqq.). *Jacques de Vitry*, Exempla No. 94, 95. Vita S. Bern. Clar. II, 5, 3.

⁵ *Sulp. Sev.* Vita Mart. c. 18; CV. 127.

⁶ They themselves constitute the *persona juridica* of the asylums which take them in: cfr., e. g., *Mittarelli*, Ann. Camald. IV, 167 No. 98 a. 1188; concession of lands *vobis - vestrisque successoribus lepre morbo laborantibus*. This is a fact, rather than a juridical conception. *Gierke*, Das deutsche Genossenschaftsrecht, III, 168 seqq.

The heroes of pity bring the sole ray of love to these poor sufferers. Saint Francis must not absent himself from that banquet of grace. Jesus also meets and heals the leper, and the water of Jordan itself washes away sin and infirmity¹—that sickness of the soul of which leprosy is a figure.²

In the Franciscan Legend, as may be easily imagined, the figure of the leper is drawn with powerful touches³; but in other narratives the spectacle of pity for those sufferers had already been painted in still stronger colours. A French bishop is pulled up on a journey by a leper who pleads for pity. The holy prelate leaps from his horse and gives the poor creature an alms. But the leper, whose malady had deprived him of even the appearance of a man, refuses the alms, as too common a gift, and displaying *carunculam de naribus pendentem, magni horris atque foetoris*, requests the bishop—and not in vain—*nihil aliud praeter linctionem linguae tuae*. The leper was Jesus.⁴ In the *Actus* and the *Fioretti* pity has already assumed the proportions of a miracle.⁵ The leper desires

¹ *Greg. Tur.* In gloria martyrum c. 18; *MG. Hist. SS. merov.* I, 499. *Vita S. Radeg.* ib. *Auct. antiquiss.* IV, 2; *Venant. Fortun.* 43.

² Heresy and sin: *Greg. M. Moral.* III in c. 4 Job; No. 58; *Beda*, in *Migne*, XCIII, 390-1 (*Spuria*); *Jacq. de Vitry*, No. 259: leprosis id est demonibus. *S. P. Dam. Op.* I, 32; *Sermo* 14.

³ I do not find quite clear on this subject, the words of *Bournet*, St. François. *Étude sociale et médicale* 1893, 67 seqq. *Le rencontre d'un lepreux, aux environs d'Assise, fut l'hégire du fils de Bernardone et de Pica, le moment où sa destinée se noua.*

⁴ *Caes.* VIII, 29: Tanta humilitas est in Christo, ut aliquando sub figuris infirmorum, aliquando quod amplius est, species leprosorum assumens, nobis appareat. The story of the bishop is in VIII, 33 (*Strange*, II, 105). In the *Vitae Patrum* (*Migne*, LXXIII, 978: V, 17) A *Frate* sips the purulent matter that flows from the flesh of a wounded man; the same thing is repeated by *Caesarius*, with certain modifications, (IV, 6). And these are not the only passages.

⁵ *Actus* No. 28; *Fioretti* No. 25. The humble *Frate* who washes the poor is of frequent occurrence: *Caes.* VI, 9. There may be in the narrative of the

to be cured by the Saint alone, and from the Saint he is to obtain healing both of body and of soul. But the origin of Thomas' narrative is both plain and clear.

Our biographer, apparently forgetful of what he said before, goes on to relate that Francis, as soon as he was freed from the power of his father, gave his immediate attention to his first work, viz: the restoration of the ancient church of God. He was not called to dig up its foundations, but to rebuild the fabric upon them. 'Ignorant though he was' he knew well that it was the prerogative of Christ himself to build the new church. In the restoration of the church of Saint Damian is symbolised the *orthodox* spirit of the Saint's mission¹; but the biographer's continual insistence on the theme demonstrates that he realised the possibility of another interpretation of Franciscan thought in the catholic world. In this same chapter is recorded the institution of the Order of *Clarisse*, that is "Poor Women":² and since the male Rule is the type on which the female is modelled, we may remark in passing—without repeating the studies of Karl Müller on the primitive Rules of the Order³—that the name "Poor" as applied to these women presupposes the exis-

Fioretti a reminiscence of *Hist. Lausiaca* c. 26 (*Migne*, LXXIII, 1123-5), where Eulogius carries home a poor mutilated fellow whom no one is willing to succour. By way of shewing his thanks the victim becomes unbearable, being victim of diabolical possession. Saint Anthony cures him.

Sabatier would bid us compare in the Franciscan Legend, the commentary on chap. X of the Rule, exhorting the sick to shew patience.

¹ I Vita d8.

² I regard Celano's authorship of the Life of St. Clare as doubtful. (*Acta SS. Aug. T. II*, 754 seqq.). *Götz*, 240 seqq.; But with this point we shall deal later on.

³ Anfänge, 14 seqq. 184 seqq. *Sabatier*, Vie, 114, 133; *Götz*, 41 and *passim*. For the name "Clarissae": *Regesti dei card. Ugolino d' Ostia e Otaviano d. Ubald.* (1890) 153-4 No. 125 a. 12; e *Lempp*, in *Zeitschr. f. Kirchengesch.* XIII 1902, 181 seqq.

tence of an Order of brethren similarly denominated. The "Poor Men of Lyons" and their connexion with the heretical movement come immediately into one's mind.

And now Francis appears in his true light. The simple man who, according to his biographer, must seek an explanation of the principles of the evangelical life from a priest (who, as a matter of fact, probably followed the comfortable precepts of the class to which he belonged) reveals himself in his true greatness. It is his word, living, hot, persuasive, that moves hearts and shakes the corrupt Church. It is the eloquence of Christianity, inspired by a feeling of tenderness and pity that comes direct from Jesus.¹ The official Church had in its bosom bishops who, in life and death, made a mock of the means of grace granted by Christ to his believers.² The poor sinner approached the confessional armed with a knife, intending to kill herself if an impure confessor should constrain her to sin as was the custom of the priests.³

What had such priests to suggest to Francis?

For his eulogy of the Saint⁴—pure, crystal spring that falls swiftly from alpine summit to flowery meads—Thomas has recourse to the store-house of his excellent memory. True, he is not invariably happy in the choice of his phrases; but rhetoric does not prevent us from getting at the truth.⁵ The eloquence of Francis, irresistible in its

¹ I Vita, 23, 36, 56, 62, 72, 73, 74, 75, 83, 97.

² Salimbene, 30, 289; William, bishop of Reggio: Male ordinavit facta animae suae . . . pauperibus clausit viscera pietatis.

³ Salimbene, 212.

⁴ Enthusiastic testimony to Francis' eloquence is to be found in the following writers: *Thomae, archid. Spal.* MG. SS. XIX, 580; *Signii, Op.* III (Mediol. 1732) 432. *Jacques de Vitry*, in *Sabatier, Spec. Perfect.* 30. *Tb. a Cel.* II Vita, III, 50 R. 59. *Felder*, 43 seqq. The Friars used to hold up to ridicule the old-fashioned type of preacher: *Salimbene*, 351.

⁵ Compare the following: I Vita 23 and *Greg. M. Moral.* XXX in c. Job; n. 6; in *Ezech. Hom.* I, 3 No. 5; *S. Bern. Sermo* 29; *Op.* II, 686; *S. P.*

sweetness, innocent of scholastic rules, is the primary cause of his success. But we know where that eloquence came from. The Legend magnifies still more ardently the Saint's gift of speech. What we read in the *Actus* and the *Fioretti* concerning the miracle of Rieti is a graceful expansion of two older stories. At Rieti the covetous priest complains that his vineyard has been wasted and despoiled by the crowd that flocks to hear Francis' preaching; and by a miracle he makes more wine than ever before with the few grapes that are left. One part of the narrative is taken from the Dialogues of Gregory the Great; another was perhaps inspired by the legend of the "Lives of the Fathers", where from the tongue of Ephrem springs a vine, and all the birds of the air eat of its fruit.¹ Thomas, however, mindful of the times in which he lived, is very cautious. Most prudent of biographers, he notes that when the Saint preached he was duly provided with the apostolic permission: and that, not content with proclaiming peace among angry folk who knew not concord,² he took pains also to confute the errors of "heretical depravity".³

Damiani, V. Rom. c. 23. Op. II, 221. But Thomas is not to be forgiven for having repeated as an eulogy of the Saint (l Vita 97) the words of the *De Vitis Patrum* (Migne, LXXIII 995): *ut putaretur omne corpus ipsius lingua esse*, which refer in the original to a chatterbox! l Vita 56: *terram-verbi vomere scindens*, is identical with *Greg. M.* XXII, in c. 31 Job; n. 51.

¹ *Actus* No. 21; *Fioretti* No. 19. Dial. I, 9: there, however, the vineyard is ruined by hail. Here is an example: *E il prete raccoglie quelli cotali racimoli e mettelì nel tino, e pigia.* Dial. cit. *Tunc vir Dei vineam ingressus, racemos collegit ad calcatorium detulit - et calcare ipsos rarissimos fecit.* *Actus: illa pauca grana uvarum recolligens et in consueto torculari reponens - viginti salmas vini optimi - recolligit.* Vita Ephr. c. 1; Migne, LXXIII, 980 (V, 17 No. 6). Cfr. *Greg. M.* in *Ezech.* Hom. I, 6, No. 4: *Aliter namque olet flos uvae, quia magna est virtus et opinio praedicatorum, quae debriant mentes audientium.*

² *Sutter*, Johann, v. Vicenza, und die ital. Friedensbewegung, im Jahre 1233 (1891), I seqq.

³ l Vita 36, 72, 75.

Did he? It is true that the confutation and persecution of heretics was entrusted to the Franciscans when the Order had attained a certain degree of culture; but originally they had rather shunned and avoided learning.¹ We know that the only people competent to enter into discussion with the heretics were the "preachers" or "lecturers" as we should call them today, endowed with wide and solid theological learning.² The Man of Assisi described by Thomas again and again as "simple and ignorant" would have found a serious obstacle to his natural eloquence in the snares of theological subtleties. Francis, without knowing it, was in agreement with Saint Augustine in the belief that all human knowledge is summed up in the single precept of love.³ If, as the facts make certain, the Saint's oratorical fire was kindled and kept burning by more than one breath of heretical tendency; surely the man who had thus shorn heterodox zeal of its combative asperity, would not be the one to wrest the simple Gospel word to polemical purposes, turning it against the humble on behalf of orthodoxy and the primacy of Rome?

Thomas proceeds with his narrative; and now the legend of Francis approximates still more closely to that of Jesus. Simple spirits come to the Saint, and, after Bernard, that candid Giles who is to live again in the piquant memories of Bro. Leo, and the rest, up to the number of eight. Then the *Socii* are sent forth two by two, after the Gospel rule, to spread the divine word throughout the world.⁴ The first waves of the great tide of the converted, rich

¹ Vita B. Aegidii, in Acta SS. T. III Apr. 232: Cur vis ire ad scholas? Summa totius scientiae est timere et amare Deum.

² Jacques de Vitry, Exempla No. 26; Charth. Paris, I No. 25; a. 1217.

³ Ep. CXXXVII, 5, 8 (Op. ed. Venet. 1729; II, 409).

⁴ I Vita 29-31.

and poor, learned and ignorant, have reached the quiet refuge of Assisi.¹

Like those who preceded him in the preaching of peace and love and in his popular successes,² Francis had no intention of tying up in the wretched bonds of an Order that movement which was designed to spread over the whole world.³ His "*plantatio*" grows luxuriantly in the sunshine; it is no hot-house plant. The Rules which slightly precede his or are contemporaneous with it—with the exception of that which is extracted from the recantation of Durand and Bernard—exhibit the persistence of the unenviable characteristics of monasticism: moral perfection is associated with fastings, watchings and cruel scourgings which take the place of a martyrdom not always accessible to the devotee.⁴ But this Rule is written by Jesus, and Jesus imposes it on all nations.⁵ Now and again, in passages which seem like flames escaping from beneath a heap of ashes, the poor man of Assisi appears in his true light—as he really is. He pulls down the great house erected for the Brethren who assemble for the

¹ I Vita 31, 37, 56, 57, 62.

² *Math. Paris.* in Mon. Germ. Hist. SS. XXVIII, 115 a. 1197. The tone of the discourses, in no way different from that of modern socialist oratory, recurs also in *Jacques de Vitry* (No. 136-137) *Rog. Bacon*. MG. cit. 573: *Matb. P.* ib. 431. In Italy Omobono of Cremona, who was canonised in 1199, had preached *super pace reformanda*. *Inn. III* in Bull. Taur. III, 139 No. 18. Earlier examples in Germany: *Gerbard*. Vita s. Ouldarici: Mon. Germ. Hist. SS. IV, 396. On Tomaso Cantiprignano: *Frauenstätt*, Blutrache und Todschlagsühne im Deutsch. Mittelalt. 1881, 11-21.

³ *Renan*, *Nouv. Études d'hist. relig.* 1884; 334; *Reuter*, *Gesch. der religiösen Auferklärung* im M. A. 1877; II, 185, 188. *Müller*, *Anfänge* 33 seqq. *Bonght*, *Franc. d'Assisi* 34 etc.

⁴ Cfr. *S. P. Dam.* Ep. VI, 27. l, 108; *Caes.* l, 22. Types of reformed Rules; *Inn. III*, in Bull. Taur. III No. 17, 41, 47, etc. a. 1198-1205.

⁵ On the obligation of evangelic poverty, see *S. August.* Ep. CLVII, 4, 24; Op. II, 553; But we shall return to the subject by another route.

general chapter at Assisi;¹ and he does not hide his aversion for the must famous of the existing Rules.²

The Order of the Cistercians regarded the practice of *mendicare ostiatim* as degrading;³ and the manual labour imposed by the old Benedictine Rule⁴ had given place to a habit of idleness rendered possible by the blessed possession of wealth.⁵ The ideal of poverty, without which nothing remained of Monachism but the name, lived on exclusively in the old stories as a vague memory.⁶ Strange indeed was the contrast between the origins of primitive monasticism and the actual conditions of the monasteries of that age! Within a few yards of Assisi itself, monasticism, though already in decay, was yielding up very grudgingly its sovereign rights to the Communes.⁷

No sooner had Francis put himself at the head of the movement, which was only waiting for the man, to shew itself in all its greatness, than the old ideals that had been smothered up in incredible stories, seemed to revive and

¹ *Tom. de Eccl.* in *Mon. Germ. Hist.* XXVIII, 562. *Spec. perf.* c. 6 (16-6); II *Vita*. III, 3 R. 37.

² *Spec. perf.* c. 68.

³ *Stat. Ord. Cisterc.* a. 1207, in *Martène et Durand*, *Novus Thes.* IV. c. 7. 1732.

⁴ *Reg. Benedicti* ed. *Wölfflin* (Teubner 1895): 48, 66. *Cassian. Inst. Coenob.* VI, 3; CV. 49 e X; 173 seqq. *De vitis Patr.*, *Migne*, LXXIII, 924, 942 cfr. 789 seqq.

⁵ When a certain man craved to be admitted to the cloister, "Monachi vero gavisi sunt, eo quod esset dives" (!): *Jacques de Vitry*, *Exempla* No. 221.

⁶ *Migne*, LXXIII, 781; cfr. ib. 284 V. Abrahæ c. 3. Super terram nihil aliud possidebat, excepto uno sago, unaque... tunica cilicina. V. S. Pachom. ib. 237 c. 11: continuo distribuebant egentibus atque iuxta praeceptum Domini - de crastino minime cogitarent; ib. 890: Dixit abbas: Thesaurus monachi et voluntaria paupertas. - *Greg. M. Dial.* I, 9; III, 14: Monachus qui in terra possessionem quaerit, monachus non est. Sic quippe metuebat paupertatis suae securitatem perdere, sicut avari divites solent peritura divitias custodire. - Joannes Eleemosinarius calls the poor *dominos et auxiliares*: *Migne*, LXXIII, 342. Cfr. I *Vita* 39 (*Paupertas*). We shall find the subject treated more fully in *Secunda Vita*.

⁷ *Sansi*, *Doc. stor. inediti Umbri* (1879): 209 No. 8; a. 1190.

find new life in him. Thomas of Celano—and those who followed in his footsteps—could find no better medium for describing the epic of serene poverty, than the ancient legends. These legends, naturally, were redolent of the cloister; and thus a movement which took its predispositions from heresy was cleverly led back to the institutions of monasticism, while these latter were, by the garb of poverty, rendered conformable to the tendencies of the age. And even in those days the world was content with appearances.

Meanwhile the multitude of those converted by the word of Francis, and by his success, increased; and therewith increased the apprehensions of the Saint. After the sweet will come the bitter, as he rightly divined.¹ Like the other forms of association of the period, that which took shape around the preacher of peace and of evangelic life, being practically a little Commune, must needs have its own statute; and this statute must reflect not only the ideas of the head, but those of the entire group.² After the same model as the *brevi* and statutes of the XIIIth century, was written the first Franciscan Rule.

Scripsit, says Thomas, sibi et fratribus suis, habitis et futuris, simpliciter et paucis verbis vite formam et Regulam, s. Evangelii praeceptis sermonibus utens, ad cuius perfectionis solummodo inhiabat. Pauca tamen alia inseruit, quae omnino ad conversationis sanctae usum necessario imminebant.

¹ I Vita 28.

² *Boncompagni*, Rhet. novissima: in Bibl. iur. m. aevi ed. *Gaudenzi*, T. II, 253. Compare the statutes in *umbra lunatica*; Cedrus, l. c. 122, where is mentioned the society *de tabula rotunda*; the name suggests the words attributed by the *Speculum* c. 62 (143) to Saint Francis: *fratres mei, milites tabulae rotundae*, a truly mock-heroic phrase!

Certain of these words, and the form of the sentence, make it quite clear that Thomas had before him the Dialogues of Gregory the Great, where is narrated the origin of the Rule of saint Benedict.¹ In Celano's thought the reformer of Assisi was successor of the Patriarch of monachism. Here again the preponderating influence of the monastic spirit betrays itself unmistakeably.

In a lay society the statutes are written and revised by special lawyers; and, if we except the fundamental idea, it is more than improbable that the Saint should have written with his own hand the Rule for his brotherhood. When it became necessary to reform the society and its laws after the grave disorders that ensued during the mission of Francis to the East; the Founder entrusted the task of correcting the Rule to Caesarius of Spire, who embellished it with certain Gospel phrases.² We may be sure that the same thing happened on the former occasion—in order that the Saint might follow the traditional course.³ The continual revisions, so minutely studied by the talented Müller are so many certain indications, as we have already remarked, of the profound commotions that agitated the brotherhood of Saint Francis just as the sister societies of the world were agitated.

In the legend of a considerably later date one can always hear the echo of those fierce tempests that were associated with the change of the Rule, which, after the

¹ Dial. II, 36: *Scriptis Monachorum Regulam discretione praecipuam, sermone luculentam.*

² Voigt, l. c. 522; c. 15 (Cfr. 519 c. 9). Among the early *socii* there was also Pietro Cattani (Voigt, 520; Sabatier, Spec. 70-71 note 2) *iuris peritus*. We jurists are ubiquitous!

³ The same thing happened to the Rule (Augustinian) adopted by the Dominicans, which was approved « *deliberatione communi* », Jord. in SS. Ord. Braed. I, 12-3; c. 24.

death of Francis, fell entirely into the power of the Holy See.

The Franciscan Rule, like that of the converted Waldensians of Lombardy who returned into the bosom of the Church, imposed on its subjects the following of the evangelic life as laid down in the four precepts of Christ.¹ Hence it was possible to attribute to the Rule a divine origin such as the *Speculum perfectionis* expounds in its first chapter, (according to Sabatier's edition),² with particulars drawn from the monastic legends. Francis ascends the mountain accompanied by his faithful *socii*, and there, *Christo docente* he writes down his Rule—the second Rule. Jesus proclaims that there is nothing human to be found therein, and proscribes glosses of any kind.³ Apparently the dislike of *glossatores* has ascended from earth to heaven!⁴ It is an angel who brings to the new Moses, Pachomius, the Tables of the monastic institutions;⁵ but to Francis Christ Himself speaks without intermediaries. The angels have more modest offices assigned to them in the Franciscan legend. One of them propounds to Bro. Elias the problem of the exclusion of flesh-meat from permitted foods⁶—a point on which Celano touches only incidentally.⁷ The precept, found alike in the earlier and

¹ Reg. antica c. 1. On the meaning given to these precepts, see Ritter, in Theol. Litteraturbl. 1877; 21 seqq.

² Sabatier, Spec. 1-5.

³ This is repeated in the so-called Testament of St. Francis. Consult: Hase, Franz von Assisi 136; Renan, op. c. 247; Ehrle, in Arch. für Litt. und Kirchengesch. III, 751; Götz, 11-16.

⁴ Boncompagni, Rhet. noviss. in Bibl. iur. m. aevi; ed. Gaudenzi II: [Glossatores] convertere moliuntur sanguinem uve veracissimum in amurcam, et amurcam pro balsamo intelligi persuadent.

⁵ Migne, LXXIII, 236 c. 21, 22.

⁶ Actus No. 3; Fior. No. 4.

⁷ I Vita 51.

later forms of the Rule¹ is perhaps a curious indication of a survival: suggesting that there remained a residuum of that aversion which the heretics felt for a kind of food which conflicted with their supreme principle of the sacred inviolability of all living beings, and which the new Franciscan society solemnly repudiated.²

But whatever may have been the tendency of the Franciscan brotherhood, there was a certain irregularity attaching to its actual condition; for here was a body composed by no means of ecclesiastics only, which gave itself to preaching without the *missio* of the ecclesiastical authority.³ And so the growth of popular devotion to the Saint could not be a matter of indifference to Innocent III, especially as the movement had its centre in a region over which the Apostolic See claimed also a temporal dominion. Such zeal in sowing the Gospel-seeds was not to be looked for from the orthodox, still less from ecclesiastics: hence the agitation was suspected. When Thomas reaches the historic moment of the 'mission' of Francis he is obviously in a very great hurry. He carries us off at once to Rome, where we meet, in the Curia, the bishop of Assisi (who is anxious lest the company should abandon his diocese) and Cardinal Colonna.⁴ In the Second Life, where Celano

¹ Reg. ant. c. 3 Reg. 1123 c. 3, 9, 14. (*Luc.* X, 8).

² For the Manichean Cathari the prohibition is derived from the *signaculum oris*. Cfr. *Murator*, *Anecd. ambros.* 112. *Sacconi*, in *Martène et Durand*, *Thes. Nov.* V, 1764; *Schönbach*, in *Sitzungsber.* cit. CXLVII 9, 63. The reformed rules of the Camaldolensians maintain (for other reasons, as will be understood) the prohibition of flesh-meat: *Ann. Camald.* IV app. II No. 14 a. 1207: *Caro vero penitus denegabitur, nisi iusta causa permittente*.—Still an echo of the discussion may have penetrated also into the monasteries: *S. Bern. Apol. ad G. Abb. T. II*, 538 c. 7: - Abraham *gratissime* carnibus angelos paverit...

³ *Friedberg-Ruffini*, *Tratt. di dir. eccl.* § 50; *Hinschius*, IV, 450 seqq. Cfr. *Concil. Lat. IV*, c. 3; *Mansi*, XXII, 990. *Müller*, *Anfänge*, 30, 33, 39, 42.

⁴ I *Vita* 38; *Sabatier*, *Vie* 108.

takes up again and developes the narrative barely sketched in the First, Francis recites before the Pope a little story which Christ has suggested to him.¹ That woman, fair but poor, forsaken in the wilderness by the king to whom she sends her sons that he may acknowledge and nourish them—if she has certain lineaments that take us back to the Epic of chivalry,² has many other more definite ones which reveal to us who she is. The king is the Pope; the forsaken woman is Religion; the sons are the followers of Jesus. Few of us will believe that the parable really came from the lips of Francis, who had no love for enigmas;³ but its signification is decidedly important.

Pope Innocent III is known as a man of vigorous purposes and rough words.⁴ He does not appear to have received very kindly the band conducted to his presence by the poor man of Assisi.⁵ According to Celano, however all passed off in the best possible way. At the outset Cardinal Colonna wished to make Francis a hermit, in order to remove him, of course, from the atmosphere of popular triumphs; and only later did he decide to plead his cause before the Pope who, *prævia discretione*, accorded his verbal approbation to the Rule of the "Poor Men of Assisi", and dismissed Francis in peace.

¹ II Vita I, 11, R. 17.

² *Potvin*, Perceval le Gallois (1866-7); e *Raina*, I Cantari di Carduino; in *Scelta di curiosità letterarie ined. o rare*. No. 135 (Bol. 1893) p. XVI; XVII seqq.

³ I Vita prol.

⁴ On the character of Innocent III, see *Hurter*, III, 48; *Caes.* VI, 29; VII, 6; cfr. the singular document in *Ann. Camald.* IV app. No. 218 (356).

⁵ *Math. Paris*. *Hist. maior* ad a. 1227. London 1640; 340, Words religiously transcribed by almost all Franciscan historians; Thomas of course could not permit it to be thought that his Order had had a less cordial welcome from the pope than the Dominicans received, *SS. Ord. Praed.* I. 13; *Jord.* c. 26.

Celano's famous narrative concludes with the vision of the great tree,¹ symbolising the majesty of Innocent, which bows itself down in the Saint's presence. But the biographer's tales leave us with a number of unanswered questions. Was Francis summoned to Rome by demand of the bishop of Assisi? Or did he go spontaneously, of his own free-will? Was it a repetition, after the lapse of centuries, of the case of Aequitius? Or did bishop Guido succeed very adroitly in bringing Francis over to orthodoxy?² We will not attempt to answer the questions, because documentary data are lacking. But there can be no question whatever of the grave anxiety that must have been aroused in the Curia by a movement which was assuming enormous proportions.³ The effort to keep the tendencies of Franciscanism within the limits marked out by orthodox tradition may have manifested itself within that confused mass of elements, good and otherwise, that grouped themselves round the figure of Francis. For there were among them ecclesiastics who sought by means of the new *fraternitas* and by the help of the name of Francis, to recover indirectly that authority that was often denied to the clerical estate. Many of these—who would probably dislike a fierce conflict with neighbouring Rome—may have pressed the Saint to avoid open war with the Church. The times moreover were not so favourable to unlicensed preaching

¹ The vision of the tree which bows down before St. Francis resembles that which is recorded in the life of S. Guido Abbot of Pomposa: *Acta SS. Mart. III*, 915: *arbor inclinavit se ad Guidonis manum*, for the abbot to gather its dates.

² *Dissolvere colligationes haereticorum, per fidelem doctrinam*, are words—and deeds—of Pope Innocent Op. 32; Sermo II, in die cin.

³ Tocco in *Arch. Storico Italiano*, 1903, 331 seqq. This anxiety is attested by the last persecutions of those Minorites who refused to abjure the most rigid Franciscan ideal.

as to make a papal confirmation of the Society's statutes seem superfluous.

But whatever may have been the actual course which events took, Thomas' narrative is marked by a special freshness and spontaneity, where he describes the journey from Rome towards the vale of Spoleto of a band now at last in full accord with canonical regulations.

Now begins a continuous succession of marvellous occurrences which, little by little, will turn into real miracles. The pious company advances into desert places, but lo!... *statim, divina gratia procurante, occurrit eis homo afferens in manu panem, deditque ipsis et abiit.*¹ The same thing happened to the hermit Anthony and his companions who, like those of Francis, saw in it the hand of God.² Henceforth the pilgrims of Assisi had no lack of abundant alms; and that which remained over of what they had begged for the love of God, they put away in a certain tomb "that had once contained the bodies of dead men". A sepulchre had, in fact, become their place of refuge, exactly as we read of Macarius and other hermits who slept "in a monument where in ancient times had been buried the bodies of pagans".³ An excellent theme for rhetoric, and one which Celano was not the man to pass over, is this idyll of the humble life—the joyous poverty of the first Franciscans, for whom in the late winter days of the XIIIth century was awaking the evangelic spring-time under the skies of Umbria.⁴ The brotherhood, ap-

¹ I Vita 34 seqq.

² *Cassian. Conl.* II, 6; CV. 45. *Eisque cum panibus occurrissent . . . reputans escam sibi divinitus ministrari.*

³ I Vita 34; *Migne*, LXXIII, 896.

⁴ I Vita 38. The phrases: *casti amplexus, suaves affectus, osculum sanctum,*

proved and blessed by the Pope has already its own name: it is the *Ordo Minorum*.

Apparently even the latest historian of Saint Francis puts a little faith in Thomas of Celano; for he relates how the Saint was struck with the passage in the Old Rule: *Omnes Fratres in quibuscumque locis fuerint apud aliquos ad serviendum, vel ad laborandum, non sint camerarii, vel cellarii, nec praesint, in domibus eorum, quibus serviunt, nec accipiant aliquod officium...* SED SINT MINORES, *et subditi omnibus, qui in eadem domo sunt:*¹ and had said: "*Volo Ordo fratrum minorum fraternitas haec vocetur*".² But this search for the origin of the name in an accidental cause—like the similar case of the Dominicans (*Praedicatores*) is not altogether satisfactory.

The same historian would also find in the peace between the *maiores* and the *minores* of Assisi a "democratic" signification of the name imposed on the Order.³ But if the *fraternitas* originally called itself "Poor Men of Assisi", and not (as M. Sabatier thinks) "*Viri poenitentiales*",⁴ the change of name which followed on the

dulce colloquium, risus modestus, aspectus iucundus, oculus simplex, lingua placibilis... idem propositum, reappear undoubtedly in Dante's lines (Par. XI 76-8):

La lor concordia e i lor lieti sembianti
Amore e meraviglia e dolce sguardo
Faceano esser cagion de' pensier santi.

¹ Sabatier, Vie, 132-4.

² I Vita 38. The chapter quoted from the Old Rule is the seventh.

³ Op. e l. c.

⁴ Leg. trium Sociorum 36: Quidam libenter eos audiebant, alii e contrario deridebant, et a multis interrogabantur unde erant, *et de quo ordine*. Quibus, licet laboriosum esset tot quaestionibus respondere, simpliciter tamen confitebantur « quod erant viri poenitentiales de civitate Assisi oriundi », non enim ordo eorum dicebatur religio. Sabatier has misunderstood the passage. The first Franciscans were not uttering the name of their brotherhood, but simply, to save themselves from embarrassment, answered that they were from Assisi and that they were living as penitents. Penitents in the Middle Ages are most common, and could

papal approbation of the Rule must not be attributed to an imitation of lay terminology.

Francis and his followers were now in the bosom of the Church's institutions. Innocent followed in the steps of his predecessors: to the disease he applied its remedy. Were heretics preaching? Then all the more need that the orthodox should preach also. The enemy must be encountered with his own weapons. Abbot Joachim, as we all know, announces in his prophecies the two Orders of preachers to whom the world is to owe its salvation.¹ But what the celebrated visionary saw with the eye of prophecy was visible to the ordinary sight of his contemporaries! In the century of heresy the Church's energies are all directed against that foe, whom she fights not only with the sword, but also with the word of her preachers. And the ignorance of the ecclesiastics and their incapacity for such a task constrained the hierarchy to seek defenders of orthodoxy even outside the ranks of the clergy and of the monastic Orders.²

be recognised at once from their appearance: the *socii* gave themselves there and then the name which was most appropriate to their condition at the moment. I do not insist on the practical worthlessness of the "Legend of the Three companions" as an historical source. Even Tarducci takes the same line as Sabatier. *Tarducci, Vita di s. Francesco d'Assisi* (1904) 127-8.

¹ In Jerem. c. 1, 19, 31. Cfr. c. 9 (131): *Viatores sunt praedicatores futuri, ad solitudinem vitae scilicet spiritualem divertentes; in quibus Spiritus Domini, in quo est libertas, ac si super aquas ambulabit... etc.* And again in c. 1: *Licet enim novus ordo praedicatorum ecclesiae oriatur etc.* Cfr. *Greg. M. In prim. Reg. VI, 3 n. 26. Venit in Bethleem ordo praedicatorum, ante iudaeam convertere studuit; see also Joachim, proem. to book above quoted.* For the appearance of the Minorites in the world: *Ursperg. Chr. MG. SS. XXIII, 376; Math. Paris. MG. SS. 379. Rog. de Wend. ib. 42.*

² The fourth Lateran Council definitely regulates preaching: c. 10. *Mansi, XXII, 998. Sui praedicatorum quaestuarii: Conc. Paris. a. 1212 ib. 819 c. 1. Conc. Avenion. ib. 781 c. 1 a. 1209. Episcopus - cum expedierit per alias honestas et discretas personas faciat praedicari, cfr. Decr. Grat. C. XVI, 9, 1 = Reg. Pontif. I No. 495. Hinschius, l. c.*

These provisions were dictated by necessity ; but their justification was found in the works of Gregory the Great. More than once that pontiff makes mention of those who are "*Ordine minores*", that is, *discipuli*, who cooperate with the *maiores* (i. e. *apostoli*) for the edification of the Church of God. Of these humble ones the *rector ecclesiae* must not be jealous, nor must he arrogate to himself the sole right of preaching, because the pious priest *ab omnibus vult adjuvari quod agit*.¹ And what are Gregory's views as to the preaching of the laity, the case of Aequitius of Rieti tells us clearly. It is not, then (to say the least), improbable that the teachings of Gregory—which according to a recent biographer of Saint Dominic suggested also the name of the Order of Preachers²—laid their impress on the institutions which were being naturally evolved by the needs of the age ; and those who are familiar with the extraordinary authority of Gre-

¹ *Greg. M.* In primum Reg. IV, 5 n. 13. *Adiutores* quippe suos *discipulos* vocavit, qui *ORDINE MINORES* erant, sed *laboris participes*, *obedientiae humilitate* *Apostolo subiecti* erant ; sed dum cum eo aeterni regni gloriam praedicarent etc. quia perfecti *discipuli* in alta dispositione s. Eccl. magistrorum suorum *coadiutores sunt*, auxilia quae possunt, per altitudinem virtutis, ferunt, sed eis, quos adiuvant, per humilitatem serviunt. (Cfr. I Vita 38 : Et vere *Minores*, qui omnibus subditi existentes etc. St. Paul's words in II Cor. 3, 9 suggested to the Pope the phrase : *Dei adiutores*).

Moral. XXII, in c. 31 Job, n. 54 : *Agricolae* quippe huius terrae sunt hi, qui *MINORI LOCO* positi, quo valent zelo, quanto possunt opere, ad eruditionem s. Eccl. cooperantur. Quos videlicet terrae huius agricolas, h. e. non affligere, eorum laboribus non invidere ; ne *rector Ecclesiae, dum soli sibi ius praedicationis vindicat*, etiam alii recte praedicantibus, invidia se mordente, contradicat. Pia enim pastorum mens, quia non propriam gloriam, sed Auctoris quaerit, ad omnibus vult adjuvari quod agit. Cfr. Conc. Lat. IV, c. 10 cit. Ut episcopi viros idoneos ad sanctae praedicationis officium salubriter exequendum assumant - verbo aedificent et exemplo - coadiutores et cooperatores episcopi.

² SS. Ord. Praed. *Const. Medic.* Prol. (I, 25) : Hunc Ordinem Praedicatorum s. interpretatur Gregorius novissimis dirigendum temporibus etc. *Moral.* XXII in c. 31 Job, n. 53 (?).

gory's name in the middle ages will not find the hypothesis out of place.

There was no lack of learned ecclesiastics in the *fraternitas* of Assisi. After the *Regula* and *missio* had been approved, some Franciscan theologian of the type of Caesarius of Spire may have seen a name invented on purpose for the new brethren in Gregory's *Ordo minorum*, which has no reference (be it observed) to the well-known division of the ecclesiastical orders into *maiores* and *minores*.¹

In the Second Life Thomas develops the theme, and returning to the conceptions of Gregory the Great makes Francis say: "*In adiutorium clericorum missi sumus, ad animarum salutem, ut quod in illis minus invenitur, suppleatur a nobis*"—words which repeat exactly Gregory's idea.² But Celano's imitation does not stop there: "*Revera super constantiae fundamentum*", (he says elsewhere) "*charitatis nobilis structura surrexit, in qua vivi lapides ex omnibus mundi partibus coacervati, aedificati sunt in habitaculum Spiritus Sancti*". These words correspond almost precisely with forms of speech drawn from the writings of Gregory, and in part inspired by the "Lives of the Fathers".³

¹ These *minores* are not ecclesiastics but laymen: i. e. *minores* are not the "minor orders" and *maiores* the "Greater" or "Holy orders". In that case Gregory uses the phrase: *minores ordinis* SACERDOTES: Hom. in Ezech. II, 10 n. 13, and so too Innocent III himself: De sacro altaris mysterio I, 6: De minoribus et maioribus sacerdotibus.

² II Vita, III, 84 R. 75. Cfr. *Speculum* c. 54, derived, as always from the second Life. The *Speculum*, c. 26 sees in the name *Minores* the revelation of the Divine will.

³ I Vita 38; St. *Paul.* Eph. II, 20-2: *Superaedificati super fundamentum Apostolorum et Prophetarum, ipso summo angulari lapide Christo Jesu, in quo omnis aedificatio constructa crescit in templum sanctum etc.* Cfr. *Greg. M.* In Ezech. Hom. II, 1; n. 5, 10; II, 6 n. 3. Vita Front. *Migne*, LXXIII, 438 prol. *Decrevi construere templum Dei, ubi et nos, tanquam lapides vivi, aedificemur in domum spirituale.*

The first Minorites afford the most brilliant example of homage to the Rule which imposes obedience, poverty, and love of labour.¹ Serene constancy in adversities, and pious superiority to insults—these form the favourite theme of the ulterior elaborations which find their climax in the *Fioretti*.² Already in the description of the golden age of the Franciscan *fraternitas* one detects a strain of regret for the decadence of the primitive practice, as rapid as had been the unlooked for rise of that burst of Christian fervour.³ The lovers of joyous Poverty—who ought, by rights, to have nothing of the old monasticism about them—are represented as so many hermits, bent on torturing body and soul for the love of God. They hang themselves up with ropes, to escape the insidious assaults of slumber during prayer; gird themselves with instruments of iron that eat into the flesh; subdue gluttony with severe fasts, and sensuality by means of icy baths, and by rolling the naked body among nettles and brambles.⁴ It is the armoury of the old asceticism that furnishes the Franciscans with their weapons of mortification and penitence.

But is it true, this narrative of Celano? With the help of our sources it is easy to demonstrate that, in this matter Thomas is copying literally from Gregory the Great and others.⁵ But that is not the whole of the indictment.

¹ Reg. ant. c. 1, 7, 9, 14.

² Fior. N. 8; Actus N. 7. Cfr. *Paul.* I Cor. 13; *Matth.* V, 10 seqq. Cfr. *Migne*, LXXIII, 781: qui - penitus ab hominibus non honoratur, desuper gloriam a Deo accipiet.

³ Cfr. the same complaint in *Migne*, LXXIII, 931: Quando Congregabamur initio ad invicem, et loquebamur aliquod quod utile esset animabus nostris, efficiebamus seorsum - et ascendebamus in coelum. Nunc autem - unus alterum trahimus in profundum.

⁴ I Vita 40, 41, 42.

⁵ S. P. *Dam.* II, 231. Vita s. Rom. Dum - pateretur acediam; laqueari-

In the Second Life Celano himself records that Francis had to impose a limit on the extravagances of the penitents.¹ There he almost describes the Saint as utterly unfavourable to this fierce ascetism which in the earlier biography is so unreservedly eulogised.²

Omitting certain other observations which might well be suggested by Celano's plagiarisms, let us pass on, finally, to one of the most notable chapters in the First Life.

The exceedingly clever rhetorician, with whom we are now sufficiently acquainted, dissimulates the importance of his real subject under the modest title "*Sancta simplicitas*". We shall soon see wherein this "holy simplicity" consists.

One day, so runs the narrative, it so happened that a priest notorious for his shameful life, who (in spite of his crimes) acted as confessor to the Brothers Minor, said to one of them: "Take care that you are not a hypocrite!" The brother, struck by the priest's word, which filled him with distress, sought comfort of his brethren, who advised him not to take the judgement seriously, knowing who that

bus cellulæ funiculos innectebat, sicque ulnis insertis psalmodiæ studio pendulus insistebat; ib. 239. Vita s. Domin. Loric. Circulis quoque ferreis quatuor - quatuor superaddidit. Cfr. *Ven. Fortun. Vita s. Radeg. MG. SS. antiquiss. IV, 2; c. 24 (45). Greg. M. Dial. II, 2 (St. Benedict): Urticarum et veprium iuxta densa succrescere fruteta conspiciens, exutus indumento, nudum se in illis spinarum aculeis et urticarum incendiis proiecit, ibique diu volutatus toto, ex eis corpore vulneratus exiit.* The words in italics are also in Celano. In like manner Besarion stands among nettles for 40 nights: *Migne, LXXIII, 894*; and so too St. Romuald. *S. P. Dam. II, 217. Rimedio dell' acqua diaccia*; Vita S. P. Dam. in Op. I, 111; *Caes. IV, 102. Osservanza del silenzio: Greg. M. In Ev. Hom. I, 7 = Moral. VII, in c. 7 Job, n. 58; V, in c. 4. Job, n. 18 ecc. Disciplina degli occhi: ib. Moral. XVI, in c. 23 Job, n. 29 ecc. Cfr. I Vita 43 pr. = Moral. XXI in c. 31 Job, n. 4 Mors... habitaculum intrat mentis; Cel. mors intrat ad animam. Obbedienza: I Vita 45. Veram obedientiam etc. Greg. M. in prim. Reg. II, c. 4 n. 11. Vera namque obedientia etc.*

¹ II Vita I, 15. R. 19 Nam cum circulis, ferreis etc.

² Spec. No 27 is simply an amplification of the second Life.

priest was. But Francis gave an entirely different answer. "He who spake", said the Saint, "is a priest. Can such an one lie? If, then, a lie is impossible, it is necessary to believe that what the priest said is true".¹ Thus one of the many monastic anecdotes, on conventional lines, directed against the shameless hypocrisy of vainglorious ascetics,² is employed by Celano to develop the point of the Old Rule which deals with the doctrine of the validity of the sacraments when administered by priest living in sin.³ During the struggle of the reforms the popes themselves had forbidden the faithful to hear the masses of priests who kept concubines; and the practice of the orthodox had gone even further, thus favouring directly heretical tendencies.⁴ In the XIIth century, as is clear from the dialectical efforts of Gratian, the grave danger of this theory was recognised, and an attempt was made to shake off the principle that the validity of the sacraments depended on the merits of those who administered

¹ I Vita 46.

² S. P. Dam. II, 217. Vita S. Romuald. c. 27. Cfr. Reg. ant. c. 7; Et caveant sibi quod non ostendant se... hypocritas, Caes. II, 23. A Friar who weeps for compunction and thinks: *Utinam videret aliquis modo gratiam istam!* Greg. M. Moral. XI, in c. 13 Job, n. 49; ib. VIII, in c. 8 Job, n. 72. Hypocrisy, daughter of the fiend becomes bride of the Religious: Jac. de Vitry, Exempla No. 243.

³ Hinschius, I, 117 seqq. IV, 51 seqq. Schönbach, in Sitzungsber. cit. CXLVII, 111-5. Lea I, 70 seqq. Cfr. Decr. Grat. D. XXXII, 5, 6 and Dicta Grat. ib. III e IV p. § 5. Conc. Rom. ann. 1059 and 1063. Jaffè, Mon. Greg. 523-5. Mansi, XIX, 897; Hefele, Conciliengesch. IV, 792. Reg. Pontif. II, No. 5109.

⁴ MG. Lib. de lite imp. et pontif. III, 12, 56. Ep. de sacr haeret. e Honorii Aug., De offendiculo. The doctrine is akin to the theory of the *lapsi*. Cfr. Vita Pach in Migne, LXXIII, 245; c. 24. Greg. M. In Evang. Hom. I, 7 n. 14: Sacerdos enim non distat a populo, quando nullo merito vitae suae vulgi transcendit actionem. Instead of shepherds, they become wolves. For the heretical doctrines, see: Lea, I. c. Alan. in Migne, CCX, 383 ecc.

them.¹ Finally, the fourth Lateran Council affirmed as orthodox the contrary, the principle which finds expression also in the old Franciscan Rule.² But if every doubt was thus solved in the sphere of dogma, the popular conscience was evidently not prepared to accord a welcome to the orthodox principle. It was repugnant that the means of grace, divine in their origin, should reach the faithful defiled, as it were, by the contact of impure hands. And the moral sense refuses to be gagged even by order of popes and councils.

Thomas of Celano, in full accord with the Old Rule, puts the orthodoxy of Francis outside the region of discussion: so the Saint of Assisi is made to subscribe his name to the sentence which condemns the contrary principle, and the Franciscan anecdote takes its place among related theological-literary manifestations, both contemporary and ancient.³

The editors of Franciscan matters in Quaracchi, have republished (in the third volume of the *Analecta Franciscana*) the jottings of the so-called "Chronicle of the XXIV Generals". When they reach the chapter of the Life of Bro. Aegidius where he is taxed with hypocrisy by a priest, they refer us frankly to Celano's little story, as if it dealt with the same thing.⁴

¹ *Grat.* l. c. Cfr. *Decr. C. I.* 1, 75. Dicta: sed hoc de peccatore tantum catholico, non heretico, intelligendum; ib. 77. Boni et mali sacerdotes eque corpus Christi conficiunt. Ib. 84; (ed. Lips. II, p. 387: These are imitations and restatements of passages in Gregory.

² *Harnack*, III, 879 seqq. Cfr. *Decr. Greg. IX*, III, 2, 7 (Lucius III).

³ The story of the leper (i. e. polluted priest) who draws pure water (sacramental grace) in a golden vessel, passes from *Vitae Patrum*, (*Migne*, LXXXIII, 911), into Jacques de Vitry's Sermons, (Ex. No. 155), and into *Gesta Romanorum* (ed. Dick 1890) c. 12; and no doubt into various other collections. The precept had already been clearly expressed by *Greg. M.* In prim. Reg. II, 4 n. 12: Ut sciamus, quia maiorum imperia, tunc etiam veneranda sunt, cum ipsi laudabilem non habent vitam.

⁴ *Anal. franc.* III, 79. *Acta SS. T.* III Apr. 233.

Aegidius, then, carrying a load of reeds passes near a church. A priest cannot refrain from shouting after him: "Hypocrite"! Great is the grief of the poor brother, and the word allows him no peace, until *unus frater* who finds him weeping consoles him with the weighty words: "*Frater,*¹ *sententiae hominum qui errare possunt frequenter Dei sententiis sunt diffformes*". Here we are in full-blown heresy! The inconsistency between the principle expounded by Thomas and attributed by him to Francis, and that of the *frater* who consoles Aegidius is quite hopeless. Who was this "*unus frater*"? Francis is in the first days of the Order, called "*frater*" antonomastically.² And without assigning too great a value to the Life of Aegidius in the form in which it has come down to us,³ one

¹ Reading *frater*, not *pater* with the printed text.

² Voigt, l. c. c. 524 c. 17. Per excellentiam, a fratribus «*frater*» dicebatur.

³ The *Life of Bro. Aegidius* itself offers a magnificent field for investigation. The text we possess has been profoundly modified by the 'spirituales', and this is the reason—not far to seek—of its points of contact with the *Speculum*. Thomas of Celano (l. Vita 25) speaks of Aegidius as though he were already dead: "Sanctae contemplationis nobis exempla reliquit". As for the theory of interpolations, I have not much faith in it. Would Aegidius then be dead before 1230? The generally admitted date for the commencement of the Fioretti (1262), is probably that of the MS cited by Sabatier (Spec. p. CLXXV); a MS which in its final phrases coincides remarkably with the words of *Salimbene* about his burial at Perugia and — "qui Perusii in archa saxeâ tumulatus est...." If so Aegidius could have known nothing of the vicissitudes of the Order and the fall of Elias, nor could he have been embraced by Louis IX of France. In the redaction that has come down to us, the traces of editing are certainly not wanting: Cfr. e. g., "Vere credendum est, inquit Leo, animam illam sanctissimam praesensisse dilectum etc." (Acta SS. cit. 242 n. 100). Hence, as a historical source our text of the 'Life' has but a very relative value, Sabatier indeed (Spec. p. XCVI) says quite the contrary; but surely the first thing is to fix the date of Aegidius' death. The truth (or imposture) hangs on a group of four figures. If the editors of the 'Life' make such an egregious mess in a point of chronology, does it not mean that their own date was for removed from that of the first Franciscan Age: possibly in the times of Ubertino da Casale, during the first years of the XIVth century?

may be allowed to suspect that the words are really those of Francis; and the tradition preserved and followed by the zealots of the Order affords a glimpse of a suggestion of heresy in the old circle of Franciscan ideas. That part of the Old Rule (the successive transformations of which I do not propose to discuss with Müller) where the subject of the respect due to priests is touched upon, is substantially at one with the recantations of the Catalan and Lombard Waldensians who came over to Catholicism. There is no need to dwell on the fact that the Minorites in their first steps in the world were taken—in France, for instance—for heretics.¹ Whatever be the origin of the Life of Aegidius, it acquires, when confronted with the narrative of Celano, an importance that cannot be neglected.

The first Legend of Saint Francis (albeit its author exhibits now and then a sceptical tendency)² would not have made its own fortune nor have increased the Saint's, without the miraculous element. Miracle is essential.

First and foremost Francis has the divine gift of prophecy. When the Emperor Otho comes to Rome to be crowned, Francis, more abstracted than Diogenes himself in the presence of Alexander of Macedon, vouchsafes not a single glance of curiosity; but he predicts for the Emperor a short reign, as Saint Romuald had predicted for

¹ Voigt, l. 517. *Jord. c. 4*: Fratres vero qui in Franciam venerunt, interrogati si essent Ambigenses, responderunt quod (sic ?), non intelligentes quid essent Ambigenses, nescientes tales esse hereticos, et sic quia (quasi ?) heretici sunt reputati.

² I Vita 70: Verum quia non miracula, quae sanctitatem non faciunt, sed ostendunt etc. Cfr. *Greg. M. In Evang. Hom. II, 29*; No. 4: Nam corporalia illa miracula ostendunt aliquando sanctitatem, non autem faciunt; *Dial. I, 12. Caes. VI, 5*; a passage cited also by *Bartolom. da S. Conc. Ammaestr. IV, 4.*

another, Otho and Saint Benedict for Totila.¹ His spirit, which miraculously visits those of the Brethren,² penetrates into all secrets.³ Here Saint Francis is transformed by the art of his biographer into Saint Benedict.⁴ A strong scent of monasticism is diffused through the entire narrative, which collects together a number of characteristic passages drawn from sources old and recent. Bro. Richieri incarnates the typical tempted novice, whose secret the abbot or *senior* reads deep down in his heart, and thereupon gives him sweet comfort in his chaste resolves.⁵ This episode, which in the sequel branches out into luxuriant ramifications,⁶ has its roots in the "Lives of the Fathers".⁷ Every act of the Saint reproduces a classical *motif* of the cloister. Francis sprinkles with ashes the poor scraps of food which barely suffice to meet the needs of his body; he publicly accuses himself of having eaten fowl's flesh like a vulgar glutton; he laughs or rejoices at insult, which is for him the teacher of humility.⁸

¹ I Vita 43 Cfr. *Greg. M. Dial.* II, 15. *S. P. Dam.* II, 219.

² I Vita 47.

³ I Vita 48.

⁴ I Vita cit. O. quotiens . . . *absentium fratrum acta cognovit*. Cfr. *Greg. M. Dial.* II, 13: Se *cognovit* etiam *absentem* in B. patris oculis deliquisse.

In this paragraph Celano by the phrase « *ad audiendum reddidit (fratres) benevolos et attentos* » shews himself an accomplished rhetorician. The formula is typical, and occurs in *Boet. Top. Cic. I Migne*, LXIV, 1042; *Isid. Etym.* II, 7, 2.

⁵ I Vita 49.

⁶ Actus No. 31. Fior. No. 29.

⁷ *Migne*, LXXIII, 742. *Disciplinus cuiusdam s. senioris etc. Cassian. Conl.* II, 13 CV. 54: Cum iam ei tali moerore depressus, nec iam de remedio passionis etc. We shall see later on the evolution of these ideas in the Second Life.

⁸ I Vita 51: *Admissa (cibaria) . . . conficiebat cinere*. Cfr. *S. P. Dam. V. Odilonis* II, 194: *Pugillum cineris latenter implevit, et apposito pane, discubuit. Cumque cinerum tamquam panem manducaret etc.* I Vita 52 and *Caes. X*, 8: *Adiuro te, immunde spiritus, in hac charitate, qua pridie, propter monachum meum, carnes comedit; (An Abbot exorcising in church).* I Vita 53: *Per obe-*

And, like Saint Martin, he is fain to die on a bed of ashes.¹ To those who take the very simple line of not even discussing miracles, it may well seem strange that a place should be found for them even in a book of historical criticism. But it is worth while to reflect that in the choice of his miracles Thomas would have employed some quite practical criteria. In miracle, if one may be permitted to say so, there is sometimes more truth than falsehood. Now our biographer has borrowed the prodigies of the most celebrated Saints in the *Kalendar*. I say nothing of the changing of water into wine—which has been in vogue ever since the marriage-feast of Cana²—and pause only upon the typical miracle of the healing of a demoniac, which is actually copied from Sulpicius Severus. It is natural that the patriarch of the new Order should be necessarily likened to the bishop of Tours, that pitiful Saint, unrivalled in his compassion for the poor and in the glory of his miracles.³ Celano could not pass over in silence all the characteristic Franciscan meekness towards God, towards men, towards all creatures animate and inanimate, which is the most delicate note of the legend, though not free from a touch of heretical tendency.⁴ In

dientiam tibi dico ut mihi duriter iniurieris. This theme, is developed in *Fioretti* Nos. 3 and 9: cfr. *Actus* Nos. 2 and 8 and the sources cited there: but the true sources are: *Migne*, LXXIII, 774. *Verba seniorum*: Quanto plus eum aliquis iniuriabatur, aut deridebat (*Pelag.* lib. 16, 12) tanto plus ille gaudebat, dicens: Isti sunt qui nobis occasionem praebeant ad profectum nostrum. Cfr. ib. 961: Bene tibi fecerunt, cenerente et cabate; and again ib. 1034.

¹ See 'The Death of St. Francis', in Appendix I to this Book.

² I Vita 61. [? 69 *Tr.*] This miracle is twice wrought by St. Peter Damian: Vita in Op. I p. VIII. Cfr. V. Odil. Op. cit. II, 195 etc. The contest with the fiend occurs in I Vita 72 = Vita s. Rom. Op. c. II 209-10.

³ I Vita 61 = Vita s. Martino CV. 125; c. 16; cfr. I Vita 68 = *Sulp. Sev. Dial.* II (III, 6) 204.

⁴ I Vita 58, 59, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81.

this part of the story, as also in the indisputable predilection of the Saint for Elias, whom he designated his successor, vibrates the truth.

There is no room for doubt as to the gentle pantheism of Francis, nor as to his domination by the proud spirit of the man of Cortona: the biographer is forced in these matters to reveal the truth in spite of himself!¹

It is indeed a strange attitude in which our diffidence places us! We come to believe as true only that which, in our judgement, the veracious biographer could not have omitted, even if he had wished, without so altering the portrait of the Saint as to render it unrecognisable!

In his description of the universal love of Francis, Celano has drawn upon his artistic powers. If he had not in him a very copious vein of poetry, he still had the ability to embellish very cleverly the dull outlines of fact. Francis gives the name of "Brother" to every created thing: one knows, however, of a poor brother of the Vth century, in the Dialogues of Saint Gregory, who "of his excessive simplicity" called a bear "*frater*". "Brother Wolf" of Gubbio has here a distant cousin.² And in Rufinus' "Lives of the Fathers" one reads also of "Brother Soul".³ The pity of the Saints for animals, and the obedience of animals to the word of the Saints are matters which occur very frequently in Mediaeval hagiography. And Saint Francis' eulogy of the birds recalls the gentle saying of Jesus, and further, the truly winged words of

¹ It was only after a lapse of 20 years that Thomas could dare, in the *Secunda Vita*, to erase the name of Bro. Elias once for all from the official records of Franciscanism.

² Dial. III, 15. See Appendix III.

³ *Migne*, XXI, 430: *Ne fratrem meum, i. e. animam meam, scandalizem.*

Saint Ambrose in his prose hymn to creation, and certain lighter stories of Caesarius.¹

"*Supra hominum intellectum afficiebatur, cum nomen tuum, sancte Domine, nominaret*", exclaims Thomas in Augustinian tones, to magnify the fervour which Francis felt for the holy name of God.² This sentiment must surpass in intensity even his ardent love for the creatures; and for its sake Francis devoutly collected every writing, even if the name of God did not occur in it. When asked why *etiam paganorum scripta, et ubi non erat nomen Domini, sic studiose colligeret, respondit dicens: "Fili, quia ibi litterae sunt ex quibus componitur Domini dei nomen"*. All this is a cold imitation of the usual "Lives of the Fathers". Pachomius also had felt the same scruples; and on one occasion he declared that he would have burnt a certain heretical book "*nisi scirem nomen Dei in eo esse conscriptum*".³

How shall we deliver the truth from the rhetorical leprosy that devours it!

¹ *Dracones* posted as guards of a cell: *Migne*, XXI, 421; a crocodile who carries a priest on his back, 430. Cfr. I Vita 61; vere sanctus cui sic *obediunt* creaturae = *Sulp. Sev. Ep. III*; 1478: qui etiam avibus *imperaret*; ib. Dial. II, (III 9); 217: *Serpentes me audiunt*. A leveret and other animals saved: I Vita 60-61 = *Sulp. Sev. I* (II, 9); 191.

Eulogy of the birds: I Vita 58; cfr. *Math. VI*, 25 seqq. *S. Ambros. Exam. V*, 11 CV. 169 seqq. «*Aviculae*» se in latibulis suis abdunt, canoro occasum diei carmine prosequentes, ne immunis abeat gratiarum, quibus Creatorem suum omnis creatura *conlaudat*. - Asses that bow the knee before the Blessed Sacrament (*Caes. IV*, 98) after a brief exhortation from him who carries it. Crows that "grutillando" ask of the Abbot *licentiam recedendi* from the monastery, practically belong to the Order: *Caes. X*, 58; cfr. I Vita 58, 59. Benedixit ipsis, signo crucis facto, *licentiam* tribuit, ut ad locum alium transvolarent; and *Caesarius*: *Elevans manum benedixit eis* etc.

² I Vita 83.

³ *Migne*, LXXIII, 247: Vita Pach. c. 27.

CHAPTER III

THE "PRESEPIO DI GRECCIO": THE EGYPHIAN MISSION: THE STIGMATA: SAINT CLARE.

CERTAIN episodes in the "First Life" merit by, their importance, a brief chapter to themselves. If we except the 'Stigmata', which have undoubtedly a profound dogmatic—but, as it appears to me, no pathological—signification, all the rest have an indisputable historical value. The "Presepio di Greccio" left a vivid impression on contemporary records,¹ and the fact of the Egyptian Mission rests on certain testimony which still remains to us.²

The ceremony of the *Presepio* and the journey to the East should be studied with the design of Celano always in mind.

In his description of the scene at Greccio Thomas does not spare the splendours of his magnificent style. Francis was inspired to perform the rite by a course of pious meditation on Jesus incarnate and crucified. From this thought he did not suffer his mind to wander for a mo-

¹ *Salimbene*, 137, 317. Greccio was the refuge of John of Parma.

² *Jac. de Vitriaco*, Ep. de captione Dam. in *Gesta Dei per Francos*; 1611; I, 1149; *Frater Franciscus* - cum venisset ad exercitum nostrum zelo fidei accensus, ad exercitum hostium nostrorum ire non timuit et cum parum profecisset, tunc Soldanus ab eo in secreto petit, ut pro se Domino supplicasset, quatenus religioni, quae magis Deo placerit, divinitus inspiratus adhaereret. *Jord.* c. 10.

ment. The birth and death of the Redeemer were imprinted on his heart. Three years before the end of his life Francis, with the aid of a faithful friend, set himself to reproduce as exactly as possible the scene of the Nativity. This he did in Greccio, on the Christmas festival.¹

Standing before the *Presepio* the Saint, clad in the ornaments of a Levite—he had deacon's Orders²—chants the Gospel with sonorous voice, and preaches it with that marvellous tongue that must really have wrought miracles, to the assembled crowds. He feels and tastes an infinite sweetness as he pronounces the name of Jesus; and God multiplies his gifts to the Man of Assisi. *A quodam viro virtutis mirabilis visio cernitur. Videbat enim in praesepio puerulum unum, iacentem exanimem. ad quem videbat accedere Sanctum Dei et eundem puerum quasi a somni sopore suscitare. Nec inconueniens visio ista, cum puer Jesus in multorum cordibus oblivioni fuerit datus in quibus, ipsius gratia faciente, per servum suum Franciscum, resuscitatus est, et impressus memoriae diligenti.*³ There

¹ I Vita 84-7.

² I Vita 8. So Durand of Huesca became an acolyte. The functions of the diaconate which are *canonically* adapted to the tendencies of the Franciscan order are enumerated in Decr. Grat. D. XCIII, 23 (Spurio; ed. Friedberg 326; note 217). Reg. Pontif. I No. 636.

³ I Vita 86: Saepe... cum vellet Christum Jesum nominare, amore flagrans nimis eum puerum de Bethleem nuncupabat, et more balantis ovis *bethleem* dicens (Rhetoric again!) os suum voce, sed magis dulci affectione totum implebat. Labra sua etiam, cum puerum de Bethleem, vel Jesum nominaret, quasi lambiebat lingua, felici palato degustans et deglutiens dulcedinem verbi huius. Cfr. ib. 82: Nam supra hominum intellectum afficiebatur. cum nomen tuum, sancte Domine, nominaret; et totus existens in iubilo ac incunditate castissima plenus... Cfr. S. Aug. Confess. III, 4. CV. 49-50: Quoniam hoc nomen... Domine, hoc nomen Salvatoris mei... in ipso adhuc lacte matris tenerum cor meum pie biberat et... quicquid sine hoc nomine fuisset... non me totum rapiebat. S. P. Dam. V. Rom. II, 219: Frequenter enim tanta illum divinitatis contemplatio rapiebat, ut quasi totus in lacrymas resolutus, aestuante inenarrabili divini amoris ardore, clamaret: Chare Jesu, chare mel meum dulce, desiderium ineffabile etc. Ille sancto

were those, then, who beheld the infant Jesus, awakened by Francis and given back to the adoration of lukewarm Christians.

Remarking, in passing upon the rhetorical origin of certain of Celano's phrases, we too will pause, with the crowds, before the *Presepio* that has been so fruitful in artistic inspirations.

Perhaps the relations, still perceptible, between the doctrines of the heretics and the preaching of Francis demanded a concrete confutation of the shadow of dogmatic errors. It is not enough for Francis to have said that the Church of Jesus is not being *built* but *restored*; to have kissed the 'sacred' hands of the poor priest; to have received his mantle from the Bishop of Assisi. An indefinable suspicion of heresy still clings to the Franciscan fraternity.¹ Hence the Saint, obedient to the current of orthodoxy that dominates his community, celebrates in the most solemn manner the Nativity of Jesus, who appears, in the form of a lifeless infant to a certain most trustworthy witness! It is the answer to the heretics' blasphemous doctrine which held (as we have noticed above) that the Redeemer came into the world in an entirely special way; that the Virgin did not really bring him forth, nor was his body ever real flesh. This point of dogma (which was noted even by the Bolognese *glossatores*) gave occasion

Spiritu dictante in jubilum proferebat: nos humano sensu exprimere talia non valemus.

¹ Francis makes confession in public (I Vita 52); when dying has read to him the Gospel of St. John (ib. 110) which is the favourite of the heretics. When he sees a lamb among goats, he says it seems like "Jesus meek and humble among the Pharisees and chief priests (ib. 77). The constitution of his Order was always opposed (ib. 73). Even in the days of Salimbene the Minorites were shunned by the other *Frati* as though they were under the ban of excommunication (Chr. 374). Cfr. *Sbaralea*, Bull. Franc. I No. 56, 57; a 1231.

to a continuous succession of miracles identical with that of Greccio, which have been collected and expanded by the genius of Caesarius of Heisterbach. A priest through whose mind heretical doubts were passing, is, by the grace of God, permitted to be present (in vision) at the Virgin's parturition, and the Mother holds out to him her new-born child, *quem ille, inter brachia sua colligens ac deosculans mysterium intellexit*.¹ The same thing happens to a nun, who is allowed to contemplate the babe Jesus wrapped in the garments of her Order, in *praesepio reclinatus*.²

In the same miraculous manner are confuted the heretical errors about the sacrament of the Eucharist; for the heterodox held, quite logically, that the "true body and blood" of Jesus could not be in the sacrament.

The narratives of the *Fioretti* have an entirely similar origin, and are therefore unintelligible except in relation to the doctrines of those times.³ Read in a vaguely mystical sense, they tell us nothing. Even miracle—indeed, miracle more than anything else—must be studied scientifically. If contemporary history be not taken into consideration,

¹ VIII, 2.

² VIII, 3 cfr. ib. c. 5. 7,

³ Fior. No. 53. Act. No. 51. Cfr. *Caes.* IX, 2, 3, 12, 19, 23, 27, 41 (*De sacr. corp. et sang.*) Cfr. [Fior . . . Chr.] Cfr. also IX, 32. Caesarius is undoubtedly the source of this narrative and of others afterwards included in the *Actus* and the *Fioretti*. The secondary sources are most diligently adduced by Sabatier in his edition of the *Actus S. Francisci et sociorum eius*. No. 53 of the *Fioretti* is a translation of a fragment of the life of S. Joannes Alvernicola: *Acta SS. T. II Aug.* 466. And in like manner Fior. No. 52, (Act. No. 51), corresponds to *Caes.* VIII, 38; Fior. No. 42 (Act. No. 53) come from *Caes.* IX, 30 (Where is given the miracle of the lifting up into the air) and VIII, 2 (the vision of the Virgin birth alluded to above). A summary index of the sources of the *Fioretti* will be found in Appendix IV. Reference to *all* the passages was impossible, but with the indications given a comparison will be quite easy, and—what is more important—convincing. It would be difficult to find a book of more varied composition than the famous *Fioretti*!

the illusions or creations of the imagination which mark certain historic periods—like that of the advance of heresy—become quite incomprehensible; or run the risk of being reckoned as mere fairy-tales bursting spontaneously into flower in the fertile meadow of ascetic fervour. As a matter of fact, this fervour often reflects with great clearness the actual sentiments of the period—even to the less popular theological doctrines in vogue.¹

Before turning to the stigmata, it will not be out of place to say a word or two about the Egyptian Mission. The two facts are logically connected together by a link that is very discernible in Celano's writings, and still more so in the workings of his mind.

We do not know much about the Saint's missionary attempts in Moslem territory:² the one thing certain is their want of success. And the biographer himself, as he hurries over the obscure events of that epoch acknowledges the failure without hesitation.³ On his return from Egypt where men would not listen to him, Francis preaches to the birds to whom the magic of his voice appeals. Perhaps Celano, with his knowledge of every literary artifice, made a point of narrating—for love of contrast—the miracle of the birds immediately after the return from the fruitless mission. It is the constant habit of the Saints to complain

¹ I take as an instance No. 53 of the Fioretti (Act. 52). Giovanni d'Alvernia in celebrating mass pauses at the words: *Hoc est corpus meum*; scarcely had he pronounced the sacramental formula when *apparuit Dominus Jesus Chr. incarnatus et glorificatus*. Caesarius (IX, 27) narrates the same thing, and in this case the transubstantiation occurs after the priest has said the words without adding *hic est sanguis* etc. The miracle serves, according to Caesarius, to prove that the doctrine of Peter of Beauvais (1184) who favoured the pronouncing of the double formula (for 'Body' and 'Blood') was not to be received... because the miracle ignored it!

² *Sabatier*, Vie 247 seqq.

³ I Vita 55-7; II Vita, 2, 1. R. 23. *Jord.* c. 10 (*Voigt*. 519).

of the unwillingness of men to listen to them while even serpents, dragons, and still more terrible monsters obey their very gestures with the utmost meekness.¹

Did Thomas mean that the Saracens were worse than dragons and serpents if Francis had spoken and they had listened with indifference?

From the few words that Jacques de Vitry has left us on the subject it would appear that Francis joined the Crusaders perhaps with a view reawakening the flagging ardour and discipline of the Christians; and that from the camp he afterwards passed over to the enemy for the purpose of evangelizing the infidels. But the man who comes forth from the ranks of an army to transform himself into a peaceful missionary, cannot ever expect great likelihood of success; for the simple reason that under the preacher's cowl the enemy is sure to be suspected. Did the Saint believe, as did many of his contemporaries, that the religion of Mohammed was but a kind of Christian heresy, and that the good disposition to abandon it was but waiting for an impulse from without? It is probable that this idea also was among the motives that excited him to preach to them.²

Francis, ignorant of the language of the country—though indeed the Frankish speech was not unknown among the Saracens—without the special preparation which mission

¹ *Migne*, XXIII, 421. *Sulp. Sev. Dial.* II (III, 9) CV. 207.

² Cfr. *Sbaralea*, Bull. Franc. I N. 82, 106. The French expedition to Tunis seems to have been inspired by the idea that the conversion of the Infidels would not be difficult! Dante (*Inf.* XXVIII 35) places Mohammed among the schismatics, "seminator di scandalo e di sisma" Peter abbot of Cluny wrote a treatise against the sect of the Saracens (*Migne* CLXXXIX, 659 seqq.). The Spanish Adoptionism of the IXth century is said have had as its object a strange reconciliation between the two creeds. MGH. Leg. Sect. III Conc. p. II: Conc. Foroiul. a. 796-7; 188.

work entails,¹ would very soon have perceived the absolute uselessness of his efforts at evangelizing. Nevertheless Thomas, who takes no account at all of the tendencies of the age, sees in the attempt of Saint Francis nothing but the desire to attain the conventional climax of sainthood—that martyrdom which is the summit of the saint's aspirations. In this way he assimilates the legend of his hero to the no less celebrated legend of Saint Romuald written by Saint Peter Damian,² and models the figure of Francis on the quite ordinary type of saints who always yearn for martyrdom without ever achieving it. The man of Assisi was to be denied the crimson aureole of the martyr: and a legend of a saint who should die peacefully in his bed, would lose all fascination, however great might be the virtue of the hero and the literary capacity of his biographer. Celano avails himself, with great cleverness of the Egyptian episode, to prove that, if martyrdom did not smile upon Francis, the fault was not his; that he had done all in his power to become a martyr—that, in fact there was no real difference between him and an actual martyr. The reasonings of Sulpicius Severus and of Peter Damian, each of whom, like Thomas, had written the life of a man most saintly—but not *martyr*—served excellently for Celano too.³

¹ *Caes.* IV, 15: Compare, for the discipline of missionary work, the Letter of Pope Alexander III in *Manst.* XXI, 961.

² *Op.* II, 223 c. 39: Audiens quia b. vir Bonifacius martyrium suscepisset, nimio desiderii igne succensus, ut pro Christo sanguinem funderet, Ungariam mox ire disposuit. Cfr. I Vita 55: Amore divino fervens - perfectionis summam attingere cupiebat - sacri martyrii desiderio maxime flagrans, ad praedicandam fidem Christianam et poenitentiam Saracenis - voluit transfretare.

³ *Sulp. Sev. Ep.* II, CV. 143: Nam licet ei ratio temporis non potuerit praestare (!) martyrium, gloriam tamen martyris non carebit, quia voto atque virtute et potuit esse martyr et voluit. Cfr. *S. P. Dam.* l. c. B, secundum intentionem

The supreme austerity of his life, faithful to the precepts of Christ, the hand-to-hand conflicts with the devil;¹ the continual mortifications of the flesh, and, finally, the horrible pains of his maladies and of the attempted remedies, serenely borne—all these represented a veritable martyrdom . . .² up to a certain point. But blood is blood; and Heaven did not vouchsafe to Francis the longed-for perfection.

The extremely dry narrative of Celano was supplemented by later legend. It was impossible that a man like Francis, who had shaken the world and bidden it follow him,³ should not have accomplished great achievements, and reaped a harvest even where his word had fallen upon soil so sterile as that of Islam. Hence we find in the *Actus* and in the *Fioretti* an amplified version of the episode. And here also the compilers have shewn no originality but made use of the best-known stories and legends in fabricating the narrative that has come down to us.⁴

quidem suam martyrium subit. I Vita 92 : Paratusque erat homo etc. Cfr. *Greg. M. Hom. in Ev. II*; 36, n. 7. ("Martyrdom of desire").

¹ I Vita 72. Manu ad manum cum diabolo conflegebat; Thomas is here, apparently, paraphrasing the 7th chapter of the Life of S. Romuald (*S. P. Dam. II*, 209-210). *Impugnabat* tamen diabolus etc. Fights with the devil are, however, too common to allow us to see anything peculiar in those of Saint Francis.

² I Vita 107: O martyr, qui *ridens et gaudens* libentissime tolerabat; and *Sulp. Sev. Ep. II*, 144: Ut *laetus* ulceribus, *congaudensque* cruciatibus quaelibet inter tormenta *risisset*. Ep. III, 149: O virum ineffabilem etc.; and I Vita 81. Saint Francis sees in the painful character of his disease (I Vita 107 a 'compensatio' for the martyrdom he had failed to win.

³ Vita Aegidii. Acta SS. T. III Apr. 236. Fior. No. 49; Act. No. 8.

⁴ Fior. No. 24; Act. No. 27. The episode of the harlot, which has affinities with the 'Vita S. Thaisis: (*Rossweyde* 374) is taken from Caesarius (X, 24; *Strange*, II 241-2; *Gerungus Scholasticus Bonnensis*). The rest of the legend reminds one of that of the conversion of the Persian king as given in *Fredegar. Chron. IV*, 9 (MG. SS. Merov. II 125-6 and note 13) cfr. *P. Diac. Hist. Lang. IV*, 50 (MG. SS. rer. lang. et italicarum 137 note 2). In point of

Celano was not content, however with the new species of martyrdom for Francis: and so he prepares us very frankly for the miracle of the stigmata, in the following words: *in omnibus his Dominus ipsius desiderium non implevit, praerogativam illi reservans gratiae singularis.*¹ The "singular prerogative"—need one say it?—is the renewal in the Saint of the martyrdom of Golgotha.

I am not unacquainted with the medical literature on the subject of the stigmata; and I can believe also that the pathological phenomena in the Saint's person may have given the first impulse to the creation of the miracle—or rather, to express myself more exactly, may have furnished the incidental elements. But, since we ought by this time to know who Thomas of Celano was, and after what fashion he wrote, (and it is to him that we owe the first narrative of the fact, that became the official text)²—we shall realise that the *literary* genesis of the miracle is likely to bring us closer to the truth than the pathological. At the same time we must be on our guard against a pedantic exaggeration of historical criticism.

The conception of the miracle itself, most easy of interpretation, tells us much. That such a thing should be attributed to the Saint, presupposes in him something extraordinary—something, one might venture to say, super-

facth te Armenian bishop Domitian did not succeed in converting the king (Greg. I Ep. III, 42), but pious tradition took hold of the fruitless attempt, and developed the legend after its own taste. The *incombustibility* of the chaste is simply the 'judgement of God' miraculously shewn. Cfr. Vita S. Joan. Eleem. c. 46: *Migne*, LXXIII, 46: *Sicut nec tunicam hanc meam incenderunt prunae istae, ita nec ego agnovi peccatum mulieris.* *Jacques de Vitry*, *Exempla* No. 212, 245, 246, 247.

¹ I Vita 57.

² *Luc. Tudens.* in *Bibl. Max. Patrum* XXV, 224. *In manibus et pedibus b. F. quatuor apparuerunt signa clavorum etc. Scriptum quippe reperitur in ejus legenda etc.* This is the Legend before Thomas touched it.

human. Francis is, in truth, the Christ of Italy.¹ The ruthless efforts made by his biographers to reduce his figure to the modest dimensions of a conventional saint were not entirely successful. Not even Thomas could remain untouched by the universal feeling. He who had been a perfect imitator of Jesus Christ, and had Christ's own soul, wide open to the infinite love—he must needs be presented to the pious devotion of all with the torn and bleeding flesh of the Crucified. And a variety of particular circumstances combined to make Thomas (or those whose ideas he was pledged to interpret) see in the broken body of Francis a supreme resemblance to the God-Man. If deception there was, it must not be imputed to the cold astuteness of Bro. Elias, nor entirely to the fervid imagination of Thomas; still less to the Saint, who most probably repudiated (if there was need to do so) so divine an interpretation of the pathological stigmata wherewith he was afflicted.² The most ingenious narrative is that which issued from the mouth (not from the *pen*) of Bro. Leo, and is related with equal candour by Salimbene.

Bro. Leo told Salimbene that when the body of Francis was washed for burying "*videbatur rectus sicut unus crucifixus*".³ And the expression, called forth by the pitiable spectacle of a body which bears, over and above the work of death, traces of the martyrdom of a long illness, is still

¹ I Vita 89. Missus est hic a Deo, ut universaliter per totum mundum apostolorum exemplo testimonium perhiberet veritati.

² Certainly we are not to think of a vulgar tattooing such as was not infrequent among the Manicheans (*Vict. Vit. Hist. persec. Vand. MG. 13*) other sacred tattooings are mentioned in *Cedren. Hist. in Corp. SS. Hist. Byz, Bonn. II, 149*. Few saw the stigmata while the Saint was alive: I Vita 96.

³ Chr. 75.

in popular use in Italy today. May not this have been the nucleus out of which, little by little, the new miracle was evolved? The final touch, which gave the episode its classical form, is doubtless that of Celano whose business it was to coordinate it with the entire scheme of his laboured narrative. Celano found the road made smooth before him to reach, so to speak, dogmatically, the explanation of this greatest of the Saint's miracles.

It had been already remarked that heretics could look upon the Crucifix without much emotion. The pains of the man, they held, could not affect the Divine Nature which had not, even upon the wood of the cross, participated in the frailty of the flesh. In the orthodox, veneration for the God-Man was intensified by this heretical disparagement of the sorrowful majesty of Calvary.¹ To weep with floods of hot tears for the Passion of the Redeemer became the sign of the greatest grace, even as, to the gay scepticism of the succeeding age, it earned contempt as a mark of hypocrisy.² Francis, according to the narrative of Thomas a second Augustine, to whom God disclosed His will by the opening of the sacred books,³ is meditating upon the Passion of Jesus. And he sees *Dei virum unum quasi Seraphim sex alas habentem, stantem super se, manibus extensis ac pedibus coniunctis*

¹ Greg. M. XII, in c. 15 Job; n. 30: Sunt.... qui Deo se iniuriam irrogare existimant.... si unch veraciter, pro nobis, carne mori potuisse crediderint.

² Caes. II, 23; cfr. I, 35. The ecstasy of the Brethren in saying Mass, clumsily described in Fioretti No. 53 (cfr. Actus No. 51), is an emotion of no different kind. These narratives also are derived from *Caesarius*, IX, 27, 32. Thom. II Vita I, 6: Spec. c. 92. Decamerone, Giorn. IV Nov. 2: *Sempre all'altare, quando celebrava. se da molti era veduto, piangeva la passione del Salvatore, sì come colui al quale poco costavano le lagrime, quando le voleva.*

³ I Vita 92, 93. Cfr. *S. Aug. Confess.* VII, 12. Vita Ant. Migne, LXXIII, 127. Fior. No. 2; Act. I § 10 seqq.

crucis affixum. After the vision he finds himself with "the round marks in his hands standing out externally after the fashion of bent nails, and with the wound in his side".¹ Francis was crucified like his Master.

In the Seraphin Francis saw himself, not the God-Man. The interpretation comes to us from Gregory the Great: *Et sunt nonnulli qui supernae contemplationis facibus accensi, in solo conditoris sui desiderio anhelant, amant et ardent, atque in ipso suo ardore requiescunt, amando ardent, loquendo et alios accendunt, et quos verbo tangunt, ardere protinus in Dei amore faciunt. Quid ergo istos nisi Seraphim dixerim?*² Have we not in these words a portrait of Saint Francis? Celano, who was so familiar with the writings of Saint Gregory, read the passage to some purpose, and remembered it as he was describing the vision, which is certainly all his own!

It was not only the revived devotion to our Lord's Passion—there were other elements also that combined to bring into being the legend of the stigmata. Saint Paul had said: *Ego enim stigmata Domini in corpore meo porto*.³ And monastic literature, in its exhortations to the ascetic life, lays down that the monk must be crucified with Christ, repeating Saint Paul's words. Upon the trophy of the cross, symbol at once of victory and of mortification, whoso renounces the world must hang, as the Saviour hung.⁴

¹ I Vita 93, 94, 95.

² Hom. in Evang. II, 34 No. 11.

³ Gal. VI, 17.

⁴ *Migne*, LXXIII, 891 - *Cassian*. Inst. VI, 64. CV. 72: *Quemadmodum, vivens, quis possit esse crucifixus?.... S. Greg. M. In prim. Reg. VI, 3, n. 25: Qui Jesum vult praedicando ostendere, per mortificationem carnis debet eius, quem praedicat, passiones imitari S. P. Dam. Ep. VI, 22. Op. I 103. Cruce omnis religio Christianorum depingitur. Illic te simul cum Christo suspende; cfr. II, 119 seqq. Sermo 47, 48. — Praeferimus igitur Crucem in fronte. Crux est, quam mo-*

Insensibly we pass from the symbolic to the actual. S. Domenico called "il Loricato" not only bore on his body the *stigmata* of Jesus, but actually painted on his brow and imprinted on every part of his body the ensign of the cross.¹ Art was come to the aid of faith. Caesarius, for whom a very thin line separates the real from the symbolical, writes that a monk's right hand ought to be pierced with the nail of obedience, his left with that of patience, his feet with that of humility.² A little step further and we reach the real stigmata. Meditating in the choir on the Blessed Trinity, a novice *crucem fronti suae imprimi sensit, et puto* (suggests the writer) *quod eadem hora cogitaret de passione*.³ The novice of Hemmerode is thus Saint Francis' predecessor in the prodigy. Another—a lay brother—sees Jesus crucified in company with fifteen Brethren of most perfect life. The Lord speaks to him from the cross: "These only, crucified with me, have conformed their life to my Passion".⁴ Material signs of Divine grace are craved and obtained. A poor rustic had his foot cut off by a tyrannical nobleman: the victim could not resign himself either to the monastic life or to his misfortune, until God made of him a veritable Job. But the miracle does not keep him waiting long; gangrene develops—the *signum Job in corpore*—and the new Job dies contented.⁵

ribus et actibus nostris debemus imprimere. Qui hanc portat, passionem Redemptoris sui vere communicat.

¹ S. P. Dam. Op. II 240. And doubtless Domenico himself inflicted the wounds after the form of a cross, in order that the raised cicatrice might indicate the symbol. He was a poor maniac who in our days would have been put into an asylum.

² VIII, 19 (De crucifixione religiosorum).

³ VIII, 23.

⁴ VIII, 18.

⁵ XI, 18.

Thomas knew where to look for his inspirations. The legend of the stigmata was already quite formed; it only remained for him to adapt it to Francis, interpreting the signification of the words with devotion and learning. God had but denied to the Saint the prize of martyrdom in order to make him worthy to suffer, unique among men, the torture of the cross.

After the Divine marks, and the other martyrdom of the disease and the cruel cure by fire, death brought him his final repose. The "Poor Women", followers of Francis' evangelical life, weep over the body of the Saint. Rome herself is stirred with emotion. Assisi becomes the centre of Christendom, when Gregory IX, with the splendid court of the Church's princes announces there the new glory of the Faith, and visits the abject and humble *Carcerate*, faithful to the word and the example of their lost Brother.¹

In Franciscan history and legend Saint Clare and her sisters could not be forgotten. If the movement of Assisi had some sort of connexion with an impulse not entirely orthodox, that would explain perfectly how it is that woman has left so vivid an impress on the records of the original and independent Franciscan fraternity. As late as 1216 Jacques de Vitry when describing the beginnings of the *Ordo Minorum*, adds at once certain remarks about the manner of life of the "Poor Women", who live together, collected in various *hospitia*. They receive nothing, he says, but live by the work of their own hands, only annoyed by the extreme honour accorded to them alike by ecclesiastics and by the laity.²

¹ I Vita 117 sq. 122.

² Sabatier, *Speculum* 300. Not being completely at home in mediaeval diction, this writer takes *hospitium* to mean "hospital", and so makes the Cla-

Karl Müller remarked some time ago that the XIIth chapter of the Old Rule, by which women are excluded, must imply a contrary practice in the period anterior to the Rule: nor does Sabatier disagree with him.¹ We may conclude, then, that the entire fraternity, in its older form, was simply a group of "*evangelici*" of both sexes; with no idea of constituting two distinct Orders, as was afterwards done when Francis had been induced to attach himself to the Church and the Church's head. Parallel to the Minorites was constituted the Rule of the "*Povere Donne*"; a circumstance which necessarily implies that the other, male nucleus, was originally formed of "*Poor Men of Assisi*". The name tells us all!

Notwithstanding the severity of the rules dictated by the monastic spirit, there persists in the Legend a suggestion of sweet and confidential relations between the "*Povere*" and the "*Poveri*". We need not imagine a romance of love in the ordinary sense of the word: but it is none the less true that the mystic smile of a woman brightens the austere life of the Saint. Clare, like Francis, is a "precious stone", and on her as foundation rises the new *Religio* of the "Poor Women".² She follows her spiritual brother in every act and thought—in humility, in poverty, *in the most fervent eucharistic devotion*. The Life of Saint Clare was written, not later than 1261, by invitation of Pope Alexander IV;³ but if I am not mistaken,

rissae "*des soeurs hospitalières*" (296). *Hospitium* means simply "place of habitation". On the origin of the Clarissae see the writings of Lempp, in *Brieger's Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* XIII, 181 seqq. and in XIV, 97 seqq., an historical commentary by Röhricht on the letter quoted from Jacques de Vitry.

¹ Vie de s. François, 181.

² Thom. I Vita 18.

³ Acta SS. T. II Aug. 754 seqq.

our Thomas of Celano, cannot be even suspected of its authorship; so many and so serious are the divergences between it and the first biography of Saint Francis. The frequent imitations of Celano's style—which are observable also in the Legend of Saint Bonaventure and the Life of Aegidius—are to be attributed solely to the celebrity of Thomas' work,¹ which greatly influenced the hagiographers of the period, who were only too glad to select from his rhetorical treasury the most beauteous gems they could find.²

Whatever may be the history of the MSS which give us the biography of the *socia* of Francis, if one takes up and studies, as it stands, the text of the Bollandists, some important conclusions are reached. In it, as we have said, remain, vivid and fresh, indications of the original familiarity between *Poveri* and *Povere*, in striking contrast with the traditional rules of the cloister, that were inspired if not by hatred of woman, at any rate by fear of one who was looked upon as sure ally of the devil. The biographer, however, prudently takes pains to reduce to moderate limits the reciprocal visits of the two Saints, in order to avoid unkind public gossip.³ Yet the influence exercised by Francis on the career of the noble maiden, was too great to permit that little or nothing should be said. Courageous and sure of her faith, the virgin friend of Poverty ran to the Porziuncula, and subsequently made her home in that church of Saint Damian which was associated with the conversion of Saint Francis.⁴

¹ *Sabatier*, Speculum LXXV; *Götz*, 240 seqq.

² Acta cit. n. 10 (756). A passage of the Second Life of Celano is referred to. I, 6; *Rosedale*, 13.

³ No. 5, 6, 7; (755-6).

⁴ No. 8-10 (755-6).

Strangely enough, Innocent III who had dealt in such surly fashion with the company of the "Poor Men", signs with a cheerful smile the Brief of the privilege of the female Order.¹

In the biography of the Mother of the Poor Clares, and also in the *Actus* and the *Fioretti* many marvellous events are, naturally, related. If we work back to the sources which directly inspired them—since the legend of Saint Clare forms part of the larger cycle of the legend of Saint Francis—we shall succeed not only in understanding the motive of the man who repeated those miracles in connexion with his heroine, but in adding also a fresh element of criticism to those which we have collected so far.

The Legend of Saint Clare preserves vivid reminiscences of the Dialogues of Saint Gregory and of the Life of Saint Radegunda. The two themes which principally figure in it are the exaltation of the virtues of Saint Clare, which correspond to those of Saint Francis, and the more delicate subject of their familiar intercourse with one another.

Poverty, humility, and the most fervent devotion to the holy Eucharist: these are the notes on which the biographer specially dwells. Saint Radegunda sweeps the monastery, not disdaining the most servile offices within the cloister, she washes and kisses the feet of the poor, and cleanses the sores of the diseased: so too does the Virgin Saint of Assisi;² and in order that Francis may not be inferior

¹ No. 14 (755-6).

² MG. SS. antiquiss. IV, 2. *Ven. Fortun. Vita s. Radeg. c. 23, 24 (44-5)* e MG. SS. merov. II, 372; I, c. 23, 24. Ergo.... scopans monasterii plateas.... quidquid erat foedum purgans, et ante sarcinans quod aliis horret videre, non abhorrebat evehere.... ferens foetores.... credebat se minorem sibi, si se non nobilitaret vilitate servitii.... Humilitate sanctissima pedes lavans et osculans. Cfr. V. s. Clarae No. 12 (752): suo illo nobili spiritu, nec sordida fugiens, nec foetida perhorrescens.

in humility to his spiritual sister, the Speculum is careful to represent him in the act of sweeping out churches.¹

The story of the intercourse between the two saints offered more serious difficulties. Salimbene heard it said often that the Minorites were fond of seeing ladies;² and certainly the saying was a natural consequence of the old state of things. In the heretical world, or at any rate within the sphere of its influence, the old ascetic ideal and the cult of virginity removed, as in the primitive Christian communities, every motive of impurity from the relations between "Brethren" and "Sisters". Only the unkind imagination of the orthodox was apt to revive against the heretics those old charges brought by the pagans against the first followers of Jesus. With the approval of the two Rules the rigid claims of the monastic spirit made themselves felt, and certain familiarities were no longer allowed. Traces of such a change are to be noted in the Legend of Saint Clare. When the papal injunction aimed at prohibiting the customary visits of the *frati* to the *suore*, this meekest of Saints all but rebelled against the Pontiff, as though she felt that the sweet fraternity of life and thought had been outraged by the intrusion of an unworthy suspicion.³

The biographer (or possibly, some later editor of the Life of Saint Clare), describes the banquet of SS. Francis and Clare at Saint Mary of the Angels, with many re-

¹ Spec. c. 56, 57: Coepit (ecclesiam) scopare humiliter et mundare.

Sabatier (*op. cit.* 105 n. 1) says that from the story of the conversion of John (of which we shall speak further on; cfr. II Vita III, 120) Celano, *embarrassé pour montrer s. François balayant les églises*, has suppressed this particular, considering it lacking in dignity.

² Chr. 214.

³ Vita s. Clarae, No. 37 (762).

miniscences of the Gregorian Dialogues. In those Dialogues one reads that Saint Benedict went to visit his sister, who had been dedicated to God from her earliest infancy. Short is the day to those devoted souls; nightfall surprises Benedict and Scholastica still at table and ever in ecstasy. But the Saint may not pass the night outside his cloister, and his sister tries in vain to keep him with her. Opportunely a sudden storm prevents Benedict's return to the monastery; Scholastica is contented—and the Rule is saved. Hence the patriarch of the Minorites may sup with his "spiritual sister".¹

Again, in the *Speculum* there is a vivid reflexion of the old Franciscan spirit, impatient of monkish propriety and circumspection. Francis desires, before his death, to see Madonna Jacopa dei Settesogli once more; and he writes to her. The Brethren hesitate to let a lady in, but the Saint cuts short all doubts with the words: "The Rule which excludes women must not be observed in the case of one whom so great faith and devotion have caused to come to me from such distant parts".² Satan is no longer to be dreaded in woman's piety. The light of the sun, the beauty of flowers, the consolation of a woman's smile—none of these are banished from the religion of Francis.³

Saint Clare—at any rate in her Legend—preserves the saintly dignity of the "Poor Sister" of ancient days. To

¹ Vita cit. No. 43-45 (762-3); Fior. No. 15; Actus, No. 15. Cfr. *Dial.* II, 33. Not even Gregory is original. The great saints often have a sister a nun.: *Migne*, LXXIII, 759, 760-1; cfr. 248.

² Spec. c. 112. Cfr. Actus, No. 18, ed. Sabatier 62 n. 2. *Miracula*, ed. *Rosedale*, 124-6.

³ Saint Dominic, on the contrary, exhorts the Brethren to be on their guard against the perils of the *juvenculae foeminae*: SS. Ord. Praed. *Jord.* c. 40; I, 40.

the Pope's entreaty that she will accept some earthly possessions she replies by proudly clinging to her evangelic faith.¹ A fugitive suggestion of heretical "Communion" flashes out in one episode of her life. The Pope enjoins her to bless the bread on the table: it is the supreme authority of the Church, which all but yields the poor virgin the august privilege of consecrating the Eucharist. That sign of the Cross which, by the virtue of Saint Clare, works so many miracles, is a repetition of that used by the monk Martirius of the Valerian province. Clare makes the sign at a distance, and the cross impresses itself on the bread.² Another miracle—that of the oil that refills the vessel, is copied from the Dialogues of Gregory I.³ The clever selection of the miracles, and their signification, illuminate for us many another narrative that would otherwise be drily historical.

¹ Vita s. Clarae, No. 14, (756). The Pope goes so far as to offer to release her from the vow of poverty, and speaks to her of the necessities of life, in opposition to the ideal. Here one is reminded of the Bull *Quo elongati*, which bends the Rule of the Minorites to meet the stern exigencies of daily life.

² Vita cit. No. 43-5 (763). Cfr. *Greg. M. Dial.* I, 11. The miracle is repeated (with other circumstances) in the Vita S. Sym. Sali, Acta SS. II Jul. 164.

³ Dial. II, 29.

CHAPTER IV

THE SECOND LIFE OF THOMAS OF CELANO: THE REAL 'SPECULUM PERFECTIONIS'.

IT will not be necessary to repeat the history of the 'Second Life' of Saint Francis, the child of the biographer's old age. What has been done already is sufficient for our purpose, and further researches will remove the obscurity which still lingers over certain points connected with it.¹ Meanwhile, however, we may at once observe that to call the work in question "Second Life" is a mode of expression that may lead to misunderstanding. The writer entitled his book: "*Memoriale in desiderio animae de gestis et verbis sanctissimi patris nostri Francisci*";² and *Memoriale* has a signification quite precise, which diligent study will determine with certainty. In the prologue is recorded the decision of the General Chapter of 1244 which entrusted the task of writing the deeds and words of the Saint "to him who, more than any other had opportunities of knowing Francis, in virtue of constant intercourse and mutual familiarity". And the vote of the Chapter had its fulfilment about the year 1247 with the

¹ Ehrle, n Zeitschr. für kath. Theol. VII, 393 seqq. Götz, 88 seqq. Müller, Anfänge 175 seqq. Sabatier, Vie LXXIII seqq. Speculum CXVI seqq. Voigt, l. c. 455 seqq. For the MSS., Rosedale, XXVI seqq.

² Prol. R. 8.

appearance of the work which we are now to study. The Order, after the serious vicissitudes which agitated the Franciscan brotherhood, culminating in the fall of Bro. Elias, (which left the field open for a more decisive action on the part of the Church) has recourse once more to the official biographer. And he points out the reason of this new task—the intimacy with which he had been honoured by the Saint. The Lives of the Saints, as we know, were in each case invariably written by the favourite of the hero; and so, true or untrue, this declaration of Celano was indispensable, to give greater value to the narrative.¹ To do him justice, however, we must remember that in all probability he lived for no short time in close intercourse with Francis, after his return from Germany.

He had already been honoured by a papal command to compose the first biography of the Saint; he was a man endowed with gifts of mental ability, culture and imagination; he had shewn himself obedient to Bro. Elias, to Gregory IX, to whoever was, for the time being, Minister of the Order. Such a man was not likely to be touchy or indignant at this new proposal. Rhetorician, sceptic, serene plagiarist, full of enthusiasm for his subject, he was one who knew his business and performed it with complete tranquility and self-possession. Would he have thought that even the dead ashes of his cold composition would be fanned into flame by the hot blast of zealous partizanship? It is not indignation only that produces verses; sometimes she finds them already made and presses them into her service!

¹ *Sulp. Sev. Ep. II, CV. 144-5.* Cum me indignum et non merentem unice (Martinus) diligebat. *S. Bern. Vita s. Malachiae (Op. II, 664):* Me inter speciales amicos Sanctus ille habebat etc.

The gentle figure of the "Poverello" had already disappeared twenty years back; and with it had gone the ideals rediscovered in the Gospel and in the heart of Francis. The great fire had burned down, and left little trace behind. A "monastic Order", tamed by the Church and loyal to her, but penetrating into her very fibres, the "Poveri d'Assisi" had effected a reunion between the imposing institution of monasticism and the humble ones of the earth; but they had sacrificed themselves to do so. The mystic marriage between Francis and the Lady Poverty had been followed by the nuptials of the new *religio* with the Papacy. Preachers and Minorites had henceforth an official mission. All was over.

A learned Capuchin has a quarrel with Müller, and with all those who (according to his opinion), have misinterpreted the real significance of the Franciscan Order. And formally he is right. The Franciscans do not constitute either an *Ordo monasticus* or an *Ordo heremiticus*, but simply an Order approved by the Church.¹ All this was known also to our Celano;² but it does not affect the fact that the Order, *sui generis* though it be, belongs to the category of institutions that must be called monastic. I say nothing of the prohibition of new Rules in the Fourth Lateran Council, because the Franciscan Order had already been approved before that. And as a matter of fact our Order possesses, essentially, the monastic spirit. Further,

¹ *Felder*, Op. c. 5 note.

² R. 90. De charitate. (To avoid tedious repetitions, it will be better to announce once for all that the letter R. followed by a page-number refers to the 'Second Life' according to the text of *Rosedale*. As for St. Gregory's distinction (Ep. III, 61) it is perfectly admissible: he who enters the ranks of the clergy would *mutare, non relinquere saeculum*; he who becomes a monk *omnia relinquit*.

the decadence of the old Rules is explained by the impetus of the new Franciscan Society which in its near approach to them appropriates all that they still retain of vitality.

The monastic and clerical world sees new and formidable rivals in the Franciscans. As in the days of St. Peter Damian, so also in those of Salimbene, the secular priests complain that the monks and friars are usurping the spiritual ministry which belongs of right to the parochial clergy.¹ Even canonistic terminology must yield to hard facts. Rules for the admission of novices, provincial and general ministers and chapters corresponding—these are so many items of a monastic constitution which, like a fine net, wrapped around, disciplined and corrected the once free society of Assisi. And that society was constrained to turn a more sympathetic face upon the smiles of science, in order to escape the imputation of a “blessed ignorance” such as would disqualify it for the functions which were imposed on it.² Neither the last Rule, nor the Patriarch’s “Testament”, nor even Celano’s First Life sufficed to create and maintain the spirit of the Order which had become a world-wide institution. The Life of their founder, written by Gregory the Great, was recognised by the Benedictines as being, after the Rule itself, the Book of the Order, *par excellence*.³ The didactic and moral treatises after the model of Cassian’s works; and that more unsystematic and confused group put together—not without risk of dogmatic errors—with the aid of the *Liber de Vitis*

¹ *Salimbene*, Chr. 210; *S. Pier Dam.* Op. III, 261 seqq.

² *Salimbene*, 108: Dicunt etiam quod transierunt per homines ydiotas, quando transeunt per loca fratrum minorum.

³ *S. P. Dam.* Op. II, 20: (Hom. IX ad hon. S. Bened.).

Patrum failed to correspond to the new needs.¹ Already in his first biography Thomas had written of Francis with his eye ever upon the ancient records of monasticism; and now, carrying on his former work with the fresh inspiration offered by the Chapter of 1244, with its expression of a true idea, it was not difficult to create what was required, vi:—a manual of monastic perfection, a *Speculum Perfectionis* after the ideals of Franciscanism.

Well, the Second Life of Celano is a true and proper *Speculum Perfectionis*. And so Thomas must needs draw more than ever upon Gregory the Great.² On this point we could not wish for words more explicit than those of the Prologue: *Extimo autem beatum Franciscum SPECULUM QUODDAM SANCTISSIMUM DOMINICAE SANCTITATIS ET IMAGINEM PERFECTIONIS ILLIUS: eius, inquam omnia tam verba, quam facta divinum quoddam divinitus redolent, quae si diligentem habeant inspectorem, humilemque discipulum, cito salutaribus disciplinis imbutum summae illi philosophiae reddunt acceptum.*

The monk should be a "Mirror of Perfection";³ and perfection is attained by studying the books that teach it;⁴

¹ On the *liber visionum*, a source of Caesarius of Heisterbach: Schömbach, in Sitzungsber, cit. Bd. CXXXIX, 119-20. A book called *Consuetudo heremi* is mentioned in a document in Ann. Camald. IV app. No. 218 (359); an. 218.

² In despatching his *Regula Pastoralis* to the bishop of Ravenna, Gregory I (Ep. I, 24 a) writes: *Pulchrum depinsi hominem, pictor foedus.*

³ Migne, LXXIII, 927: *Peregrinus monachus SPECULUM debet esse localibus monachis.* Cfr. Ann. Camald. IV app. No. 218 an. 1216: *Vos SPECULUM totius Tuscie....* Cfr. *Isid. Etym. XIX*, 31, 18 (ed. Lindemann 612): *Dictum autem speculum.... quod ibi contuentes (feminae) considerent speciem sui vultus, et quicquid ornamenti desse viderint adiiciant, Greg. M. Moral. II, l.: Scriptura sacra mentis oculis, quasi quoddam speculum opponitur etc.*

⁴ *Cassian. Inst. Mon. CV. 6. Prol.* The writer proposes to discourse « non de mirabilibus Dei, sed de correctione morum nostrum et consummatione VITAE PERFECTAE etc. ».

even the Minorite, therefore, has need of a book; and Thomas provides him with one calculated to meet all exigencies, a book that has had a most remarkable success. A little groping in the manual, and the origin of his matter is quickly found. I venture to say that you must close your eyes in order not to see it—a method appropriate, perhaps to ecstatic contemplators, but very odd in those who are historians by profession. With closed eyes we may have an excellent view of the things inside us, but not of those without!

The three parts of the book, harmonious in its subdivisions, are inspired by well-known themes. It begins with the "example" of the Saint's conversion and the history of the Order; next follow further "examples" of the gifts and graces of the Patriarch, on which all—from the novice to the General Minister—should model their own conduct. The Saint's death itself is an "example" of a good end; and that solemn moment is coldly exploited by didactic rhetoric, on the principle that the word of the dying man is specially weighty and memorable, as gathering up in a single phrase the secret of a pious existence. This is why Celano repeats, with variations, the scene of the death of Francis.¹

If only the book were as faithful to fact as it is loyal to the idea which animates it throughout! Often, if not always, the very style pulls itself together, as it were, and the pompous solemnity of the First Life gives place to a simplicity less involved alike in diction and in thought. But as soon as the writer has made himself master of the reader's

¹ Compare the lengthy sermon uttered by the dying S. Severinus, ed. cit. c. 43 (49-50) and R. 104.

mind and has allured him, so to speak, with the bait of a narrative of things true or plausible, by a clever sleight-of-hand he substitutes for Francis a puppet from the familiar oriental *repertoire*. We are in the Chapter of Temptations and I will not attempt to resist them!

Naked amid the snow the Saint quenches the flames of impure desire: then he forms of the white material seven figures that represent wife, children and servants. It is the family that he has granted to his disconsolate solitude. He says to himself: "Hasten to clothe them, for, as thou seest they are dying of cold! If the cares of a family prove so heavy for thee, serve God alone, and thou shalt have neither care nor anxiety". Celano is a man of honour. He adds that one of the "spiritual" brethren, intent on prayer saw all, by the bright light of the moon that flooded the garden, but refrained from revealing it to any one during Francis' life-time. He had promised the Saint to be silent, and kept his word. Alas! the poor "spiritual brother" was the victim of a strange illusion. He read a book—and thought he saw Saint Francis in a garden! It was the moon, no doubt that deceived him. It was clay not snow in which the "potter" wrought to reduce the rebellious flesh by his artistic exertions.¹

The beginning and the end of the manual of perfection preserve, up to a certain point, the narrative form; but in the body of the book the life of Francis is decomposed into a series of pictures corresponding to the various virtues presented for imitation. True even when cut up into fragments the figure does not cease to coruscate; but its

¹ R. 64 and *Migne*, LXXIII, 747.

lightnings, which might else be dangerous, are tempered by monastic prudence.¹

Thomas describes the immense activity of his hero. Every word the Saint utters is a wise admonition, every act is a gem of teaching. From Bari to Alessandria, from the noblest cities of Italy to its obscurest villages he passes, preaching and blessing. He composes discord, he corrects and sanctifies, he sings praises to God continually, without ceasing. Diseases rack his frame; he subdues them by the serenity of his spirit. On his death-bed he reserves his last smile of satisfaction for the "loan" of a wretched garment which enables him to escape from the odious conception of "property": and so the dream of heaven brought down to earth, which had flashed across his mind as across the ardent fancy of Chrysostom, finds its climax... in the terms of a *contract*!² As one reads and reads over again the *Memoriale* of Celano a new impression forces itself upon one. No! it is not always Francis who stands before us. He who peers craftily into the poor heart of the novice to discern the temptations of youth not yet resigned to the denial of love; he who, like an old anchorite curbs rigidly the impulses of human passion and stands immoveable during the recitation of the psalter³ this is not the friend of the flowers and of the sun; it is a crabbed abbot, escaped from his own ruined cloister and sum-

¹ Cfr. R. 31; II, 14: The Saint is described almost as a recluse who hates the light and the world.

² R. 107 III, 139. Cfr. Pöhlmann, *Gesch. des antiken Kommunismus und Sozialismus* 1901: II, 617.

³ R. III, 39. Spec. perf. c. 94 (186): *nolebat muro, vel parieti, dum psalleret, adhaerere.... sed semper erectus.* Migne, LXXIII, 258. V. Pach. c. 14: *Non iacens somnum capiebat noctibus, sed in medio cellulae suae residens, adeo ut nec dorsum saltem parieti, pro substitutione reclinaret.*

moned to teach, in the blessed Porziuncula the difficult art of ruling soul and body.

What a wealth of cleverness and of scepticism are to be found in this book, which is a *chef d'oeuvre*—possibly the *chef d'oeuvre* of monastic imposture in the thirteenth century—entwined like clinging ivy round the little plant of Assisi! What are the innocent literary frauds of the learned Hincmar in comparison with these of Celano?¹

The manual must needs correspond to its lofty purpose, certain images out of the First Life must disappear—they were obsolete survivals. The memories of the Saint's gay youth, those of Bro. Elias; the fresh idyll of the joyous band on its way back from Rome; the sharp vivacity of certain expressions, and the calm indifference to the flatteries of vain erudition.

In the presence of the *Povere Donne d'Assisi* it was prudent that the Saint should now droop his eyes, in order that novices should not get into the habit of lifting theirs too high, but should cultivate a certain self-restraint. In the first Legend there stood out the figure of a beauteous virgin, sketched with masterly swiftmess, free from all rhetorical rubbish with which Celano's clever art might have overlaid it. It is the figure of "Evangelic Poverty". Chastely secure in her absolute nakedness, she flashed with sparkling light. In 1230 a mantle was thrown over her naked limbs—the mantle of the Bull "*Quo elongati*":² and this vesture cried out to be embroidered with subtle juridical and canonical conceptions.

Men and things were changing; but there remained the

¹ Vita S. Remigii, in MG. SS. merov. III, 261 seqq.

² *Sbaralea*, Bull. franc. I 68. No. 56.

fundamental compact of the Order with Rome, dominating and dominated by the mighty family. Upon the rough and ingenuous group of the *Socii* of Assisi had arisen an imposing organisation that knew no bounds either of political dominions or of ecclesiastical jealousies. It was necessary to point out with the utmost clearness to this world the virtue of obedience to the Church, the charity of its government, and the rules of the *modus vivendi* with it. Broad as Franciscan thought, which is derived from the Gospel; lively and various as the new conditions; proud, yet loyal to Rome, as the Saint's own compact:—such must be the great commentary on the Rule which the Pope, with the interpretative skill of a *glossator*, was to reconcile with the practice of the Franciscan's life. This commentary, which is identical with the "Mirror of Perfection" of the institution and of the individual, was asked and was obtained from Thomas of Celano. He was in a position to write it.

In the First Life, Celano gave to the Saint the physiognomy he was enjoined to give; in the second he described the life of the Order and of the individual Friar according to rules still more rigid.

Such is the character of the book: Francis is no longer its only hero. The brilliant figure depicted is that of the perfection of the Order.¹ If the desired perfection is to be found actually in the Saint, we can believe that Thomas takes it from the life; if it is not there, he takes it from elsewhere, and from a source—we may suggest—that is

¹ Prol. Dehinc vero exprimere intendimus et vigilantī studio declarare, quae s. Patris tam in se, quam in suis, fuerit voluntas bona, beneplacens et PERFECTA in omni exercitio disciplinae coelestis et SUMMAE PERFECTIŌNIS studio, quod semper habuit apud Deum.... et apud homines in *exemplis*. — Greg. M. In Job praefatio I, 1; n. 4, c. 2.: Adhibita sunt *praecepta*.... adiunguntur *exempla*.

not necessarily historical. If it is but too true that "reasoning makes no wrinkles", it is true also of the proofs which we mean presently to adduce.

We said above that the first chapter of the *Speculum* had to be that on conversion; and as a matter of fact conversion is the subject that the professional writers of treatises on monasticism make it a rule to develop first.¹ The conversion is prepared for, or shadowed forth, in the very opening words: *Franciscus . . . cui divina providentia hoc vocabulum indidit, ut et singulari et insueto nomine opinio ministerii eius, toti innotesceret orbi, a matre propria Johannes vocatus fuit, cum de filio irae, ex aqua et Spiritu sancto renascens, gratiae filius est effectus.*² It is his mother, a new Elisabeth, who foresees the sanctity of her son, on whom presently smiles the certitude of being worshipped upon the altars.³ The Saint's name is changed. Called by his mother at the font Giovanni, i. e., servant and "friend" of the Most High, he received from Divine Providence the other "strange and unusual" name of Francesco. "When God gives or changes a man's name, it is an indication of saintly life"—such is the teaching which the good disciple Thomas of Celano draws from his master Hincmar!⁴

Probably, according to a custom of which there are very numerous examples in the thirteenth century, the name Fran-

¹ *Heisterbach*, I, I De convers. (*Strange* I, 3 seqq.); *Cassian*.

² The biblical phrase reappears in *Cassian*. Conl. Mon. III, 7; CV. 78.

³ R. I (I, I): *Adhuc sanctus adorabor per seculum totum*, i. e. for ever. How is such a thought to be reconciled with Franciscan humility? Celano is the victim of his own excellent memory; St. Ambrose also as a child makes them kiss his hand in anticipation of the episcopal dignity. *Paulini*, Vita s. Ambrosii c. 4: *Dicens et sibi id . . . fieri oportere, si quidem episcopum se futurum.*

⁴ Vita Rem. I. c. 261. Cfr. *Jerem.* I, 5.

ciscus was added afterwards to the baptismal name. This would explain the "work of Providence". But we must not neglect to point out that Celano was inaccurate in affirming that the name Francesco was "stange and unusual". In Tuscan documents of the twelfth century we find *Fran-cischo* and *Franzus*;¹ that proves the relative frequency of the name.

These many presages of future spiritual greatness no longer harmonised with the storms of his early youth. His mother, indeed, like Monica, asks, *quasi divino instructa oraculo*: "What shall my son be?" But it is not because she is anxious about him; only to console herself with her own reply: "*Meritorum gratia, Dei filium ipsum noveritis affuturum*". Francis grew up courteous and well-bred; "he had not the appearance of having sprung from the family which claimed him". So says Celano, meaning no insult, of course, to the irreproachable mother, but to Bernardone. Had the biographer still in mind the portrait which Saint Gregory paints in his *Dialogues*?—The father who accustoms his son to blasphemy opens the gates of Hell to his offspring. The responsibility of the slight moral deviations—if such there were—of the Saint's youth, lies always at the door of his father, who imports, perchance with French merchandise, heretical blasphemies also. The pious compassion of Francis flows forth unhindered as soon as he has shaken off the paternal shackles; in his first moments of emancipation he bestows, not merely half a cloak but an entire vesture, and a very rich one, upon a poor man. Saint Martin himself has been surpassed! By

¹ *Davidsohn*, *Forschungen zur Geschichte von Florenz* 1900; II, 160. See also *Tarducci*, *Vita di s. Francesco*, (1904); 6 (note 12), who collects other instances.

a wonderful vision God transforms the murky smoke of military glory that for a short time darkened the hero's mind. The conversion of the soldier of fortune is more rapid than that of the Roman Legionary had been. "Return to thy country", is the Lord's injunction: and Francis returns, an obedient child of God.

In his own city, his former companions, "children of Babylon", attempt to seduce him back to perdition; but in vain. All they can win from him is a farewell banquet. He is changed. He proceeds to climb the steep mountain of the new life.¹

Who can trace out seriously and historically, in the brilliant artistic design of the First and the Second Life, that foundation of truth which seems to stand out so clearly to the modern biographers of the Saint?

Assisi and Guido's episcopal palace had been, according to the former narrative, the witnesses of the great act of Francis' conversion; but evidently that scene was now considered too humble for so great a Saint as the Patriarch of the Franciscans. The Second Life transfers the scene to Rome, where it is enacted in front of the Apostle's tomb and in the sight of all Christendom. For love of God the pilgrim of Assisi lays aside his own elegant vesture, and donning the garb of a beggar outside the Church of Saint Peter, sits down and eats ravenously, confused among the crowd of mendicants.² Great is the solemnity of the episode, which has found a warm welcome in the later legend and in the artistic pages of Sabatier.³ This is the psychological moment of the conversion. All that is lacking

¹ R. 12, 13 (I, 3).

² R. 12; (I, 4).

³ Vie de s. François, 28.

is an identification of the Saint's impetuous zeal with a profound obsequiousness to the majesty of the Roman Church. And for this very reason Francis is made to enter the Church and approach the altar of the Apostle. The piety of the faithful is meagre; the scanty oblations rarely give a ring of metal upon the plate which at once collects and denounces them. Then the pilgrim casts in money by handfuls, and remembers even the humblest ecclesiastical officials.³

The man who was to assume an apostolic mission, from the very beginning was filled with the catholic faith in all its integrity and with reverence for the ministers and the things of God. Saint Francis reconciles Poverty with the Church. The outlines of the poor priest of Saint Damian's and of the Bishop of Assisi himself¹ now grow pale and

³ I observe that Celano, like our friend Homer, is subject to occasional fits of abstraction. Francis changes his rich robes for the beggar's rags; it seems, however that he did not forget to remove his purse, but put it into the pocket (if there was one) of the tattered vesture he had donned! As a matter of fact the Saint is represented as entering the church after his change of clothes, and, when there, could not have thrown all that money down before the altar of St. Peter, if he had not been careful to keep hold of it at the moment of his heroic act. It were more dramatic and more logical to invert the order of the two incidents.

¹ In the second narrative there comes out more clearly the part played by the bishop of Assisi in the conflict between father and son. Francis, cursed by his father (Salimbene relates in very similar language the story of his own conversion and his father's wrath: Chr. 13) gets himself blessed by a simple and holy man of the people, and *restores to his father the money which he had intended to spend for the rebuilding of the Church, and that by the advice of the bishop of his city, a man of deep piety, on the ground that it would not be lawful to devote to sacred uses wealth that had been ill-gotten*. Thereupon the Saint, reciting the *Pater noster*, and declaring himself son of God and not of Bernardone, restores to the latter not only the money in question but also the clothes he has on; and concludes: "*nudus igitur ad Dominum pergam*" (R. 14-15; I, 7). An historian would say that with this rite of stripping himself Francis performed his part of the *forisfamiliatio*; that is to say, detaching himself from his family, he restores to the parental authority that which he (having become extraneous to it) could no longer keep back. It is probable that the touches by which the old narrative is modified were suggested to Celano by the necessity—or

dim. Woe to this last if he approach without due caution the One whom he gathered naked into his arms! His indiscretion shall cost him his voice!¹

Thomas gives proofs of a most excellent memory. After so many years he recalls a page of the namesake of his provincial minister Caesarius. In Germany, as elsewhere, the canons of good family went about in magnificent clothing, and were regarded with suspicion by the friars whenever they knocked for admission to the convents. The noble canon Philip recognised the danger and took measures to avoid it. "*Scholas deseruit, et cum esset adolescens delicatus, bonisque vestibibus indutus, pauperi scholari sibi occurrenti illas dedit, vilia illius vestimenta reinduens*".² So writes Caesarius of Heisterbach: Celano copies him with alterations, leaving however the two words *vestimenta* and *delicata* as indications of his plagiarism. And when once these German records came crowding into the rhetorician's mind, how could he pass over the ever-memorable figure of the canon Ensfrid,³ who invited to his table poor men with ulcerous hands, holding out his own bowl to them that they might eat with him?⁴ There was no necessity to go as far as Rome to see the beggars at the church doors; Thomas had read over and over again in

the opportunity—of a nearer approach to the truth which had been rudely violated by the scene as described in the First Life in terms of a monastic *Abrenuntiatio*.

¹ R. 55; (III, 43).

² I, 38; *Strange* I, 467.

³ Kaufmann, Caesarius v. Heisterbach, 1850; 22-23; But neither is Caesarius original. Ensfrid liberates children from a master who did more teaching with his fist than with his tongue (VI, 5), so does S. Simeon Stultus: Acta SS. T. Jul. 156. Perhaps there was a Latin version of the Life of S. Simeon unknown to the Bollandist.

⁴ VI, 5. (I, 350). Cfr. *Greg. M. Dial.* I, 9.

the "Lives of the Fathers": "*In porticu.... ecclesiae iacet multitudo mancorum*".¹ That was the fertile sowing-plot for good works. No one will doubt that Francis did really give loving consolation to the miserable and leprous; indeed it is his infinite pity that excites the artist of Celano to give his hero the classical attitudes of the conventional friend of the poor. Francis could not have shewn himself inferior to an aristocratic German canon!

We may believe in the virtues of the Saint: but the words of an incorrigible plagiarist fail to move us. A short and unimportant chapter brings back summarily to mind the episodes of the temptation of Saint Francis and his tenderness towards lepers;² but Thomas is in a great hurry to describe the miracle "unheard of for centuries past". In the ruined and deserted church of Saint Damian, a painted Crucifix speaks to the Saint: "Francis, go and repair My house, which, as thou seest, is all in ruins". "Was a greater portent ever heard of?" exclaims Celano triumphantly—just as Sulpicius Severus exclaims when he proves that for miraculous virtues, Saint Martin surpasses all the anchorites of the Thebaid.³ At the foot of the Crucified the Saint weeps over the Passion of the true God *and true Man*, who shall make him worthy to bear His wounds. This theme is already familiar to us, but it is necessary to subjoin one or two examples, to shew that the miracle is very far from being "unheard of".

¹ Cfr. S. John. V. 3. *Migne*, LXXIII, 1197. (Hist. Laus.) These clients of the Saints are called *matricularii*; as being inscribed in the registers of the Church and supported by the offerings of the faithful; cfr. *Greg. Tur.* De virt. S. Iuliani, c. 38; De virt. S. Martini, I, 31; II, 22; Hist. Franc. VII, 29. *Greg. M.* Ep. III, 41, 42 (MG. 200-1 note 1).

² R. 12, 13; (I, 5). Cfr. *Greg. M.* Hom. in Evang. II, 39; n. 10.

³ Dial. II, 5; CV. 186.

In the silence and mystic twilight of the cloister the pain-racked image of Jesus upon the cross loses the rigidity of dead matter and quivers like a living thing. The convulsed lips tremble, and speak to Bro. Corrado as he contemplates the eternal spectacle of the great Martyrdom: "See, Corrado, how much I have suffered for thee!"¹ Bro. Daniel, again, fixes an undiverted gaze upon the Crucifix, and the Crucifix, moved by such devotion, addresses to him a divine word of kindness: "Ask all that thou wilt!" The grace requested and obtained is that of never thinking on the Passion with dry eyes.² If a monk is consumed with the feverish desire for martyrdom, the hands of Christ free themselves from the bloodstained nails and embrace the candidate for that glorious death;³ if a nun is tormented by Satan, Jesus clasps the poor victim of temptation to His heart, and heals her once for all.⁴

He who is disposed to believe Thomas of Celano, cannot deny credence to Caesarius of Heisterbach. Strange are the vicissitudes of the legend of Saint Francis!

It has come down to us in its actual form partly because Thomas sojourned in Germany long enough to become acquainted with the works of that narrator of miracles, the delight of all the German monasteries, the incomparable artist who is not known or studied to day as he merits. But for the German mission of 1221, it is probable that the Franciscan Legend would have assumed a very different shape. As a result of the diffusion of the Minorites throughout the world, the form of the Patriarch came to

¹ *Caes.* VIII, 20 (*Strange* II, 98).

² *Caes.* VIII, 11 (II, 90); cfr. VIII, 10 (II, 89).

³ *Caes.* VIII, 16 (II, 94).

⁴ *Caes.* VIII, 20 (II, 98).

be enriched with traits drawn from the most celebrated stories in vogue in each different country: and thus the physiognomy of the seraphic man became familiar to the whole world.

The words of the Crucifix of Saint Damian's have the other miracle of the Stigmata as their logical consequence. There was therefore no necessity to repeat the narrative of visions. The Stigmata, and the pains taken by the Saint to conceal those marks of Divine favour now come to be simply an example of his *humility*, and afford a convenient occasion for taking away from certain of the "Companions" the wish to boast of having seen the mystic wounds.¹

In the Preface to the "Manual" there was only room for certain subjects exquisitely selected and developed: Saint Francis intent on the restoration of Saint Damian's the conversion of Saint Bernard, the conversation with Innocent III, the establishment of the religious capital of the Order at the Porziuncula—"caput omnium Sanctorum" and "*speculum religionis*"—and, finally, the first acts of the pious government of the great family and the solemn approbation of the Rule in the days of Honorius. Among the companions who attach themselves to the Saint as soon as he has escaped from the persecutions of his father and brother after the flesh, the most prominent place is given to the figure of Bernard, follower, according to Divine prophecy, of Francis and Poverty.²

The episode (among those collected later in the *Actus*),³

¹ R. 71-3 De occultatione stigmatum; the chapter precedes that de *humilitate*.

² R. 16 (I, 10). R. 33 (II, 17).

³ Actus No. 1 § 10 seqq. Fior. No. 2. Cfr. S. Aug. Confess. VIII, 12: *Migne*, LXXIII, 127.

is repeated by Celano in the place where he records the conversion of the priest Silvestro, the miserly vendor of stones that are to become the House of God.¹

It seems to me that the symbolism (which is the characteristic disease of those days) in this place at least lends transparency to the fact. Avarice and simony, like a malignant cancer, are ruining the Church; but Francis does not wash only the poor lepers, he cleanses also impure priests. The priest Silvestro sells to the Saint the stones with which he is to restore the building which Innocent sees crumbling down and supported only by the simple and despised man of Assisi.² We see nothing of the proud plant that scarcely deigns to bend down its branches before the *Poverello*, as it is described in the first, timid Legend. The haughty tree has become a trembling reed. In 1229 Celano shews us Francis almost terrified by the majesty of the Pope; here on the other hand, God announces to the Pope the mission of His servant, as the mission of the humble Aequitius had been announced to Symmachus.

Not many years have gone by since the meeting of the learned Lotario with the simple Saint of Umbria: yet the "Memoriale"—allowing for Celano's exaggeration—indicates most surprisingly, in its changed language, the serious humiliations inflicted by the Franciscan Society upon the Papacy and the secular clergy. On his entrance into the Order, the novice learnt from Thomas' book that one must shew obedience to the Church and the Pope;³ but at the

¹ R. 60 (II, 54).

² R. 16-18 (I, 11). It seems as though Innocent were disturbed by other people's visions: Reg. II No. 405.

³ R. 20-1 (I, 16, 17). Spec. c. 78: *Quod voluit religionem semper esse*

same time he was made aware that without Saint Francis—and, still more, without the Franciscans—the Church would not have had left to her one stone upon another. The sins of the unworthy ministers had justly cancelled the promises of God. So there remains still in a rhetorician who is the Popes' whole-hearted and devoted servant, the Franciscan germ of heresy.

The work of Celano gives us a repetition of the classical type of monastic institutions, and never diverges from the spirit of conventional monasticism.¹ And hence it is that the whole body of the work is distributed under a number of "Examples" corresponding in number to the number of the virtues proper to the perfect life of the Religious. The dogmatic definition of each virtue is followed by the narrative of those acts or occurrences that are calculated to illustrate best, and impress most strongly on the mind, the intimate nature of the moral endowment which the monk needs if he is to approach the great Model. We may take, for our own example, the chapter on *Humility*. The heading says: *Sub hoc titulo continetur humilitas sancti in habitu, sensu et moribus, et contra proprium sensum.*² First of all humility, which is *omnium virtutum custos et decor*, is defined as being the foundation

sub protectione et correctione ecclesiae romanae. (Cfr. Salimbene, 119: *Nam summis Pontificibus obediendum est.* Vita b. Aegid. in Acta SS. Apr. T. III, 225: *O Sancta mater Ecclesia Romana, nos insipientes et miseri non cognoscimus te, neque bonitatem tuam. Tu doces viam salutis, paras et ostendis nobis viam, per quam si quis pergit - ascendit ad caelestem gloriam.* There was no rebellion in them!

¹ St. Dominic might have studied the *Collationes patrum* (SS. Ord. Praed. Jord. c. 7. l. 4); but St. Francis even if he had been to school with the priests of S. Giorgio (l. Vita 23; *Bonav.* 219) would not have understood such a book. Celano no doubt undertook this work on his behalf!

² R. 5, 73 seqq.

of the monastic life.¹ This definition—we may remark at once, for the benefit of those who care to know—is drawn in substance from Gregory the Great.² If the Patriarch is humility itself in all his actions, it is clear that after dealing lightly with characteristic aspects of that supreme virtue as they appeared in the Saint, Thomas should demonstrate in what manner and degree he was, felt himself to be, and wished to be and to appear humble: how he drew salutary lessons from the very people who humiliated him and, in so doing, involuntarily lifted him higher than ever. So anecdote alternates with teaching, and the lesson becomes less trying. One among many of such little stories *à propos* of humility is related by Celano as follows. “Once upon a time the Saint had to preach at Terni. The bishop presented him to the congregation with fair words, and when the sermon was ended he said: ‘At the last hour God hath willed to enlighten his Church, sending this beggarly fellow, ill-conditioned, simple and ignorant (*pau-perculus, despectus, simplex et illicteratus*). And therefore we give thanks to the Lord who granteth not such boons to all the nations’.³ There is no need to record the answer of the great preacher to the discourteous bishop. The subject of the simplicity of Franciscan speech fitted in very

¹ Non discernebatur Dei princeps (I) quod praelatus esset, nisi hac clarissima gemma, quia, inter minores, minimus aderat. Haec virtus, hic titulus, hoc insigne generalem indicabat esse ministrum. In the so-called *Speculum* (c. 78) there is but a miserable paraphrase of these conceits, mixed up with reminiscences of other passages of Celano.

² Moral. XVIII, in c. 33 Job; n. 24: Humilitatem, quae magistra est omnium materque virtutis. In Evang. I, 7 n. 4: Scientia - virtus est, humilitas etiam *custos* virtutis. Cfr. *Cassian.* Inst. IV, 29; CV. 68 Christi humilitas quae est vera nobilitas. *Migne*, LXXIII, 785; Omnis labor monachi, sine humilitate, vanus est. Humilitas enim praecursor (*sic*) est charitatis etc.

³ R. 74; (III, 73).

well with that of humility; and Celano, who lacks neither spirit nor clever art, makes this his opportunity of celebrating those triumphs of the Saint that gave so much annoyance to the clergy. The clergy might indeed be, technically, learned; but they had forgotten the reason why the *populares sermones* of Saint Ambrose had been so successful.¹ In the Bull of Canonization of the Saint—that unfortunate piece of official rhetoric—there is mention of the “simple” words of the new Samson who, armed with the famous “jaw-bone of an ass” triumphed over the enemy like the Israelite hero. From the jaw-bone there issued afterwards a copious stream of water which washed many a stain and refreshed the parched and exhausted meadows of the Faith. If we were not dealing with a simitudo of Saint Gregory’s derived allegorically from the story in the Bible, one might have suspected that the rhetorician of the Curia really desired, with scanty reverence for the new Saint, to hint at the ignorance of the man who had no need of schooling in order to thrill the crowds with his burning phrases.²

Within the restricted circle of such facts as, in all probability, are but little removed from the truth, Thomas of Celano deserves credence, and his work, in certain points (of course with the greatest caution) acquires also a little of the dignity of history. Yet the temptation to add example

¹ *S. August. Confess.* VI, 4; CV. 119.

² *Sbaralea*, Bull. Franc. I No. 25 a. 1228: *Praedicatione siquidem simplici, nullis verborum persuasibilium humanae sapientiae coloribus adornata.* Here is the Gregorian allegory: (Moral. XIII; in c. 16 Job; n. 15): *Maxilla quippe Ecclesiae, sancti praedicatores sunt.... Hinc est etiam quod Samson maxillam asini tenuit et hostes peremit.... Et maxilla in terram proiecta, postmodum aquas fudit.* Cfr. *Iud.* XV, 16-19. It is true also that God “aperuit os asinae et locuta est”: *Num.* XXII, 28; see further *Greg. M. Ep.* V, 53 a; MG. 355.

to example makes him trip up occasionally in his lying.¹ Then, when he has exhausted the series of true anecdotes he gracefully adapts to his purpose whatsoever his memory suggests. And so he teaches also to those who shall come after him the secret of amplification and of plagiarism.

Let us pause for a moment longer in the congenial realm of Humility which borders on that of Prophecy, and let Celano speak.² He relates, then, how Saint Francis, when he returned from his mission beyond the sea, had with him Bro. Leonard of Assisi. They were both tired to death. The Saint, to rest himself a little, rode upon a donkey and Leonard followed on foot. Even saints are human, and Bro. Leonard could not help thinking: "My ancestors would not have deigned to associate with his³... yet look at him! He on the donkey, and I, as driver, on foot!" Then Francis dismounts and says: "Nay, brother; it is not seemly that I should be riding upon the ass, and thou who in the world wast nobler and more powerful than I shouldst follow me on foot". Astounded

¹ The same ill-fortune attaches also to the Dominican writers. A little of Caesarius and a great deal of Gregory the great give life to the little story that we read in the legend of the bishop of Orvieto (SS. Ord. Praed. I, 33; cfr. *Greg. M. Dial.* II, 27 and *Caes.* XI, 35; *Strange*, II, 297); and the customary *dracones* that pursue such of the Preaching Friars as are not quite sure of themselves, are undoubtedly Gregorian (SS. cit. l. c. 7 and *Dial.* II, 25). The good *Pas-savanti*, who had not the task of composing a saint's Life, in his *Specchio della vera penitenza*, honestly quotes the Lives of the Fathers, Gregory the Great, Bede, Jacques di Vitry, Caesarius of Heisterbach etc., whence he draws the material for his work. Ed. *Classici Ital.* 1808, *Cesario* 31, 105, 138, 181 etc. *Maestro Jacopo de Vettriaco*, 133 etc.). A professional man of letters might well make a study of the fortunes of Caesarius in Italy.

² R. 24 (II, 1).

³ I render into the vernacular Celano's phrase: *non ludebant de pari parentes huius et miei*.

at the unexpected answer to his thought, Leonard perceived that nothing could be concealed from the Saint, and humbly begged pardon of him. How lively is that spectre of "nobility" that crouches beneath the serge which clothes the magnificent Thomas of Celano!

Now we will pay a visit to Saint Benedict.¹ The Saint is calmly seated at table, and the lamp that illumines his cell is held by a Brother of noble family—his father was nothing less than *defensor*, and therefore a person of consideration.² A diabolical thought passes through the mind of this Brother. "Who is this whom I serve while he eats? And who am I that I should have to wait upon him?" Saint Benedict was as successful in reading hearts as was Saint Francis in a later age; but the man of Assisi shewed himself more gentle than he of Nurscia. The sweet temper of Francis is attested by the falsehood of his biographer better than by a hundred true anecdotes. Celano has copied from Gregory with short and insignificant alterations:—everything except the end of the tale. The harsh words which Saint Benedict uttered in a like case, saint Francis would never have pronounced. Celano, who knew the Saint, when he imagined him in the same circumstances as Benedict, attributed to him this placid and gentle answer, which is like a clear ray from a light very far away and studiously hidden from our view. As with honest intent we retrace the tortuous path of the biographer of Saint Francis, criticism has these pleasant surprises in store for us.

In the "Memoriale" the concatenation of themes is

¹ Dial. II, 20.

² The *defensor civitatis* has a right to the title *vir clarissimus* or *vir laudabilis* (Marini, Papiri Dipl. 113; MG. Leg. Sect. V, 1 Form. 4.

thought out and developed with consummate wisdom. This is how it presents itself, in a few broad lines:—God grants to the Saint the gift of prophecy; he reads in the souls their temptations, aids those tormented by the tempter to overcome, and unmasks hypocrites. The cult of poverty and the serene courage of the outstretched hand bring him near, in utmost tenderness, to the abandoned. From the ardour of his soul his words burst forth like flames. Satan, in the form of *accidie*, is conquered by holy industry. A serene spiritual gladness flashes in the dark eyes of Francis, humble in his glory, obedient as the least of the Minorites, sworn foe of idleness and of darkness, whose soul lies wide open to the ecstatic contemplation of the beautiful things created by God.

If some historians have failed to see their way clearly through this dry catalogue of themes and of facts, the fault is certainly not Celano's. But I cannot help bringing forward one other consideration which has again and again presented itself to my mind. In the First Legend—a phrase which may be taken to include collectively the two works of Celano, for we cannot take account of any other—it is strange that the sinister preoccupations of the other life, with the customary terrors of hell and cruel uncertainties that tormented so many believers, have not in any way found that place so generously conceded to them in the other writings of the period. There is no word of the other world, of the pains of hell or of the joys of paradise till we come to the stories of the Fioretti that are to follow. Francis says nought of them; the terrors of his time are unknown to him. Everything is alive about him. Even the stone is no inanimate thing, for his unutterable tenderness penetrates it and transforms it into a being that

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can feel and suffer.¹ God is everywhere: to behold Him it is not necessary to close one's eyes to the light of the sun and of the universe, so beautiful, so full of His glory.²

¹ R. 84: Super petras ambulat reverenter...

² R. 83: Mundum quasi peregrinationis exilium exire festinans, iuvabatur felix iste viator iis, quae in mundo sunt, *non modicum quidem*. The desire "dissolvi et esse cum Christo" (cfr. *S. Aug. Ep.* (LVIII, c. 2 Op. II, 560) is obligatory for all who aspire *ad atria Dei*.

CHAPTER V

THE CONTENT OF THE TRUE SPECULUM PERFECTIONIS

AT the risk—or rather with the certainty—of being tedious, we must repeat that the “Second Life” is a *Speculum Perfectionis*. In it the sayings and doings of the Saint are not set forth in accordance with the technical rules of historical narrative; the link of chronological sequence, which should group together and distribute the principal events, is broken. The treatment derives its unity from the design which the author has in mind—a design which, according to his opinion, corresponds to the precise aims of the book. If we remove the single “examples” from the place which they occupy and try to put them together, all the matter becomes intricate and confused in appearance. It is almost as if one should take the books of a library from the shelves where they were arranged on definite principles of classification, and pile them up in a great heap.

Since, however, the order given by Celano to the material of his book need not prejudice that to be followed by us, there will be no harm in pausing in front of the most notable pictures, without removing them from the place in which they are found by the will of the artist.

Francis has from God the spirit of prophecy, which manifests itself not only in the announcement of the ap-

proaching defeat of the crusaders, of the civil war in Perugia, and of other events of minor importance;¹ but also, in a special way, in the power of discerning the pious or wicked resolutions within the soul of young novices. Thomas is not willing that the customary shrewdness of celebrated abbots should be lacking, in so essential a matter, to his Patriarch—or to that Patriarch's successors. There is nothing of greater importance to the Order than this. On the wise choice of these tender plants depends the glorious future of the great family. The half-falsehood of attributing to Francis the sureness of vision of certain famous abbots in the preliminary examination of novices, is more than venial!

That young nobleman of Lucca who with joined hands, on bended knee, and bathed in tears, begs in vain from the Saint the boon of reception into his Order, has tried already at other convent-gates without success. He has always received the same answer—a refusal. This candidate for perfection has not the necessary *spirituality*; only capricious impulses, which evaporate as quickly as they form.² Another enthusiast for evangelic poverty, before he dons the habit, remembers that he has relatives in the world, and distributes to them, instead of to the poor, the riches which have now become useless to him.³

¹ R. 23-4 (II, 2); R. 27 (II, 6); R. 27-8 (II, 7) etc. R. 22 (II, 1). *Praedicebat multa spiritu prophetiae, occulta cordium rimabatur, noscebat absentia, praevidebat et enarrabat futura.* Greg. M. II, 12: *Coepit—vir Dei prophetiae etiam spiritu pollere, ventura praedicere, praesentibus etiam absentia nuntiare.*

² R. 29 (II, 9); Spec. 103. Cfr. Caes. I, 11: *Venit ad nos adolescens quidam canonicus - magis, ut postea rei exitus probavit, ex quadam levitate mentis, quam devotione conversionis...* Dominus G. abbas noster intelligens solam in causa esse levitatem - cum satis tamen rogaretur suscipere iuvenem, non consensit. Qui mox eadem via, qua venit, rediit. Cfr. ib. I, 9 = Vita S. Bern. I, 13 etc.

³ R. 47 (III, 25). *De renuntiantibus seculo.*

Before formulating the judgement of Francis on this point Thomas glances at the pages of some of his old books.¹ Again, a novice displays qualities the reverse of good: he eats, and does no work.² Here are two Brethren called "flies" because good for nothing. "Flies" and "devils" (according to an old phrase) come and go in the same way: and it is best to keep them at a distance.³

Certain wandering spirits there are, never satiated with sanctity: these are more than suspected. For them the Order has not perfection enough. If we keep our eyes—and the Dialogues of Gregory the Great—well open, we shall see that they have upon their back a clinging devil, in flesh and bones.⁴ Another bad sign is the neglect of confession.⁵ Woe to the novice and to the professed friar who do not immediately seek shelter from their temptations by confessing them fully to one single confessor.⁶ Without such aid the evil becomes incurable. There is not always a dragon ready to keep the monk from apostasy.⁷ The abbot must keep watch over each and all. A word from

¹ *Migne*, LXXIII, 931: *Soror mea pauper est, si do ei eleemosynam, non est sicut unus de pauperibus?... Dixit senex: Non... quia sanguis trahit te modicum.* Cfr. *Greg. M.* In *Evang. Hom.* II, 27 n. 1. The words of Francis "*nondum existi de domo et cognatione tua*" are taken from *Cassian.* *Conl.* III, 6, 7. CV. 73 seqq.

² *R.* 45 (III, 21); *Spec. c.* 24.

³ *Migne*, l. c. 803: *Muscas tamquam daemones venientes.* And Celano makes Francis give this name to money also: *muscas nempe denarios vocavit.* *R.* 45, 46 (III, 23) *Spec. c.* 22.

⁴ *R.* 22 seqq. (II, 1, 3, 4). Cfr. *Greg. M.* *Dial.* II, 4, 16, 30.

⁵ *R.* 23 (II, 1): *confessionem iniungit. Respuit ille.* Cfr. *R.* 26 (II, 5) *Cassian.* *Inst. Coen.* IV, 37. CV. 74. Cfr. *Fior.* No. 41, 43. The invitation to confession (II, 1) is perhaps to be connected with the story given by *Caesarius*, III, 24; which, in its turn, is a repetition of a passage of the *Life of S. Jo. Elemos.* *Migne*, LXXIII, 354-5.

⁶ *R.* 67 (III, 64) *Spec. c.* 106. *Diversas diversis particulas confitebatur.* Cfr. *Caes.* III, 22.

⁷ *Greg. M.* II, 25.

him shall comfort the poor victims of temptation: "The crown is only for them that strive".¹ Are words insufficient? A writing, the "*Eulogia*" of the Fathers—even a modest relic of some Saint—say a finger-nail—work miracles!²

We have removed from Celano's pages the names of persons and places and all that remains us that the writing before us is the Legend of Saint Francis: and lo! as by enchantment, the literary work is transformed into a series of tags from well-known authors, the Lives of the Fathers, Gregory the Great, Cassian, Caesarius, and so forth. These fragments, adapted to the subject, are held together by Celano's considerations, very much as the the sources of the *Decretum* are welded by the sayings of Gratian; and they form a sort of dogmatic and ethical commentary on the regulations which the papal authority had already imposed for the reception of novices.³

From the Second Life there pass down to the *Actus*, and so to the naive *Fioretti*, to those little figures, sketched with so much grace, of novices, victims of temptation, preserved by timely aid in the sanctity of the Order. A prudent reverence to an altar, the example and advice of

¹ R. 67: Ad coronam tibi perveniet non ad culpam. Cfr. 2 Tim. II, 5; *Migne*, LXXIII, 905: Erat enim ibi quidam qui sustinebat tribulationes, et non habens fiduciam in aliquo cui confiteretur, parabat a sero melotem suam, ut discederet. Cfr. ib. 743-5. Ecce, fili, fideliter intelligis quod hoc spiritale certamen per patientiam ad salutem aeternam animae tuae proficiet... Ubi durior est pugna, ibi gloriosior erit corona etc. *Cassian*, Conl. II, 13; cfr. *Migne*, I. c. 876, 878, 881, 884. The same sources are cited by *Passavanti*, Specchio della vera penitenza; Dist. III, 4.

² II, 11; III, 19 (R. 30, 33). For the *eulogia*: *Migne*, I. c. 1169: Accipe eulogiam patrum. R. 33: Accipe tibi cartulam. Hence the famous letter of the Saint to Bro. Leo: *Sabatier*, Speculum, LXXIII-IV.

³ *Sbaralea*, Bull. Franc. I No. 5 ann. 1220 (*Hon.* III); cfr. No. 2 (Greg. IX) ann. 1227

a venerable "senior", save those souls from apostatizing. The tempted ones live and die serenely faithful to Saint Francis, and the Madonna comforts them at their departure with the heavenly electuary of her grace. *Il Maestro da Celano* has founded a flourishing school; his scholars paint magnificently! If the pallet of the ancients is lacking, a little, in colour, it is ever charged with varied and fresh inspirations of a most charming kind.¹

A precious gem in the crown of monasticism is chastity, divine conqueror of the senses. The teaching with a view to the achievement and preservation of this grace is an extremely important part of Celano's treatise. *Franciscus, ut autem loqueretur manu, se ipsum exemplar omni praebebat virtutis.*² There were only two women in the world that he would have recognised by face. Like the ascetic who fled from them as though they had been lions, the Saint felt not fear, but terror for women:³ and he used

¹ Act. No. 21; Fior. No. 20: The novice is saved by a reverence made to the altar where the Blessed sacrament is reserved. Cfr. *Caes.* IX, 4 (I, 175): *Coram altari sancti J. Bapt. transiens, profunde inclinavit*; see also *Migne*, LXXIII, 905 - Fior. No. 41. The secular garments were kept by the steward during the novitiate, in case of necessity: *Cassian.* Inst. Coen. IV, 6, 37; CV. 51, 73. The discourse of Bro. Simon is called *lighted coal* that kindles, because preachers "carbonēs ignis vocati sunt, quia... per flammam caritatis accendunt", *Greg. M. Moral.* XXIX in c. 38 Job; No. 38. The passages in *Il Vita* I, 17 (R. 33) and III, 64 (R. 7) occur in *Spec.* c. 106; Act. No. 35; Fior. No. 31 (*Anal. Franc.* III, 46) and are akin also to Act. No. 50 and Fior. N. 43 (*Anal. Franc.* III, 423): But the original source of all the narratives is the episode of *Silvanus* exquisitely described in the *Life of Pachomius* c. 38 (*Migne*, LXXIII, 255), which begins: "Quidam denique iuvenis, Silvanus nomine, de scena conversus".

The Brother consoled with the "most sweet electuary of Mary" (*Actus* No. 68; Fior. No. 47) is a surgeon-Brother of vagabond inclinations who by means of this heavenly food is retained within the cloister. *Caes.* VII, 47 (II, 67).

² R. 61 seqq. III, 55 seqq.

³ *Cassian.* Conl. Mon. VII, 26. CV. 205; But more knowing is the abess who says to a *frate* half dead in an encounter with the Enemy: "An thou wert a perfect monk, thou wouldest not regard us with eyes that shew thou

to teach the enigma of the queen who was gazed upon with complete satisfaction by the king's servant in a form which, as it happens, bears a remarkably close resemblance to the story which runs through the ascetic literature of the Middle Ages.¹ Even Francis, however, was tempted by the "minions (*gastaldi*) of the Lord"—that is by demons²—but not all could vaunt themselves of his signal victories. If any should suffer from the assaults of the fiend, he had but to turn to Saint Francis, imploring the aid of his prayers and of his word of consolation, and the enemy would straightway raise the siege of his beleaguered heart.³ But woe to the prelate whose wary vigilance and just severity is not matched by the moderating virtues of compassion and gentleness. In a book which contains the models of the monastic ideal, the strongest light will be focussed on the type of *General minister*. Thomas, aware that the Saint had not been much of a student, sets him first to read certain phrases of Saint Gregory the Great, and then puts him in front of the canvas on which is to be sketched the figure of the greatest prelate of the Order.⁴

knowest us full well to be women". *Migne*, LXXIII, 872. It is always a prize for the devil if he conquers a friar: *ib.* 885.

¹ *S. P. Dam.* Op. III, 381, (Story of Sibilla's eyes). *Caes.* IV, 62 (I, 231). Cfr. *R.* 62; III, 56. Spec. c. 86. Later on the Minorites used to take a good look at the ladies because, for the glory of their Order they used to arrange marriages. *Salimbene*, 217.

² *R.* 63, III, 58-61; Spec. c. 67. Sabatier maintains the erroneous reading *castalli*, which means nothing: *castaldi* and *castaldiones* are the ministers or officers of the Commune, or of private persons... or of the Lord. As is well known the word is an old Lombard one: *Bruckner*, Spr. d. Langob. 205.

³ *R.* 64, III, 60; *Migne*, LXXIII, 742 No. 8: "Discipulus cuiusdam etc." The doctrina of "fleeing from Woman" may be reconstructed from the following materials: *Greg. M.* Dial. IV, 11; Ep. I, 48; Moral. XVI, in c. 23 Job, No. 29 "Oculos ergo inclinare etc." *Jacques de Vitry*, Exempl. No. 212 p. 220 (Life of S. Bernard) etc. Cfr. *Acta SS.* T. III Apr. 237-8 No. 76-7. (Sayings of S. Aegidius).

⁴ *R.* 92-3 (III, 96); Spec. c. 80: Officium plus sibi fore sentiat oneri,

Celano encountered serious difficulties at certain points of his work. The life of the man of Assisi, good and simple like all really great things, failed to offer him apposite examples for the illustration of certain doctrines. Fortunately erudition came providentially to his rescue. A novice is terribly tempted with longing for a little supper, or possibly, for something much less—a bunch of grapes, for instance.¹ The temptation is, at bottom, a disease, and sick folk, as the vernacular proverb says “are not moved with a pitchfork, but with a sheet”. So the abbot himself may eat flesh-meat with his poor tempted brother, and pass a tranquil hour at table with him.²

Such a pious concession to human frailty involves no relaxation of rigour; discipline stands on an adamantine

quam honori; *Greg. M. Moral. XXIV*, in c. 34 Job, No. 55; Potestas... non honor sed onus aestimatur; *R. 92*: Homo vitae gravissimae; *Greg. M. Reg. Past. II*, 2: *ex gravitate vitae*. *R. 93*. Non tamen e superflua mansuetudine torpor nascatur nec ex laxa indulgentia dissolutio disciplinae; *Greg. M. Moral. XIX* in c. 29 Job, No. 30: Nec in disciplinae vigore benignitatem mansuetudinis, nec rursum in mansuetudine districtiorem deserant disciplinae; *Reg. Past. II*, 6: Miscenda ergo est lenitas cum severitate etc. *Moral. XXIV* in c. 34 Job, No. 54: Nec tamen disciplinae vincula eadem lenitate dissolvant etc. Cfr. *Greg. M. Ep. I*, 24; *MG. 35*.

R. 93: Volebat eos affabiles... ut eorum affectui non se vererentur committere delinquentes; volebat... tales etc. *Desperationis* morbus praevaleat infirmos. *Reg. Past. II*, 5: Tales autem sese qui praesunt exhibeant, quibus subiecti occulta quoque sua proderet non erubescant; *II*, 10: Cumque increpatio immoderate accenditur, corda delinquentium in desperatione deprimuntur. Cfr. *Moral. XX* in c. 29 Job; No. 14. Miscenda est ergo lenitas cum severitate, faciendumque quoddam ex utraque temperamentum: ut neque multa asperitate exulcentur subditi, neque nimia benignitate solvantur. The passages in Gregory which Celano paraphrases are same which are cited by Gratian, *Decr. D. XLIV*, 9, 10, 14, 16. Certain rules proposed for observance by the prelate occur also in *S. P. Dam. Op. III*, opusc. No. 51; 151 seqq.; cfr. *Inn. III*, Ep. I, 311. (*Balut. I*, 168).

¹ *R. 19* (I, 15, 16). *Spec. 27*; *R. 88* (III, 160). *Spec. c. 42*.

² *Jacques de Vitry*, *Exempl. No. 14*: Ducens eum ad cellarium cum eo manducavit. Cfr. *R. 88*: In vineam duxit et sedens cum eo etc. Cfr. *Caes. III*, 49 (I, 167). But after a gay banquet with the abbot the frati expiate the moment of forgetfulness of the Rule. See also *X*, 8.

foundation—obedience.¹ If the novice be ignorant of the meaning of this supreme duty of the monk, let the abbot send him to bless first and then to curse bones of the dead, and then ask him:

“What did those bones say to thee?”

“Nothing: they uttered no sound”.

“Well, if thou wouldst abide in the monastery, bear this mind that thou also must be dead, insensible alike to curses and to blessings”.²

The dialogue above has something tragically sombre about it. Celano's copy is, as a matter of fact, superior to the original.

‘Said his companions: “Father, what is supreme and perfect obedience?” And he, describing the obedient man by the likeness of a dead body, replied: “Take a corpse, and place it where thou wilt. It doth not complain of the spot chosen, nor giveth any sign of the wish to leave it. Assay to set it in a chair; it droopeth its eyes. Clothe it with purple; the pallor of death standeth out twice as intensely”’.³ *The monk is a dead man*: here is the germ of the similitude⁴ which Thomas expresses with a couple of masterly sweeps of the brush. That body dangling down by sheer wright of inanimate matter from the chair, which is a symbol of human power, towards the earth, common sepulchre of proud and humble; that bold yet ineffectual sheen of purple that is extinguished by the juxtaposition of the waxen pallor of death:—these are

¹ R. 78 seqq. (III, 88 seqq.). On obedience: *Migne*, LXXIII, 232, 248, 246, 266, 792, 948 ecc. *Greg. M. Moral.* XXXV, in c. 42 Job, No. 28: Sola... virtus est obedientia, quae virtutes ceteras menti inserit, insertasque custodit.

² *Jacques de Vitry*, Exempl. No. 118.

³ R. 78 (III, 88). *Spec.* c. 46.

⁴ *Jacques de Vitry*, Exempl. No. 117: Monachus ait: Et ego sum mortuus. Cfr. *Greg. M. Moral.* XVIII in c. 37 Job, No. 89. Praedicator ipse mundi gloriam quam appeteret, tamquam mortuus non videret.

extremely effective touches. Whence has Celano borrowed them? From *Frate Pecorella*, says Sabatier; for, according to him, the whole ponderous woven work of Thomas' book, is nothing but the *Legenda Antiquissima* of Bro. Leo repaired by the rhetorician's art. It is really marvellous how some ideas have been seriously maintained, and, because seriously maintained, discussed with an ardent desire to find them true!¹

A certain thought has come to me... and if to me, then doubtless to many others. It is this. As long as we are dealing with common endowments that all *frati* possess; or ought to possess, such as Obedience, Chastity, respect for the Rule, clearly the line taken by Celano in his work is explicable if not justifiable. But Francis had a sanctity so original, so much his own, that when the discourse comes at length to treat the subject of these very special virtues, one might suppose that truth would suffice, and Thomas be spared the unnecessary trouble of invention: especially as falsehood would, in any case have defeated the purpose of the writer. We may hope, then, that in the Chapters on Poverty, Gladness and Simplicity Celano will stand aside, and leave us to contemplate the beautiful figure of the Saint without his own artistic retouchings.

Who could be more poor or more simple than the Man of Assisi?

It might be replied that the argument is ruined by a charming *petitio principii*. We cannot think anything at all about the Saint apart from Celano's suggestions. The so-called *Speculum Perfectionis*, which should be a work of "those who were with him", that is, of the "Com-

¹ Even Götz is very lax in his criticism.

panions" of Francis, is an evident elaboration of the Second Life. For us, therefore, it is as though it did not exist: and so we fall back again into the clutches of the man of Celano.¹ Yet the extraordinary care that he has devoted to the description of the love of poverty, spiritual gladness, and frank simplicity, is of itself a proof that these were the most resplendent gifts—the very soul—of the *Poverello*. If the Saint of Umbria had elected to emulate some fanatic for chastity and for a repulsive asceticism, such as San Domenico Loricato is recorded to have been; or if he had simply desired to repeat the exploits of the old monachism of the Middle Ages, we can see that to present Francis to us in the act of playing the violin, or in ecstasy before the flowers and the sunshine, would have been a form of poetic licence fatal to the biographer and to his legend. No skill of the artist could avail to transform the type of saint that lived in the popular imagination, prostrate in his lurid cell, absorbed to dizziness in assiduous prayer interrupted only by bloody scourgings of the poor emaciated and ulcerous body,²—to transform such an one into a man like other men, serene, joyous, free from morbid terrors, sweet as a young girl, with a voice clear and ringing that conquers and inebriates whose hears it. Nay, Celano's efforts are obviously directed in the opposite direction. In the Second Life he sets himself to give to the

¹ *Sabatier*, Spec. p. XLIX. *Götz*, 151. The last-named writer doubts whether the phrase "Nos qui cum b. F. fuimus" is an imitation of St. John XIX, 35 and XXI, 24. The source is less ancient. Cfr. *Hist. Laus. in Migne*, LXXIII, 1160, 1156: *Narrarunt nobis qui cum ipso erant... qui cum eo conversabantur.* *Migne*, XXI, 38: "... Ut viderem eos et interesset conversationi eorum."—As for the "Legend of the Three Companions", no account need be taken of it; and its close kinship with the "Anonimo Perugino" puts the latter also out of court. *Götz*, 140, seqq.

² *S. P. Dam. Op. II*, 235 seqq.

very singular virtues of Francis a distinctively monastic character, and to this end he searches and searches again up and down his library and accumulates the examples appropriate to a saint like his hero and to a perfect monk also.

In certain doctrinal points the difficulties confronting our writer were enormous. Francis had celebrated his mystic marriage with *domina Paupertas*, and had remained ever faithful to her.¹ The figure is Celano's own. After her chaste husband's death, the austere widow did not, apparently, find herself comfortable in the Franciscan Family. The family, however, were perfectly aware of their obligations to the poor desolate one. As though the Rule itself were not enough, the so-called "Testament" of Francis provided for all contingencies: and the Lady Poverty was secured from any tampering with the provisions of the Rule by the insidious hand of the *glossator*.² "*Fratres nihil sibi APPROPRIENT*", said the Rule in its latest form, "*nec domum nec locum, nec aliquam rem. Sed, tamquam peregrini et humilitate Domino famulantes, vadant pro eleemosyna confidentur. Nec oportet eos verecundari, quia Dominus pro nobis se fecit pauperem in hoc mundo*".³ More concise but essentially identical was the old Statute: "*Vivere in obedientia et in castitate et SINE PROPRIO*". It is *proprium*, *proprietas*, that is forbidden to the *fratres*. The last Rule, repeating the terms of the old

¹ R. 43 (III, 16, 18): *Dominam meam Paupertatem... Sanctam... sponsam*. Cfr. I Vita 51: *Dominam Paupertatem*.

² The Testament of Francis is mentioned by Thomas, (I Vita, 7) and by the Bull *Quo elongati*; but that does not prove that it is identical with that which has come down to us: (Götz, II, 12). And the prohibition of glosses betrays its scholastic origin.

³ c. 6.

one (or, to speak more correctly of the previous ones) developed with greater fulness the obligation of poverty, but it left unsolved a question of the gravest importance.

Then followed the "declaratory" Bull of Gregory IX, *Quo Elongati*, which, far from removing all controversy, only inflamed it to a further pitch of violence.¹

In 1230 that Pope, who was preparing to follow the example of the great Justinian in his collection of the Decretals, imposed on the Order the solution of doubts, in the following manner. In his "Testament" Francis had forbidden two things:—first, that there should be any gloss upon the Rule, secondly that any request for special privileges should be addressed to the Apostolic See. The point that required a *papal gloss* was that of the obligation of absolute poverty. Referring to the clause of the last Rule: "*Fratres nihil sibi appropriant*", Gregory IX observes that the plenary observance of the precept was thought to be in danger because certain persons asserted that the Order—in *communi*—had *proprietas* in real estates. It rested with the Pope to provide so as to save the purity of souls and of the Order.

The papal interpretation is preceded by a *Whereas*, clause, which calls for quotation here.

"Whereas in virtue of the long-continued intimacy which the aforesaid Confessor had with Us, We have a fuller knowledge of his intention; and whereas in the formulation of the aforesaid Rule (*in condendo*), and in the following Acts, for the purpose of obtaining Apostolic confirmation thereof, We rendered him assistance, being at the time in a position inferior to Our present Dignity; Ye (*Fratres*)

¹ Cfr. the Bull of Nicholas III in Bull. Franc. III, 404, Liber Sextus, V, 12, 3.

request of Us a declaration on the points of the said Rule which remain obscure....".

The witness of the Bull is twofold. The Minorites affirm that the Pope took part in the formation of the Rule, and the Pope admits it. The request for a "declaratory response" is not addressed merely to the supreme authority of the Papacy, but further to the man who was, as it were, depositary of the Saint's intimate thoughts. Let no one doubt what Gregory IX categorically affirms. We have had occasion to remind ourselves before, that the practically illiterate Francis is not the author of the Rules: he will have furnished the design and the principal outlines of them: but the final redaction is, throughout, the work of learned men.

Certainly it is not the Saint who when defining the duties of poverty, strangely repeats Cassian's words about monastic institutions: *Tanquam peregrinum se gerat et incolam istius mundi*.¹ Cardinal Ugolino, who had devoted such a deal of watchful care to the *plantatio* of Francis,² did not fail, we may be sure, to set his hand also to the reconstruction of the Rule; and sought inspiration for this work in the *locus classicus* for ancient ascetic ideals. This is a most valuable indication, as demonstrating indubitably that the future Pope saw in the Minorites a wise return to the most ancient traditions of the cloister. Such a decisive impulse given to the Order in the direction of the forms, the spirit, and even the necessities of monachism, could not escape the unlearned but lively and vigorous

¹ IV, 14; CV. Cfr. Test. b. Franc. *Sicut advenae et peregrini*. So the Testament, like the Rule, repeats the expression of Cassian, [derived ultimately, no doubt from such passages as Heb. XI, 13; 2 Pet. II, 11 L. R.].

² I Vita, 74; II Vita R. 21.

mind of Francis. The principles laid down by Jesus Christ for all nations were, in any case, miserably abridged and compressed in the narrow terms of a Rule. And it is only probable that a regretful resignation to inevitable destiny was the attitude of the "Poverello's" mind when he set his hand to the last Statute of his family, which had by that time become too numerous to consist entirely of worthy members.

The Rule forbids the *fratres* to have property: they are subject to what we should call a "radical incapacity" for the acquisition or possession of any kind of goods. So far we have nothing new. The greatest difficulty arose about the extension of the same incapacity to the Order itself. In mentioning the '*fratres*', the Rule made reference to the individuals, and to the *ens* constituted by them: and even without this dry admonition, the Saint's acts and words left no room for uncertainty as to the extension of the precept which a very few years of the Order's existence had already shewn to be incompatible with even the humblest necessities of the Franciscan family. Either way the existence of the Order was threatened; for *absolute* poverty meant the end of the institution as an organism, in the form in which it had become familiar to the world; while *relative* poverty was equivalent to disobedience to the Founder. Thus, in either case, either the Order died out, or the Franciscans were no more!

The Dominicans also, before arriving at their final Rule,¹ *instituerunt possessiones nec habere, ne praedicationis impediretur officium, sollicitudine terrenorum, sed tantum redditus eis adhuc habere complacuit.*² The *reditus* is, so to speak,

¹ *Item possessiones seu redditus nullo modo recipiantur.*

² SS. Ord. Praed. I, 33. *Jord.* c. 23; cfr. *ib.* c. 38.

the economic result of a right over that which belongs to some one else ; refusing this also, the Dominicans had to be content in the end with another expedient of a formal nature.

Before we study the answer of Gregory IX, which is dictated by some jurist who has a thorough grasp of things, let us cast a glance backwards at the Franciscan band as it returns from the first interview with Innocent III. The *socii* and the Saint, as they move towards Assisi, are no longer the same who had set forth from the little Umbrian city. Or perhaps we had better say they were followed by an invisible, impalpable figure—a “fictitious” figure, to use the old legal language—stronger than they, and mistress of their individual wills. This mysterious figure is that of the “*persona juridica*”.

The Franciscan Order had come into being. A single word from the Pope had created the spectre, tyrannical, immortal. The ecstatic companions of Francis might pass away, one and all, but this figure remained in the renovated family. By the irony of fate an academic conception ruins the Saint’s ideal : yet the juridical idea is but the outward aspect given to one of the greatest manifestations of social life that the world has ever seen. As long as the Companions of Assisi constituted a *free* Brotherhood, whose ends coincided with those of the individual’s perfection, no external power could have imposed on them rules by which to reach the predetermined goal.

The Society itself demanded no more than a partial sacrifice of the individual’s activity ; and the individual was not entirely torn away from other social bonds. No common life, no exterior forms were necessitated by the linking together of the members, united solely by the common

religious ideal. But afterwards things changed. Of the free society whose aim was to interpenetrate the whole of the great society of mankind, was born a new being which had no relation with her mother, who died in bringing her into the world.

There was one Order the more—nothing else. Its vigorous life is revealed in the robust frame, in the functions and in the needs of the organism. The story of primitive monasticism repeats itself in the twelfth century. Fleeing from Christian society, since they were not satisfied with such perfection as that society could offer, the ascetics had asked of the deserts and of their own souls the way to attain sanctity. The abbot or head of a monastery collecting those anti-social elements within the cloister, on the model of non-Christian institutions, created a special type of corporation, viz, the coenobitic life.¹ The ideal of perfection which this enshrines is no longer that of the hermits who dwelt in caverns; nay, the benefit of association makes itself felt even in the pursuit of the supreme evangelical ideals. Woe to the solitary! The individual, if he attempt to govern himself, is lost.² Individuals live in the cloister; the cloister itself has a life entirely its own. The monks can remain, as before, entirely faithful to evangelical poverty;³ but the monastery, by the mere fact of its existence, is the necessary negation of poverty. Hence it is only the individual that is to be poor: the institution may, for the greater glory of God, become proprietor of boundless wealth.

¹ E. Löning, *Geschichte des deutschen Kirchenrechts*, I, 332. *Harnack*, *Das Mönchtum, seine Ideale und seine Geschichte*.

² *Plerique sunt qui, nisi omnia reliquerint, salvari nequeunt*: *Greg. M. Ep. III*, 51. Hence the necessity of Monasteries.

³ *Migne*, LXXIII, 89, 284, 904 etc.

Scarcely has the Brotherhood of Assisi reached the threshold of monastic institutions when doubts begin to arise. A single man may calmly fly in the face of every economic principle, and embrace absolute poverty, if he be so disposed: nay, he may even die of abstinence.¹ But for an institution this is not possible. To maintain its existence it must possess a minimum of goods, be it but the merest scrap of that hated "property". Legally the actual word may be avoided: one may say "use", "usufruct" "*precario*". But these distinctions count for less than nothing in the language of economics, and do not alter the nature of the facts. In strict logic the "proprietor", if he would live, must needs beg alms of the "usufructuary"; the latter, who has no proprietary rights, is much better off than the former, who is the real owner of all. Such are the subtleties which were employed in the attempt to reconcile poverty with riches!

And did Francis understand that Poverty would not be welcomed in the Order as she had been received in his own heart? It would appear from the words of Gregory IX that the saint had felt some doubt. Assuredly if the evangelical precept were to be observed without a gloss of any kind, there was only one remedy, and that a somewhat radical one:—the dissolution of the Order! But the strange solution of the problem does but serve to shew that Francis in spreading abroad with Nazarene gentleness this love of poverty, had no thought of founding an Order. Neither he nor his first companions were fitted

¹ *Reuter, Gesch. der religiöse Aufklärung im Mittelalter, 1875-7. II, 183* .
seqq. But the obligation to labour must not be forgotten. *R. 81-2. Contra*
otium; cfr. *Cassian. Inst. Coenob. II, 2; CV. 19.*

to lay its foundations.¹ All the great founders of Rules, as we shall shortly see, desired to have the monk poor and indeed incapable of rights, in order to remove from him the inconvenience of temptation. Yet none the less did the brethren surmount the passes of the Alps in order to obtain from the Emperor the confirmation of those privileges thanks to which their monasteries acquired and kept dominions of monstrous extent: and not a few of them busied themselves in making money.² In the final resort, the true "proprietor" was always God, or the patron Saint.³

Now for Pope Gregory's interpretation of the Rule. "Neither the individual Brethren", he says "nor the Order (*nec in communi, nec in speciali*) may have property, but

¹ Venerius when asked by St. Romuald to what Order he belonged, replied that being free from every subjection, he wished to follow "quod sibi utilius videretur": *S. P. Dam.* II, 215 (c. 24 Vit. Rom.). Just also is the judgement of a certain cardinal on the Minorites: *autonomi: Isti sunt sicut aves, non habentes nidos*: *Acta SS.* T. III Apr. 222. On vagabond monks (*gyrovagi*): *Decr. Grat.* C. XVI, 1, 17 and *Ruffini*, *Summa* (ed. *Schulte*) 313-4: *Sarabastae id est azephali et gyrovagi... apud Deum et ecclesiam abominabiles sunt.* This is the danger of "free" monks.

² *S. P. Dam.* Ep. VI, 32 (Op. I, 115): *Non parvis ad Teutonum partes Imperator expetitur; pragmatice sanctiones cum singulis (signis?) imperialibus advehuntur.* (The reading "singulis" gives no sense).

³ For the juridical condition of the monasteries in the Roman period and those that followed, the reader should consult *Gierke*, *Deutsche Genossenschaftsrecht*, III, 119 seqq. and the abundant literature cited there; the following works may also be added: *Ruffini*, (in the "Studi offerti a F. Schupfer") *Storia del diritto italiano*, 326; *Brugi*, *Istituzioni di diritto privato giustiniano* I, 112; and the recent work of *Knecht*, *System des Justinianischen Kirchenvermögensrechts*, 56 seqq. (in the "Kirchenrechtliche Abhandlungen" edited by *Stutz*, XXII Heft, Stuttgart 1905). The *Cod. Theod.* (V, 3, unica) assures to the monastery the right of succession to the property of the *religiosus* who dies without heirs and intestate, after the model of other corporate institutions (*Ecclesia, vexillatio*, etc.); a fact which would seem to exclude Knecht's doubt as to whether the monastery can, in ancient times, have been assimilated to the *pia causa*. The monastery, as a juridical person, is responsible for the obligations of the individual monk: cfr. *Greg. M.* Ep. III, 61; *MG. Reg.* 220; *Justin. Nov.* V. 4.

they may have the use of the utensils and of those articles of furniture which it is lawful for them to have, and may use them according to the regulations that shall be laid down by the Minister general and the Ministers provincial, *salvo locorum et domorum dominio illis ad quos noscitur pertinere*". The last touch, which is the most important, has need of a little gloss itself. And it is curious to note that the jurist who edited the Bull apparently meant in this airy formula to skip lightly over the question of real property. The Bull explains that any relation subsisting between real property and the Minorites (whether the entire Order, or single members) cannot have juridical effects of a kind to modify the legal relation which exists between a thing and its legitimate proprietor. Since the Minorites are forbidden to have property, not even a century of possession would give them the ownership of a house ; any donation of realty to them would be null and void, and so on. They can have everything except proprietorship—use, usufruct, tenancy. The Bull treats the Minorites in a way almost exactly paralleled by our modern laws for the suppression of religious corporations ; when we have an excellent legitimate proprietor who will content himself with his high-sounding title and leave the humble enjoyment of the actuality to a monastery that is incapable of possessing—then Poverty under an *alien* roof finds not the least token of *proprietas*. Juridical science, starting from the idea of *proprium* banned by the Rule, had solved the controversy. The faithful laity, or the Church, could be proprietors, for the sole purpose of not depriving the Franciscans of the use of realty and personalty of which the Order had need.

Celano in his treatise *De Paupertate* shewed a perfect

understanding of the Bull ; but the later compilers of the so-called *Speculum Perfectionis* when they cite examples from it, or comment upon it, obviously either fail to understand, or are unwilling to take in the spirit of it.¹

In such difficulties Celano lays aside the rhetorician's art to take up that of the *glossator*. *Nolebat (Franciscus)*, he writes, paraphrasing the words of the Bull, *locellum aliquam fratres inhabitare, nisi certus ad quem proprietas pertineret constaret patronus* : he was unwilling that the Brethren should inhabit any place, however modest, without the certainty that the property in question had an owner. So (we must suppose) the Saint read in the Bull... that was written four years, all but six days, after his death ! Even on his death-bed he would accept only the "*commodato*" of a pair of breeches, lest he should be contaminated by ownership.²

To hear a thing spoken of as "his", pained him excessively. One day, says Celano, a Brother "*in beremo Sartiani*" when asked whence he came answered : "I come from the cell of Bro. Francis." Francis overheard it, and brusquely exclaimed : "Because thou hast given my name to the cell, making me the proprietor of it (*approprians eam mihi*), I will never set foot in it again. Let him dwell in it who will, not I."³ Grave was the fault of that Brother. Cassian teaches : "*Ne verbo quidem audeat quis dicere aliquid SUUM ; magnum sit crimen*

¹ R. II, 2 seqq. Spec. c. 5 seqq.

² R. 117 ; III, 139. But Celano has failed to observe that the *proprietas* of the breeches is but passed on to the man who lent them—himself also a Minorite. Here we observe the inconvenience of too much zeal ! Cfr. R. 51. III, 36. Spec. c. 35. Where the 'loan' (*mutuo*) of a mantle is spoken of : a word that shews how shaky Celano is in his Law.

³ R. 37 II, 5 ; Spec. c. 9.

ex ore monachi procedisse : CODICEM MEUM, TABULAS MEAS..."¹ We must not, however, fail to observe that what is condemned is not *common* ownership, but *personal* proprietorship by the individual monk. Malediction on him who when entering the monastery reserved for himself even the least trifle *ad proprium*!² Terrible is the rite where-with is pursued even the dead corpse of the Brother who lived guarding a little hoard from which death alone could part him!³ All must be "in common". Whoso filches the things that belong to all, shall be cast *in sterquilinio*, and the imprecations of his Brethren shall be his well-earned obsequies. The writer who adduces the cruel ceremony as an "example", is the same who gave liberally to monasteries and, when Pope, defended their property most energetically. It is not possible, then, that a clever man like Thomas of Celano should have failed to distinguish between *common* and *personal* ownership: if he deftly confounded the two, he had his reasons for doing so. An indication on this matter may be found in his narrative. "God", he makes Saint Francis say, "lived for forty days in a cave; *sequi eum possumus in forma praescripta nihil proprietatis habendo, licet praeter usum domorum*

¹ *Cassian. Inst. coenob.* IV, 13; CV. 55. *Reg. Basil.* c. 4, 5, 29, in *Holstenius*, *Codex Reg. mon.* 1759, I, 67 seqq. Cfr. *Vetus Disciplina monastica* ed. Parisii 1726, 177; *Bern. Ord. Clun.* c. 19: *Nihil appellat singulariter suum, sed ad omnia dicit nostrum, nisi de patre et matre et de peccato.*

² *Cassian. Inst. Coenob.* VII, 7 and 9; CV. 133 and 143; cfr. *Migne*, LXXIII, 899: *De eo quod monachus nihil debet possidere.* *Cassian. Conl. Mon.* V, 8; cfr. IV, 20; CV. 128-9; 117; cfr. *Knecht*, *Op.* c. 60.

³ *Greg. M. Dial.* IV, 55. *Inn. III*, Ep. V, 82; *Haréau*, *Op.* c. 253, cites the same fact from an instance given by *Jacques de Vitry* (*Bibl. nat. Par. Mss. lat.* No. 17509 f. 43 v.), which I have not found in the collection of *Crane*; No. 177 (p. 75) refers to the burial of an usurer, not of a *frate* "proprietario".

vivere non possimus".¹ It would seem that *usus* here takes the place of *proprietas* to demonstrate the poverty of the Order: and that in deference to the Bull.

That which follows in the Treatise, where the much-celebrated poverty of the wooden booths is treated of, and the scientific and domestic furniture, makes quite clear the embarrassment of the biographer.² Who was the owner of those things of which the use was permitted to the Minorites? And did not the stern monastic fortress which rose in Assisi at the foot of the olives, where the Saint had laid his frail body, supply an impressive confutation of all the empty formulas?³ Celano, following in the steps of the Bull, attempted, though without success, to allay discords and tempests; but none knew better than he the uselessness of such an effort. He himself, in common with the entire Order, was struggling with the extraordinary difficulties of the problem which confronted those who would fain be with the Rule and with the Pope, with the ideal and the actual at the same time. And perhaps he scarcely hoped that juridical distinctions could have saved the whiteness of the most pure spouse of Francis. As a melancholy synthesis of his thought Celano finally calls up again the vision of the famous statue of Daniel:⁴

¹ R. 37. III, 5. (The text, corrupt in Rosedale's edition is corrected in that of P. Alençon p. 216).

² R. 36 seqq. III, 1 seqq. Spec. c. 5 seqq. Wooden huts were even better than the *arundineae rusticorum tegetes* (S. P. Dam. Ep. I, 15; Op. I, 12).

³ V. Aegidii, Acta SS. III Apr. 237. Gazing at the sumptuous buildings of Assisi Aegidius (or whoever speaks in his name) exclaims: "Now all that is wanting is... wives for the *frati*!" The vow of Poverty had been dispensed; that of chastity would doubtless come next.

⁴ R. 47. III, 26. *Daniel*. II, 31 seqq. Cfr. *Joach.* in Jerem. 314.

material ancient enough in all conscience, but adapted to the critical occasion.¹

Thus we can see how the "Second Life" if it did nothing else, prepared the most inflammable material for the blaze of the "*Speculum*".

A multitude of sayings and narratives, always on the subject of poverty, of love of the poor, and of execration of money—such is the average compendium of Celano's literary thefts. For him certainly, property did, and did not exist. Let us give an example or two. The wish for wooden cells, lightly constructed after the fashion of booths is an inspiration drawn by Celano from the ancient monastic precept: *neque mittas fundamentum, ut aedifices tibi cellam aliquando*.² Agathon abandoned his cell as soon as he had the unpleasant surprise of seeing in it *quaedam non utilia*; and Saint Francis hates to have in the cells utensils *multa et exquisita*.³ If a Brother gives himself the luxury of a pillow, he is placing under his head a nest of diabolical spirits. As a matter of fact the Minorites were not like the rest who, in a house that was their own, possessed no such things as pillows; on the contrary, when they had entered the cloister they could

¹ Spec. c. 2 cfr. p. 11. The *unica tunica* (R. 42, III, 15) (if I may so say) the new symbol of the sect of the "Apostoli", who however are obliged occasionally to stay in bed while the one garment is being dried after the wash! *Salimbene*, 121; *Ebrle*, in Arch. für Litt. und Kirchengesch. des Mittelalt. 1886; II, 131. On the sumptuous buildings see *Vita Aegidii*, in Acta SS. T. III Apr. 237; on Poverty: *Ubertini de Casali*, *Arbor vitae crucifixae*; ed. Venetiis 1485. Lib. V, 1. (no page-numeration). Compare for the clothes and hosen of monks, *Cassian*. Inst. Coenob. I, 2, 7, 9; CV. 8-14.

² *Migne*, LXXIII, 906.

³ *Migne*, LXXIII, 888-9. R. 38; III, 6. I Vita 51: *Nec vasculum in domo aliquod residere*.

not close their eyes if the accustomed soft support for the night were lacking.¹

Meagre was the fare of Francis, affording an example of abstinence.² If in his very observance of the Gospel he was induced occasionally to eat fowls' flesh, his followers were not to imitate him with too great assurance. In Alessandria a certain knave found Francis with that luxurious dish in front of him, and played him a scurvy trick with regard to it. He waited till the following day when Francis was preaching, and while the people were hanging upon his lips he proceeded to brandish a large piece of capon, crying out: "Behold the preacher of nonsense! A fine Saint in sooth! Yesterday he ate of this!" And he displayed his capon... Capon? But every one beheld—a fish! The pious fraud of a miracle had saved the reputation of the man of Assisi.³ These are Bro. Galdino's wares.

But we can guess whence Thomas drew his unfortunate inspiration. Fish did not always take the place of flesh on the saints' tables in a miraculous way. Hence Caesarius of Heisterbach records how certain abbots kept their faith to the Rule that forbade the eating of flesh. If fish was not forth coming they were fain to put flesh on the table artistically served up in the form of fish.⁴ Friars have never been wanting in cleverness; and Celano drew from the example of those abbots his picture of the unsavoury hypocrite of the miracle of Alessandria.

¹ R. 39, III, 10. Spec. c. 98. Cfr. Bull. ed. Taur. III, No. 17. an. 1198; 134-5 *Jacques de Vitry*, Exempla No. 84. Cfr. I Vita 52: *Sedens, nec aliter se deponens dormitabat, pro cervicali, ligno vel lapide utens.*

² R. 38; III, 7. Spec. c. 20.

³ R. 46; III, 24.

⁴ *Greg. M. Dial. I, 1. Caes. V. 3 (I, 343).*

The Rule of the Minorites forbade the handling of money. A hesitating Brother was tempted by a purse which lay by the road side, swollen with coins; but a horrible serpent issuing from the purse saved the soul of the monk and the observance of the precept.¹ It must be left to the *savant* to consider how Thomas came to be familiar with an Indian story which, according to the learned researches of Alessandro d'Ancona, is one of the sources of the Novellino.²

Further parallels might be adduced *ad nauseam*; but we would not abuse the patience of any who may chance to read these pages. We will only add that Saint Francis—and an Egyptian monk a little before him—sell the New Testament and give the price to the poor: obedient to the precept which the Book contains;³ the Saint of Assisi—and a canon of Cologne—draw off their breeches as soon as a poor wretch asks for them.⁴ All will re-

¹ R. 41-2; III, 14.

² A. D'Ancona, *Studi di critica e storia letteraria*, 1880; 337. Novellino No. 83. Budda, travelling with a companion discovered a heap of gold and precious stones. "Behold", he cried, a venomous serpent!" [Avadânas trad. Julien I, 60]. The hesitation of a *frate* confronted by a half penny—should he, or should he not pick it up?—is described in Migne, LXXIII, 790.

³ R. 51; III, 35. Spec. c. 38. *Da matri nostrae novum testamentum, ut vendat illud pro sua necessitate, quia per ipsum monemur subvenire pauperibus*. Cfr. Migne, l. c. 772-3. The story passes into the Life of Joannes Eleemosinarius, ib. 359; then into Jacques de Vitry, No. 98. Crane (176), incorrectly cites this Life as primary source of the *Exemplum* of de Vitry. The original (?) attribution of the deed is to Serapion and shews whither absolute doctrines logically lead. The Gospel destroys the Gospel. The old story smacks of the subtle Hellenic genius.

⁴ R. 51; III, 34. *Nonnumquam etiam ob simile opus femoralia traxit*. Spec. c. 34. The narrative of Thomas of Eccleston, MG. SS. XXVIII, 561, records only the gift of a tunic belonging to the Saint (i. e., as a relic): he has nothing to do with the Saint's charity; (Sabatier ib. 65). *Caes. VI, 5 (Strange I, 346-7): Quidam dixerunt nunquam se legisse de aliquo homine, quae tantae fuerit circa pauperes compassionis (R. 48 De compassione s. F. ad pauperes)... Juxta ecclesiam B. M.—quia vestem aliam exuere non potuit, aspiciente paupere,*

member a charming scene described by our biographer who, when he likes, is a perfect master of his art. Hard by the dear Porziuncola "a Brother" returning from his round of collecting alms, raises his voice in resounding praises to the Lord. "Blessed be thou, my brother!" exclaims Saint Francis. The Lives of the Fathers transport us to Oxyrrhyncus, the city of the papyri and of the poor. A beggar who is waiting for alms, half naked, his teeth chattering in the cold night air,—he too gives thanks so the merciful God: "Thanks to Thee, Lord! I am free, while so many rich folk pine in fetters; I am like an emperor, I go where I list!"¹ He is the type of the happy poor, as was Francis himself, and as the Saint wished all his spiritual sons to be. Inexhaustible is the Franciscan piety! Francis even imitates Moses, making a spring of water burst from the rock to refresh the thirsting poor; and the narrative itself, to tell the truth, flows in most limpid stream from the Gregorian Dialogues; while Saint Bonaventure opens the magic book once more to complete a phrase which his predecessor in the plagiarist's work had left half finished!²

femoralia sua solvit, et cadere dimisit.—When he returned home the good Ensfid kept hold on his mantle to conceal the lack of breeches, and one of his relatives remarked: "*Satis puto quod non habeatis braccas*". *Tale aliquid non legitur in actis s. Martini, plus fuit braccas dare, quam pallium dividere.* This is the reason why the legendary "*socii*" go about in public with so little on. The comment of Caesarius (*plus fuit etc.*) was repeated by Celano. Another example of giving away one's own clothes is given in *Greg. M. Dial. I, 9*.

¹ *R. 45; III, 22. Migne, LXXIII, 904: Gratia tibi, Domine; quanti sunt modo divites in custodia, qui etiam in ferro sedent, aut pedes habent in ligno constrictos!... Ego autem, velut imperator sum, extendens pedes meos, et ubi volo ambulo!*—The compilers of the "*Speculum*" say *pauper spiritualis*; and according to Sabatier, Thomas, copying from Bro. Leo, would have failed to realise that it was not a question of a *frate* but of a *poor man*: forgetting that the instance comes under the heading *De petenda elemosyna*.

² *R. 30-1 (II, 15): Stupenda Dei dignatio; e Greg. Dial. II, 8: Mira...*

Poverty and knowledge :—how were they reconcilable in days where it was absolutely necessary for the student to possess his little hoard of books ? Certainly if there had been public libraries they would have relieved the Minorites of one cause of disquietude ! Saint Francis, who is consistently described by his biographer as perfectly illiterate,¹ would only tolerate a few books :² those, we must understand, which were absolutely necessary, to the exclusion of such luxuries as those beautifully written and illuminated manuscripts which were the traditional delight of the learned monk.³ What is it, after all, that books teach ? and what is wisdom ? It is the eye of love that penetrates and illumines the darkness of ignorance, writes Gregory the Great. Love soars up beyond where intellect can pass. Beautiful words, which Celano places side by side with kindred conceits found elsewhere ;⁴ which

et stupenda. *S. Bonav.* Acta SS. T. II Oct. 647 ; n. 101-1 and Dial. cit. II, 8. Nam in aqua ex petra producta Moysen, in ferro... Elisaeum ; and *S. Bonaventura* : In educatione aquae de petra conformis extitit Moysi, sic in multiplicatione victualium Elisaeo. The miracle is old and frequent : *Migne*, LXXIII, 941.

¹ This does not however hinder the Saint from repeating what *Gregory* (*Moral.* VIII, in c. 8 Job, No. 72) gives to orators on sacred subjects (III, 99-100) *Spec.* c. 73. It is the old Horatian precept. *Mens igne divini amoris non calet...* Inflammare auditores nequeunt verba quae frigida corde proferuntur (*Greg.*). And Celano : Debet... prius intus calefcere, quam foris frigida verba proferre. *Cfr. Inn.* III, Op. 61 : Ardeat igitur ignis in corde, ut lingua congrue sonet in corde.

² *R.* 38 (III 8).

³ *S. P. Dam.* Op. III, 392. *Cfr.* Laus Gembl. aecl. in Abbandl. der k. Akad. d. Wiss. Berlin 1893 ; 123-4. *Salimbene*, Chr. 186.

⁴ *R.* 56 (III, 45) ; Ubi magistralis scientia foris est, affectus introibat *amantis*. E prima : penetrabat... mysteriorum abscondita. *Greg. M.* *Moral.* IV in c. 3 Job : quae... veritatis intelligentia cum per cordis humilitatem quaeritur, legendi assiduitate penetratur ; ib. in c. 5 Job ; No. 12 : Amor ad meditandum pertrahit, sensus hebetudo contradicit. *Migne*, LXXIII, 908 : Magis de puritate mentis provide securitatem edicendi sermonem. *Cfr. R.* 97-8 : Praeodora bat etiam tempora... in quibus occasionem ruinae fore scientiam. *Spec.* c. 68. On the other

the amplifiers of Sabatier's "*Speculum*", more angry still at the invasion of knowledge, reinforce with original reading from the "Lives of the Fathers".¹

The Lord is so lavish of his gifts to the Saint that Francis explains the difficult passages of Scripture as well as—or even better than—a professional theologian. Any one who had questioned him as to the hidden meaning of an obscure passage, would doubtless have repeated the words of Sulpicius Severus² in praise of the natural wisdom of that Martin who had certainly been more conversant with battle-fields than with books: "Never have I heard issue from the mouth of man so much knowledge and so much eloquence!" Perhaps this was the reason why the humble ignoramus could stand fearless before the "holy athlete" of the Christian faith, Saint Dominic, who had devoted so many years of his youth to his first love, the study of theology. Cardinal Ugolino, wishing to put new life into the Holy Orders and purify them by the intro-

hand sapientia nutritur studio litterarum: Bull. Franc. I, No. 42 (Greg. IX an. 1229).

A sulky attitude towards science and literature is characteristic of the old monasticism from St. Jerome onwards. Cfr. Vita S. Rom. MG. SS. Merov. III, 138.

¹ *Spec.* c. 8 corresponds to *R.* 38 (III, 8). The compilers of the *pseudo-Speculum* repeat the answer of Macarius to Theodore; Habeo tres codices et proficio ex lectione eorum. Sed et fratres petunt eos ad legendum, et ipsi proficiunt. Dic... mihi: Quid debeo facere? Answer: Boni sunt quidam actus, sed melius omnibus est NIHIL POSSIDERE: *Migne*, l. c. 889; 890. Observing the books of a monk Serapion says: Tulisti ea quae erant viduarum et orphanorum et posuisti in fenestra. Viderat enim eam codicibus plena; cfr. 929: replesti fenestras de chartis. *R.* 98: libri ad nihilum utiles in fenestris proiciantur, says Celano; but then, by adding in *latebris*, he seems to shew that he has not rightly understood his authority.

² Vita S. Martini c. 75. CV. 135. Cfr. *Migne*, LXXIII, 915: Crede mihi multos codices legi et talem eruditionem numquam inveni; answer of a novice to the sentence of Evagrius which may be compared with the words: Theologia viri huius... est aquila volans (*R.* 57. III, 47). *Cassian.* also (Inst. Coenob. V. 23. [V. 106-7]), says that profound knowledge comes from *sola puritas cordis*.

duction of the monastic element, asks of the two Saints: "Why may we not make your *frati* bishop and priests? Was it not so in the primitive Church, when the pastors were poor men, free from avarice and full of charity?"¹ Francis' reply did not hinder the other Saint from saying to him: "I would that thy Religion and mine formed a single institution and our manner of life in the Church were the same". Are we to reject as mere legend the meeting of the two Patriarchs,² or to accept as true Celano's narrative, granting to the fact that Saint Dominic was in Rome in 1218 the dignity of an historical proof?³ Sabatier, not content with the conversation between the heads of the two Orders in Rome, prolongs the interview to the 3rd of June, 1218, in the general chapter of the Porziuncola; regardless of the fact that our information is derived from Bartolomeo da Pisa. Bartolomeo in his *Conformitates* has naturally selected the "*capitolo delle stuoie*",⁴ with its five thousand Brethren, the most miraculous scene of all,⁵ the most solemn parliament of the Franciscan world, to form a frame for the grandest figures of his picture. But there is one unfortunate circumstance. The chapter in question met, says Jordanus with great exactness *a. d. 1221 decimo Kal. Junii, indictione 14^a, sancto die pen-*

¹ R. 76 (III, 86,87). Spec. c. 43.

² Hase, Op. c. 71-2.

³ Sabatier, Vie 244; 247 seqq.

⁴ Voigt, l. c. 490 seqq. Bart. Liber. Conform. I fructus 10; cfr. II fructus 12 (ed. Bononiae 1590; 139, v. 269).

⁵ S. Bonaventura (Acta SS. Oct. II, 639 No. 52) is perhaps the first to relate that the Divine clemency catered for the vast assembly. How this was done Bartolomeo of Pisa tells us, repeating the miracle of S. Fronto (*Migne*, LXXIII, 438); cfr. Actus No. 20; Fior. No. 18. The camels of the Orient are transformed into the horses and mules of the gentry of Assisi and Perugia; and Francis' sermon is not very different from the oration of the old hermit who exhorts the Brethren to trust in Providence that never abandons those who seek Him.

thecostes, and the same writer leaves no room for doubt as to the identity of this chapter, by his mention of the great *fratrum multitudo*.¹ Another sure countersign is furnished by the record of the theme of Saint Francis' sermon on that occasion, though the sermon itself would seem, according to Jordanus' version, to have been somewhat less elevated than Celano would make out.²

Turning now to the "Second Life" we find that the narrative of the charming scene between the two Saints³ is given under the heading *de Humilitate*.⁴ Humility—Gregory the Great and Thomas are agreed—is the guardian and the glory of all virtues. There cannot be too many examples of it. Thomas advances deliberately, step by step, and groups together designs and ideas. When the Franciscan family has increased, Francis yields the government of it to the jurist Pietro Cattani,⁵ amid the sighs of the Brethren; he gives them the example of humility in submitting himself devoutly to the vicar whom he himself has chosen. A little discourse was obviously in point here. Saint Francis commends to the Lord his beloved family, as Pachomius had commended his,⁶ and gives se-

¹ c. 16; Voigt, l. c. 523: The Speculum, c. 68 makes no mention of St. Dominic in its description of the chapter "*de storeis*".

² Jord. l. c. *Benedictus Dominus meus qui...* And Celano, R. 96: *Voluptas brevis, poena perpetua* etc. But probably the sermon does not really belong to the "capitolo delle stuoie"; Bartolomeo adopted it because it fitted in nicely, and because of its solemn tone, suited to a vast reunion of *frati*. For a comparison of the preaching of Christ with that of Francis, see Conform. cit. II, 12 [264].

³ R. 77. *Discedentibus autem inde, rogavit b. Dominicus s. Franciscum ut sibi cordam, qua cingebetur, dignaretur concedere. Lentus ad hoc s. Franciscus laudem humilitate renuens etc. Learning bows down before simplicity.*

⁴ R. 73.

⁵ Sabatier, Spec. 70-1 note 2. Jord. c. 1; Voigt, l. c. 520. R. 74; (III, 81); Spec. c. 39.

⁶ R. 74 cit. *Domine, tibi recomendo familiam, quam mihi hactenus com-*

vere admonitions also to the Ministers. Such counsels were called for because the Minorites, while issuing victorious out of many trials did not always resist the tempting offer of prelacies within the Order, or of ecclesiastical dignities. In vain the Saint cried, and cried again: "We are designed to help the ecclesiastics, for the saving of souls: let us work in harmony with them!"¹ Whatever Dominicans may have thought, Francis' spirit did not welcome even the suggestion of Cardinal Ugolino to imitate the "primitive custom"—and, we may add the oriental tradition—of drawing ecclesiastical prelates from the Religious Orders. Thomas of Celano represents and defends these ideas of the Founder: ideas which, in the inevitable reaction that so constantly recurs in the history of monasticism, were vigorously contested by the tendencies of the Order after the Patriarch's death.² The Minorites should remain

misisti; cfr. *Migne*, LXXIII, 263: Memento, Domine, studiorum meorum... memento famulorum tuorum, qui tibi tota mente deserviunt. See also *Fior*. No. 13 and *Actus* No. 13 § 27, where is announced the promise of St. Peter and St. Paul substantially identical with that wherewith Jesus comforts Pachomius. *Animaequior esto, et confortetur cor tuum, quia posteritas tua manebit in saeculum, nec usque in fine mundi deficiet etc.*

¹ *R.* 75; III, 84. Subjection to prelates is forcibly expressed by *Greg. M.* In primum Regum V, 5 No. 42. Magna enim munera etc. and Thomas: Estote subiecti praelatis, etc.

² *S. Bern.* Op. II, 584: Haec dicta sunt contra... tentationem, quae saepe viri religiosi episcoporum... ambire gloriam... diabolicis instigationibus incitantur. An old story! *Martène et Durand*, V, 1626: *In vita patrum*, inveniuntur capitula de fugiendo clericatu, nullum invenitur de appetendo clericatu. Cfr. *Vita S. Rom.* in *Acta SS.* T. III Febr. 742: Cum ad officium clericatus rabida ambitione pervenerint, confestim cothurno elationis inflati, non solum contra coevos digniores, verum etiam supra vetulos ac seniores... juvenculi efferuntur, et nec primis saltem simplicibus elementis imbuti, nituntur cathedris, vel sacerdotio praesidere, qui adhuc pro elatione ac levitate juvenili, virgis indigent coerceri. The Middle Ages had sought a middle course between secular priesthood and monasticism, imposing a community-life upon the clergy in cities. The canons were to be *inter duas conversationis species, media via*: *Fantuzzi*, *Mon. Rav.* VI, No. 15; an. 1042.

Minorites and nothing more. And if the Dominicans were less rigid, this was no good reason why the Franciscans should nourish, towards the spiritual sons of Saint Dominic, feelings of rancour and hatred unworthy of the two Patriarchs. Hence arose the need of a vigorous appeal to the sentiments of concord and humility expressed in and wonderfully suggestive scene. For this reason I have strong suspicions that the conversation between the two Saints is purely imaginary. And my fears are enhanced by the form of Saint Dominic's aspiration: "*Vellem, frater Francisce, unam fieri religionem tuam et meam, et in Ecclesia pari forma nos vivere*". It resembles too closely that of Saint Bernard: "*Omnes ergo concurramus pariter in unam tunicam, et ex omnibus constet una*",¹ for us to believe that it really issued from the lips of that great theologian. It is probable that Dominic really judged Francis and the Franciscans, much as did that other learned man Innocent III, though he may not have expressed his judgement quite so harshly. Students, especially in the Middle Ages, lived in a world where the impression produced by spontaneous popular movements reached them in a diminished and attenuated form, by reason of the great altitude from which they observed—or thought they observed—such phenomena. The religious sentiment free from the tentacles of the theological syllogism, in the hands of a poor Umbrian preacher, was either a flame of heresy, or a simple, ingenuous hymn inspired by the eternal poetry of the people.

As for the example of humility given by the Saint, it will suffice to adduce Sampson, who renounces the prelacy of the Abbey because he desires *sedere ad pedes Domini cum Maria*, and *vacare contemplationi*: Ann. Camald. IV, 375; No. 223, an. 1217. There is no need to mention the other example of Celestine V.

¹ Op. II, 546: Apol. ad G. abb. c. 4.

CHAPTER VI

SAINT FRANCIS AND THE "SPECULUM" OF THOMAS

ILDEBRANDO Della Giovanna, in one of the very few really scientific monographs on Franciscan subjects that have appeared so far, gives us a study of Saint Francis as "*giullare di Dio*" marked at once by graceful erudition and by penetration of thought. And the figure that he calls up, is one resembling that *bizarre* chanter of popular praises Benedetto da Corneto, as described by another *bizarre* but congenial friar, Salimbene of Parma.¹ And even if the examination of the Second Life, and of that '*Speculum*' which we will continue to call 'Sabatier's'—in order to distinguish it from the true *Speculum* of the Second Life—leads us necessarily to reduce to more modest proportions Celano's eulogistic picture of the Saint's simplicity and spiritual gladness, I have no doubt that Della Giovanna's sketch is true to the life.

As we have already repeated too often, everything has its limits—even the fury of plagiarism, the love of Art and of the Order! The apparition of the Poverello had shaken great and small alike; in him were gathered up, in a sense both the living sparks of heretical rebellion, and the vague aspirations of a faith incapable of resigning itself

¹ *Giornale stor. della Lett. italiana*, XXV, 1 seqq. 14-15. *Salimbene*, Chr. 32-4.

to languish in the cold atmosphere of catholic dogmatism: all the supreme ideals, in fact, of a people that was quivering with youth and passion.

The chair—that is, aristocratic thought—creates the theologian: creates one who will end by deriding evangelic simplicity, the humble consciousness of an Aequitius and a Francis. When our Saint, abandoning the ways of ordinary life to lift himself to a loftier plane, and giving utterance to sentiments universally felt, in the magnificent simplicity of his plebeian tongue, succeeds—to use Celano's phrase—in “transforming thousands and thousands of listeners into one single person”;¹ he attains to a genuine greatness and a most conspicuous originality which political and rhetorical fictions only serve to veil.

The populace delights always in that which is intimately its own. The vague, indefinite fancies which rove through its imagination need but the vivifying and defining touch of Art, with its intuitive grasp of common ideals, to give them a new and victorious entrance into the spirit of the people, over which they exercise a powerful domination. And the form into which these popular thoughts and sentiments are so translated, must itself be akin to the matter. A theologian from the University of Paris lecturing in Umbria, or in any other part of the world, would have missed the applause of a crowd of learned students assembled in the halls of science. What a poor figure would a professor have cut, with his monotonous dialectical distinctions, in face of the people, assembled in the open air in sight of mountains and plains!—yes even though those subtleties had been expounded in the idiom

¹ I Vita 72: *Populorum maximam multitudinem, quasi virum unum cernebat et uni praedicabat.*

of Italy! It was not thus that the people was used to be addressed. Vernacular eloquence had its own proper demands, and the first of all was the absence of all pretence to be eloquent.¹

And the external inspiration of the environment must needs be no less forcible than the internal. From the soft *motifs* of a song, or of the lays of chivalry (which have an epic piety of their own), there was often flung off a fervid prayer to the Lord; like a solemn chorus uniting voices that had been festive and tumultuous a moment before. Who could distinguish the opening of a spontaneous call to religious meditation from the finish of a jester's reckless ditty? The *Domini joculatores* who modulated the *cantilene* imported from rebellious Provence,² had frequently the cleric's tonsure and the intonation of the ecclesiastical chant, which was studied in the most famous monasteries.³ Religion and Poetry, song and prayer, can never really be separated: they are one thing. The example had been set by the Church herself, when she borrowed from pagan liturgy those sweetest psalmodes which conquered alike the austere spirit of Saint Augustine and the impressionable heart of the populace.⁴ Proper

¹ How can one fail to recall the words of Peter Chrysologus bishop of Ravenna? He says: *Populis populariter est loquendum, communio compellanda est sermone communi, omnibus necessaria dicenda sunt more omnium; naturalis lingua, chara simplicibus, doctis dulcis: docens loquatur omnibus profutura; ergo hodie imperito verbo veniam dent periti: S. Petri Chrysologi, Op. (ed. Venetiis 1742) Sermo XLIII, 69.*

² Odofredo, 176-7. *Memorie carolingie in S. P. Dam. Op. III, 104.* *Rolandus Cantapoco* is a Tuscan name of the year 1141; *Davidsohn*, *Forsch.* cit. I, 162. On French works in Italy in the XIIIth century, see *Dunlop-Wilson*, *Hist. of Prose Fiction*, 1896; II, 43. *D'Ancona* in *Rend. Acc. Lincei* 1889; 420 seqq. *Della Giovanna*, l. c. 22.

³ *S. P. Dam. Op. I, 103; (Ep. VI, 22).*

⁴ *Confess. X, 6, 33; CV. 231, 262-4. Cfr. S. Paul. Eph. V, 19. Can-*

to the liturgical chanting is that free rhythm which one might almost call 'oratorical', since that which we employ in a normal recitation is, at bottom, the same thing.¹

As the *cantus* adapted itself to the moveable parts of the Mass, the original participation of the faithful in the solemn sacrifice became reduced to a musical dialogue between the celebrant and those who were assisting at the ceremony. And then both chant and words came out again from the Church to return again amongst the people, whence they originally sprang. The invasion of profane singing was felt as an annoyance by the ecclesiastics.

Timid penitents would ask their confessor: "*Oportet nos, pro recreatione et propter intolleranciam laborum, quandoque aliquando iocunda cantare?*"

And the reply was given: "Songs of the world, no; but... *hoc ipsum placet si de Deo et de S. Maria et buiusmodi.*"²

Tardy counsel and vain! The Jesters themselves, who even in Salimbene's day³ had become great rivals of the Friars Minor, and frequented the society of priests and bishops⁴ in the houses of great Churchmen with a view to win pardon for their profanity, mixed sacred and secular freely together, and combined the strains of gaiety and

tilenae of the Church, see *S. Petri Chrisologi Sermo CXVI*, 116: *Resurrectionem... cantet... Christianus.*

¹ *F. Flamini*, *Studi di storia letteraria*, 115 seqq. 129 seqq. 142 seqq. Cfr. *Lavoix*, *Hist. de la Musique*, 7.

² *Schönbach*, in *Sitzungsber.* cit. *CXLVII*, 90 (From the sermons of Berthold of Regensburg). *Della Giovanna*, l. c. 19 No. 2.

Cfr. *S. Petri Chrys.* *Serm.* X, 17; *XCV*, 171; *CXV*, 175: *cantilena « data nobis naturaliter » ad solatium laboris.*

³ Chr. 353.

⁴ *Decr. Greg.* *IX*; *V*, 3, 18; an. 1166? A horse seems to be the customary gift of a bishop to a jester.

mysticism.¹ It is certain also that the heretics began with singing, those meetings which the simple found so alluring;² and perhaps they used to develop the argument of their discourses on the basis of a popular *motif*. The prophetic words of Saint Augustine were verifying themselves: "*Surgunt indocti et cælum rapiunt, et nos cum doctrinis, sine corde, ecce ubi volutamur in carne et sanguine.*"³ The sermons and popular discourses which had touched the heart of the infidels in the first age of the Church, were now alternated with hymns in which rhythms of the lays of chivalry gave their soft tone to the afflictions of the heroines of romance—or of the Virgin Mary. These formed a fashionable type of dramatic and religious ceremony during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁴

I would not suggest, as does Della Giovanna, that the French speech into which Saint Francis often lapsed in his moments of greatest religious enthusiasm, was a common way of drawing attention to himself.⁵ It is evidently a question of relapses into rhythm which betray their poetic

¹ On Jacopone da Todi see: *D'Ancona*, Studi sulla lett. ital. de' primi secoli, 1884; 4 seqq.

S. Simeon Stultus in a tavern ἡρξάτο ἀλλεῖν, i. e. he accompanied himself on the *pandura*, singing the hymn of the great Nicon, which drove away the devils: Acta SS. T. I Jul. 157.

² Decr. Greg. IX, V, 7, 8. (Conc. Lat. III c. 27). On erotic *rhythmi* see *Schönbach*, in Sitzungsber. cit. CXLVII, 119.

³ Confess. VIII, 8. CV. 186.

⁴ This also is old material. We read in the Life of S. Radegonda (MG. merov. II, 575-6) that the Saint when certain secular songs were echoing all round the monastery, *nihil audisse modo saeculare de cantico*. Radegonda, in ecstatic mood, heard only a religious hymn modulated over popular melodies, which were carried over to sacred uses.

For the comic-religious "Mysteries" of the XIIIth century, consult *Lavoix*, Hist. de la Musique, 110-2.

⁵ R. 15; II Vita; I, 8: Quasi spiritu ebrius, lingua gallica petit oleum—semper enim verba foris eructans gallice loquebatur se apud illam gentem praecipue honorandum praenoscent, et reverentia speciali colendum. An excellent reason!

origin. They are fragments of songs that have remained alive in his memory, and by association of ideas, and by a psychic process far from mysterious, slip into his discourse whenever a strong excitement, similar to that which the epic narrative arouses, reproduces the same nervous commotion.

Saint Francis, born into a wealthy family, brought up in a refinement enhanced further by his embracing the noble profession of arms, was doubtless familiar with the literature of chivalry in its original tongue, which was also the language of aristocratic society.¹ The prowess of the heroes of the noble land of France, which remained dear to him even after his change of life, incited him no longer to seek glory in bloodstained battle-fields, but rather to win souls to that serenity and peace which the Gospels promise. This may be one of the reasons for the "chivalrous" character of the Order—meaning by that word that the saint drew the inspiration of his eloquence from the very special conditions of religious and artistic feeling by which he was environed. And the singing of Saint Francis, to whom pious posterity attributes the authorship of certain hymns,² is followed by his companions, down to the very metre used by the Master.³

¹ *Benv. de Ramb. de Imola*, Com. super Dantis Ald. Com. (Flor. 1887); II, 409: Indignor animo, quando video Italicos, et praecipue nobiles, qui conantur imitari vestigia eorum et discunt linguam gallicam, asserentes quod nulla est pulchrior lingua gallica.—Our old writers justly attributed to the French language the power to render ideas more vivid: gallicae animositatis genium servans, et ex more patriae verba violenter infringens, says *S. P. Dam.* Op. II, 204, of a lady who made a disturbance because she was not reconciled to having her husband enter the cloister.

² *Della Giovanna*, l. c. 27, with whom I gladly leave the matter, so as not to trespass on others' preserves. Cfr. Spec. ed. *Sabatier*, 234 and app.; 242, *Götz*, 50 seqq. The *laudes de creaturis* are always associated with his sermons. *Tbode*, Franz v. Assisi, 68.

³ See, e. g., *Vita Aegidii*; *Acta SS.* T. III Apr. 239: *Mystico et spiri-*

Absolutely nothing is left to us of those sermons which moved the world. Jordanus preserved only the first words of the sermon preached at the Chapter of 1221: "*Benedictus Dominus meus qui...*"¹ This resembles the beginning of the *laudi* of Benedetto da Corneto: "*Laudato et benedetto et glorificato sia lo patre...*"² Celano apparently did not like simplicity; at any rate it is absent from the following theme—*Voluptas brevis, poena perpetua, modica passio, gloria infinita, multorum vocatio, paucorum electio, omnium retributio*.³ But it comes back in the exordium of the sermon at Bologna: *Angeli, homines, daemones*.⁴ To folk frenzied with wrath and blood the Saint (blessed be his memory and his words!) preached not the sweets of Roman orthodoxy and the horrors of heresy; but just "Peace—peace—peace!" The very men who were on the point of cutting each other's throats remembered at last that they were brethren.⁵ If we had

tuali cantu voluit... monere. And so they become, ignorant as they are, most acute interpreters of Scripture: *ib.* 240.

¹ c. 16; Voigt, l. c. 523. (Ps. CXLIII, init.).

² Salimbene, Chr. 32-3. *Alleluja, Alleluja!* was the response which followed his sermon.

³ R. 96; It is modified by Barth. da Pisa, because the good friar begins with the prefatory words: "Magna promissimus, majora promissa sunt nobis. Observemus hec, aspiremus ad illa". *Brevis voluptas* etc. Voigt is right (l. c. 491 No. 45); the passage must be taken from some homily or other; but so far I, like Voigt, have not been successful in detecting the source.

⁴ Sigonii, Op. III, 432; MG. SS. XIX, 580. De his autem (writes Tomaso da Spalato) spiritibus rationabiliter ita bene et districte proposuit, ut multis literatis, qui aderant, fieret admirationi non modicae *sermo hominis idiotae*. By *idiotae* are meant, in scholastic language, those not '*esinaniti*' (according to the technical phrase) in the studies and the books of learning. At Bologna, in the greatest centre of Italian culture, on the Feast of the Assumption, 1220, the Saint had elevated somewhat his style of speaking; and the vigorous oratory was enforced by long practice. The success of that sermon is recorded in Fiorretti No. 27; Actus No. 36.

⁵ L. c. Tota verborum eius materia discurrebat ad extinguendas inimicitias, ad pacis foedera reformanda... Tantam Deus verbis illis contulit efficaciam, ut

no other testimony to the life of the Man of God, this would be sufficient to glorify him for ever; much more so than that kind of neurasthenic apotheosis which is accorded to him in our days.

In the "*Prima considerazione delle sacre sante stimulate*"¹ the popular theme is repeated: "*Sancto Francisco . . . vassene in su la piazza, dove era ragunata tutta la moltitudine di tutti questi gentili uomini, et in fervore di spirito monta in su uno muricciolo et cominciò a predicare, proponendo per thema della sua predica questa parola in volgare:*

*Tanto è quel bene che io aspetto
Che ogni pena m'è dilecto*".

Thomas of Celano had seen and heard the great preacher, and had admired him, perhaps, in his own way, with the reserve of a man of culture suspicious of anything like enthusiasm. He had further taught his Master Gregory's precepts on sacred oratory; and had succeeded in making of him a saint conformable to the canons of the hagiographer's art. More could not be expected of him! The essentially original figure declined to accomodate itself to the conventional garb of monasticism: Francis was still too vivid a memory in every heart for his place to be entirely taken by a whitewashed symbol of the man. And, further, not even Celano would have wished to put his hand to a work which would have robbed the Order of its glory and of the plaudits of the populace. Simplicity, serene spiritual gladness, spontaneous delicacy of act and

multos nobilium, quorum furor immanis multa sanguinis effusione fuerat debacchatus, ad pacis concordiam simul deduceret.

¹ Fioretti, ed. *Passerini*, 145.

word had conquered the world. Who would have denied the lofty endowments of Saint Francis because, (as we have seen), he avoided the harsh austerity of Saint Benedict, and, smiling and singing, drew folk after him? Art should not trespass beyond certain limits. Celano did not lack inspiration, either. The very practice of begging from door to door—a hard necessity where work does not provide for the day's needs—acquires a sort of charm, a sweet poetic confidence in the love of all men.¹ Where the devil is, gladness is not—and the devil is idleness.² An old monastic duty, neglected now by the lazy denizens of cloisters that are little capitals of little kingdoms, helps to preserve that gladness of heart which Saint Francis imposes upon all his followers on the ground that Christ's servant is immune from the assaults of demons when they see him full of holy joy.³ And there was no harm whatever in making the Saint—ever hilarious like the hermit Anthony,⁴—repeat, with the famous text-book of monasticism: "*Qui querulosus est, monachus non est.*"⁵

Not content with pouring out his soul in praises of the

¹ Reg. c. 5, 6. De modo laborandi - De petenda eleemosyna. R. 43 seqq. II, 17; Spec. c. 26. R. 81.2 III, seqq. Celano with the words: *Liceat, sanctus pater*, etc. begins the lamentations for the extremely rapid decadence of the Order.

² Migne, LXXIII, 934, 789, 923, 934, 942; Cassian. Inst. Coenob. X, 173 seqq. This is why the hermit Aegidius lives by selling "*sportellae*" that he makes; Migne, 886: *Sportas - distrahendas per plateas circumferret*; Cassian. Inst. Coenob. IV, 39; CV. 67. Acta SS, III Apr. 223; *faciebat etiam quaedam laboricia de juncis*.

³ R. 68; III, 65. Spec. c. 95.

⁴ Migne, LXXIII, 156; V. Ant. c. 40: *Semper hilarem faciem gerens*; cfr. ib. p. 965: *Misericordem in bilaritate*; ib. 1161 (Hist. Laus. Vita abb. Apoll.). *Licebat autem eos videre exultantes in solitudine, adeo ut nullam eiusmodi aliam exultationem in terra videre liceat, nec laetitiam corporalem. Neque enim erat inter eos aliquis moestus, aut tristis*, etc.

⁵ Migne, LXXIII, 922 (V, 9 No. 54); cfr. 924.

Lord and of His creatures, Francis longs also for the harmony of a cithern, to make him forget for a moment the cruel pain of his eyes. In the cells of the brethren no such instrument is to be found; and the Saint's companion who in the world had been a harp-player humbly refuses to beg the loan of one. "Father", he says, "I am grievously ashamed: if they hear me play as I used to do once, they will say that I have fallen into temptation... One must respect appearances" (or opinions, which are always, of course, the same thing). The Saint surrenders to the bashful timidity of his fellow; but God consoles him with the celestial music of an invisible cithern.¹ Even so the sweet melody that vibrated within his spirit, and gurgled forth in the rhythm of Gallic speech, gave him no peace until... *lignum quandoque, UT OCULIS VIDIMUS, colligebat e terra, ipsumque sinistro brachio superponens anulum filoflexum tenebat in dextera, quem supra viellam trahens per lignum et ad hoc gestus repraesentans, ydonea gallice cantabat de Domino. Terminabantur tota baec tripudia frequenter in lacrymas, et in passionis Christi compassionem hic jubilus solvebatur.*²

"Oculis vidimus"? Yes, undoubtedly; but what the eyes of Thomas actually did was to peruse a charming page of Caesarius, where he speaks of a cleric *archipoeta* who makes a pair with Frate Pacifico converted when already king of versification, like other joyous souls, by Sant Francis.³

¹ R. 68; III, 66.

² R. 69; (III, 67). The jester has always his viol with him: *Salimbene*, 153.

³ R. 58 (III, 49; cfr. III, 27 e 76). *Caes.* II, 16. Cfr. *Boncompagni*, *Cedrus* t. c. 163, which recalls the great renown of Bernard, the inventor of *gloriosae canciones et dulcisonae melodiae*. The "Re dei Versi" saw two

With a view to demonstrating the elegant plagiarising of Celano, we must bring together in close association "spiritual gladness" and her amiable sister "simplicity". The *Sancta simplicitas* is no longer that which shuts one's eyes to the unworthy life of the priests; it is the monk's most splendid gift, which renders him worthy to obtain the most singular graces and favours from God. "*Nemo se seducat*," says the Apostle, "*si quis videtur inter vos sapiens esse in hoc saeculo, stultus fiat ut sit sapiens*".¹ These words have created the type of "Brother Simple"—a type that deserves a study to itself—the type that takes pains to appear half idiotic, even when possessed of a learning and a sanctity surpassing those of God's most famous champions.

In the "Lives of the Fathers" we have already made the acquaintance of Paul "the Simple", who yields to non in the art of putting devils to flight, ignorant though he be of the most elementary points of the Christian Religion—e. g., whether God be in heaven, or whether Jesus came into the world before the prophets. God denies him nothing, and when He hesitates a little to work a miracle for him, Brother Simple is quite capable of threatening him with a fast, like a Brahman, and gains his point.² Gregory the Great sketches charmingly the

swords of fire issue from the saint's body; just as the dumb porter saw flames issuing from the month of Peter Telonarius the hero of charity: Vita S. Joan. Eleem. c. 21; *Migne*, LXXIII, 359. On Frate Pacifico there is a carefully written article by *Cosmo*, in Giorn. Stor. della Lett. Ital. XXXVIII, 2 seqq. Cfr. *Sabatier*, Spec. 108 note 2.

¹ 1 Cor. III, 18. Cfr. ib. I, 22: *Placuit Deo per stultitiam praedicationis salvos facere credentes*; and *Greg. M. Moral. XIV*, in c. 19 Job; No. 54.

² *Migne*, XXI, 458: De Paulo simplice: *Migne*, LXXIII, 1129 (Hist. Laus. c. 28); ib. 1140: A nun who *propter Christum simulabat stultitiam*; ib. 429: *Nescio si sit Deus in coelo, sum enim rusticus*.

figure¹ which Leontius—author of the *Life of S. Joannes Eleemosinarius*²—completes in that of S. Simeon Stultus, adding certain classical traits suggested by reminiscences of the tradition of the Cynic philosophy.

Saint Simeon exhausts all his resources in the effort to be humiliated, derided and despised. He eats lupins in the *piazza*, like Diogenes; he trails behind him a dead dog and the children bay him; he goes about with his clothes over his head, leaving the rest of his person uncovered; and finally, mindful of the other virtues of an ancient hermit, he calmly submits to be accused of a pater-*ernity* of which he is innocent. Charming and pious legend, which demonstrates that supreme, absolute goodness always triumphs over the wiles of the wicked. When Saint Simeon sings the hymn of the great Nikon in a hostelry, the devils immediately take flight.³

Caesarius of Heisterbach has dedicated to Brother Simple an entire book—the sixth—wherein he treats of the virtues of simplicity.⁴ We find our Brother Simple portrayed in many attitudes, and nearly all of them pleasing. It is true, however that the delineator's art—like the fair Hildegund⁵—frequently forgets that its home is the cloister,

¹ Dial. III, 33, 37. Moral. I, in c. 2 Job, No. 49; ib. VIII, in c. 8 Job, No. 85. Cfr. S. P. Dam. Opusc. 45. Op. III, 364: De sancta simplicitate. The ignorant console themselves with the familiar argument: Deus per viros idiotas ac simplices mundum instituit.

² Cfr. Gelzer, in *Sybel's Zeitschr.* N. F. LXI (1899): 1-38. Leontius wrote between 642 and 668 A. D. Simeon, of Edessa, is of the Justinian period.

³ Acta SS. T. I Jul. 136 seqq. Cfr. especially No. 31 (152); No. 34 (153-4); No. 39 (146-7) e Migne, LXXIII, 779, 958. *Diog. Laert.* VI, 2 (48) Monasticism is united to the ancient schools of philosophy by a close bond of kinship.

⁴ *Strange*, I, 441 seqq.

⁵ *Caes.* I, 40 (*Strange*, I, 47 seqq.).

and relapses into sheer gaiety, like a young girl among the crowd at a *festa*.

Brother Simple is the hero of charity. Ensfrid gives all to the poor -- even that which is not his! In the canons' kitchen hang magnificent hams; he cuts them in half, and the part which touches the wall he leaves hanging, that none may observe the absence of that which he has cut off given to the poor.¹ Another Brother, a little daft, but good all the same, goes out by the window instead of the door, and then wends his way on, quite unconscious. Everything, or almost everything, is permitted to the simple and the humble. God protects them.² The Apostle who counselled holy foolishness is the same who said "*Dei sumus adiutores*";³ and Caesarius, mindful that Jesus conquered the world by the virtue of poor ignorant folk, and that He needs must be pleased with those who follow His example, repeats that all simple brethren are "the jesters of the Lord, of the Saints and the angels".

*"Simplex quandoque mimo vel ioculatori comparatur: sicut illius verba vel opera in eorum ore vel manibus, qui ioculator non est, saepe displicent, et poena digni sunt, apud homines, quae tamen ab his dicta vel facta placent: ita est de simplicibus. Ut sic dicam, IOCULATORES DEI SUNT sanctorumque angelorum, quorum opera, si hi qui simplices non sunt, quandoque facerent, haud dubium quin Deum offenderent, qui in eis, dum per simplices fiunt, delectatur"*⁴

Arnold was both simple and pious, but the poetry of devotion was not as spontaneous in him as he would have

¹ VI, 5 (I, 347). He also cuts up and gives to the poor the geese which he finds strung on the spit for roasting in the kitchen of Godofred the Notary.

² VI, 9 (II, 41). Cfr. the delightful stories VI, 2, 7. (I, 357 seq.).

³ I Cor. III, 9.

⁴ VI, 8 (I, 359-60).

desired. "When I wish to excite myself to prayer", he says "*sub cuculla digitos ad similitudinem citharizantis moveo, et corda cordis tango, sicque mentis torporem ad devotionem excito*". Such, at least, was his belief: but, as a matter of fact the fingers that touched the chords of an imaginary lyre drew therefrom in reality a wave of harmonies that was heard afar off.¹

The difference between Caesarius' story and that of Celano is practically nothing: for the extremely slight variants only serve the better to prove the methods by which Thomas worked up German fancies for his own purposes.

Sabatier's *Speculum* is more malicious than usual on this point. The pure legend which was hidden in Brother Leo's² mysterious "notes", has a better knowledge than have modern critics of Brother Thomas' marauding expeditions. According to the *Speculum* of 1318,³ Francis had the idea of putting Bro. Pacifico at the head of a band of holy buffoons—*Frati-giullari*. Pacifico would have preached first to the congregation, and his companions, in chorus would have sung the praises of the Lord, *tantumquam joculatores Domini*.

When the singing was ended the preacher would have brought the ceremony to a close, with the customary jester's plea: "*Nos sumus joculatores Domini, et pro his volumus remunerari a vobis, videlicet ut stetis in vera poenitentia.—Quid enim [ait] sunt servi Dei, nisi quidam joculatores Ejus, qui corda hominum erigere debent et movere ad laetitiam spiritualem?*"⁴ So the compilers of the

¹ VII, 39 (II, 54).

² Tileman, 83 seqq.

³ Op. c. 149. It will be understood that we have little interest in the fixing of the exact date within a year or two.

⁴ Spec. c. 100 (196-7).

fourteenth-century *Speculum*, while repeating Caesarius' charming phrase, reproduced with great exactness the true form of the primitive Franciscan preaching. Brother Pacifico takes the place of Francis, the chorus of Brethren, that of the people who respond to the Saint's words with hymns of devotion. Like Thomas, the compilers wished to give a literary and at the same time a monastic colouring to their description of that reality that was still vivid and alive in pious Franciscan traditions; and so they had recourse to Caesarius. Aegidius, too, has up his sleeve a lyre, *qualem solent pueri effingere*; and takes it up to play an accompaniment to his dialectical arguments in the "contest" with Guardo.¹

Paul the Simple, Saint Simeon Stultus, Ensfrid, Arnold, Christian, reappear in Franciscan garb, with the exaggeration characteristic of imitators, in the figures of Giovanni, Ginepro, Egidio, and even find their way into the verses of Italy's greatest satirist, Carlo Porta.² Ginepro—"Brother Juniper"—instead of cutting hams in half, cuts off the feet of live swine to give pleasure to a poor sick friend. He plays at see-saw, lets himself be all but hanged for a crime he has not committed, and casts away his clothes after the fashion of his ancient colleague. He is also an expert in cookery—after a fashion entirely his own. He cooks together in one huge pot fowls, fish, vegetables and eggs: but, observe, that dish so refreshing to the minds of the brethren, is really drawn from an old monastic recipe of Gregory of Tours.³

¹ Acta SS. Apr. III, 241; No. 99.

² Poesie ed. Firenze, 1884; 115.

³ Anal. Franc. III, 62. *Passerini*, Fioretti 215-6. This story should be compared with that of *Gregory of Tours*. Lib. vitae patrum c. 3 (MG. SS. merov. I, 665-6). Non est dignum ut monachi, quorum vita solitaria est, tam

Now Brother Simple has become a little slovenly. It is difficult to say whether he is trifling or acting and speaking seriously. Art has its rights amongst us. From *sancta simplicitas* Franciscan ardour has drawn these charming figures which come again and again before us, and carry us off in their company into the world where to think is to dream.

The foresight of Celano had provided even against exaggerations! Francis was simple, but not *too* simple. A pleasant little scene suffices him to demonstrate the absurdity of certain unfortunate imitators of the inimitable Saint.

Giovanni is an all too simple peasant who resolves to become a friar. No sooner said than done. He unyokes one of his oxen and offers it to Saint Francis. The poor country family, alarmed at this costly outburst of charity, rush up in tears to the Saint. He reads in their stunted souls the anguish they feel at the thought of losing the beast, and so—"Don't be disturbed", he says, "I give you back the ox, and take the man!" The Master finds in his new disciple an all too conscientious imitator. If Francis coughs, Giovanni coughs; if he expectorates, so does his follower...¹

This delightful satire on the clumsy followers of the Patriarch may perhaps itself be drawn from one of Caesarius' narratives, in which the devil desiring to triumph over a Brother who has fallen into the sin of gluttony

ineptis utantur sumptibus. Et statim iussit praeparari aeneum magnum. Cumque locatus super ignem fervere coepisset, posuit in eo cunctos simul, quos paraverant cibos, tam pisces, quam holera sive legumina, vel quicquid ad comedendum monachis destinatum (sic) fuerat dixitque: De his pulibus nunc reficiantur fratres, nam non deliciis vacent. Cfr. Acta SS. III Feb. 741; and Vita Ioh. Götz in MG. SS. IV, 343.

¹ R. 95 (III, 110); Spec. c. 57.

imitates, gesture for gesture the sham invalid, who has got himself into the infirmary with the sole purpose of eating flesh meat, which is forbidden to those in health.¹

Gathering up into itself every perfection, simplicity prepares for Francis glories both in heaven and in earth. Up above in the empyrean there stands already prepared for him the splendid seat lost by a rebellious angel who was cast down with Pride and with Satan into Hell.² On earth every creature approaches the Saint with entire confidence. Birds find in his hands the protecting warmth of a nest; bees spread their honey over the bowl that has felt the sweet touch of his lip.³ In Francis all is simple, even religion itself. Like Augustine he adores in the beautiful the supreme beauty of God:⁴ but the devotee

¹ *Caes.* V, 6 (*Strange*, I, 286): *Eo modo quo ille claudicaverat et ipse claudicavit, et sicut introspexerat, introspevit, in nullo ab illius gestibus discrepans.*

Thomas writes: *Animaequiores estote*; the phrase occurs in *Vita Pach.* c. 43; *Migne*, LXXIII, 103; 881: *animaequior esto*. In the Scripture I have not found it.

² *R.* 66-7 (III, 63). *Spec.* c. 60. Here it is Frate Pacifico who has the vision. Identical visions will be found in *Migne*, LXXIII, 905; *Caes.* VII, 10. A *sedes vacua mirae pulchritudinis* was reserved for a blind German: *cfr.* VII, 56; XI, 12. Dante reserves a seat in Paradise for Henry VII: *Paradiso*, XXX v. 133 *seqq.*

³ *R.* 83 *seqq.* (III, 101 *seqq.*). If S. Francis had a falcon to wake him, and Elijah (I Kings XVII 6) a raven to bring him bread; S. Benedict also was visited by a diabolical black bird and a good raven. *Greg. M.* Dial. II, 2, 8. The sparrows came down fearlessly into the hands of S. Remedius: *V. S. Rem.* c. 7. *MG. SS. antiquis.* IV, 2; (*Ven. Fortun.* op. *ped.* 65).

On the love of birds: *Hincm.* V. S. Remigi. *MG. SS. Merov.* III, 267: *Aves tam saepe in Scripturis commendantur, sicut passer, columba et turtur; Cassian.* *Conl. mon.* XYIV, 21. CV. 267. *Cfr. Spec.* c. 113. The bees (*R.* 86), *mirabili arte favorum*, built their comb in the vessel from which the Saint used to drink; and constructed a most beautiful *capellula mirae structurae* over a consecrated Host: *Caes.* IX, 8. Celano has also in mind the Legend of St. Ambrose, which makes the bees alight on the Saint's face while he lay, as an infant, sleeping in his cradle. *Paulinus*, *Vita S. Ambros.* c. 3.

⁴ *R.* 83 *seqq.* (III, 101). De contemplatione Creatoris. *Cfr. S. Aug. Confess.* XIII, 32 e IV, 6, 12 CV. 353, 51, 78. Celano writes: *cognoscit in pulchris pulcherrimum*, and Augustine: *Pulchritudo pulchrorum omnium*; XII,

of Saint Michael, of Mary the advocate of the Order, of the Lord's Body, and of the relics of the Saints,¹ is no heretic.

This is what the Father of the Minorites *bad* to be like. And, let us repeat it, through the tissue of falsehoods the truth is visible. But without the patient and austere guidance of criticism, we should have lacked the infallible mark by which the true is distinguished from the false.

We have followed Thomas of Celano in his arduous task of composition; we have seen him place his hand by preference on certain books—and in so doing it has revealed to us the secret of its guiding thought.

Among the monastic types one alone laid its claim upon the artist of the *Speculum*. It was the most singular type of all, and the one least at home in the severe discipline of the cloister: the unlearned man, miracle of goodness, of happy sweetness, of charity, which his word imparts to others with the violence of fire and the force of love.

Criticism has scattered the nebulous images of Celano, and robbed them of their power to keep from us the contemplation of the truth.

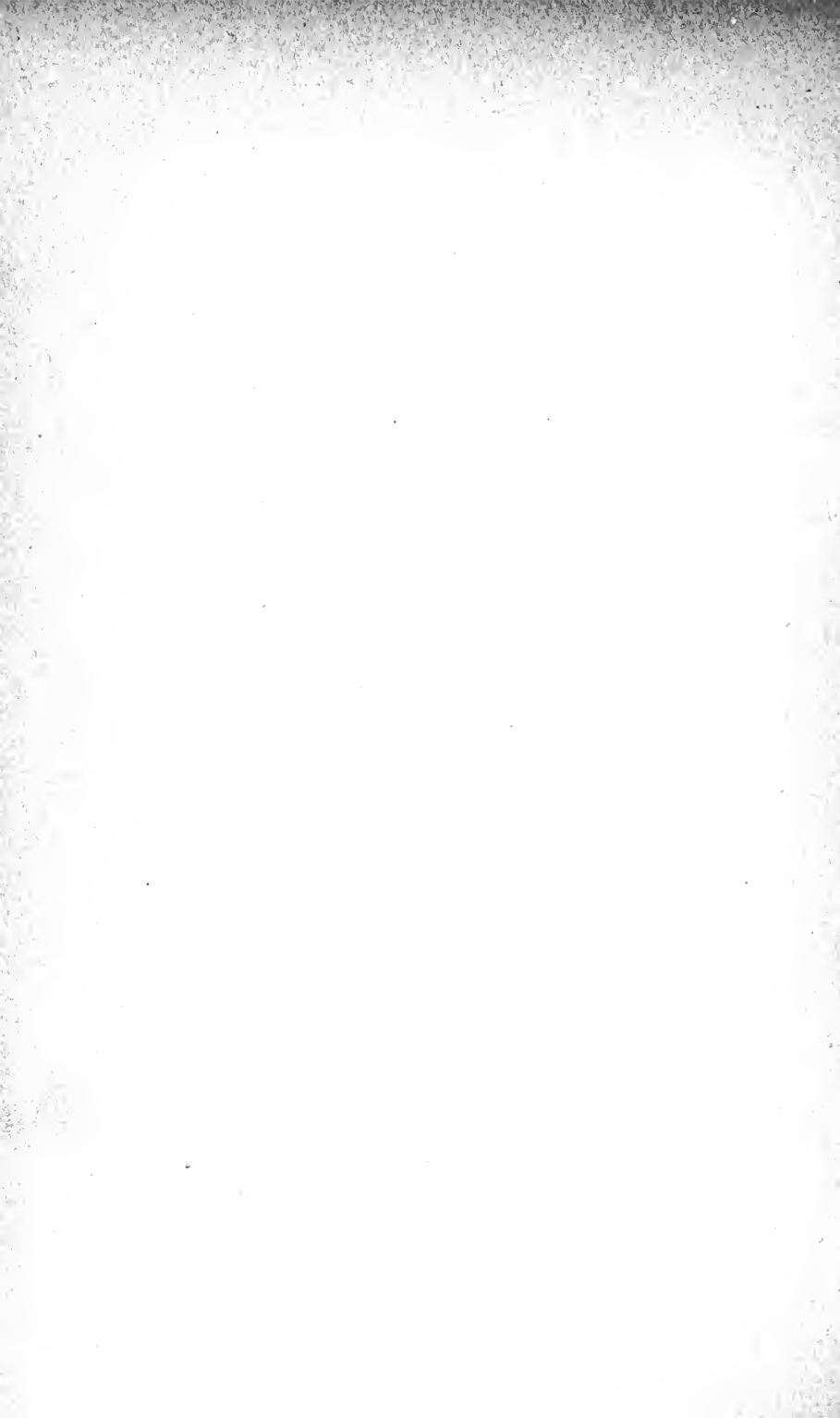
20: *Et pulcra sunt omnia, faciente Te, et ecce Tu inenarrabiliter pulcbrior, qui fecisti omnia.*

¹ R. 98 seqq. *De devotionibus specialibus Sancti*. Mary is the *mater pacis*, the patroness of monasteries. S. P. Dam. Ep. VI, 32; Op. I, 115. Cfr. Caes. VII, 6: *Ordinem Cisterciensem, cuius advocata sum*, etc. ib. XII, 58. Cfr. for the Dominican Legend: *Passavanti*, Specchio della vera penitenza, Dist. III, 4 (ed. Classici Italiani, Milano, 1808; I, 110: *Leggesti nella leggenda del Padre nostro ecc.*). On St. Michael whom the heretics could not forgive for his victories over Satan, see: S. P. Dam. Op. II, 133; Greg. M. Hom. in Evang. II, 34; No. 8. Caes. XIII, 45; XI, 3. St. Michael, as both Celano and Caesarius note, is the *angelus praesentator animarum*. In Italy the sanctuary of Gargano both is and was very famous. S. P. Dam. Op. I, 291; Ep. VII, 17. MG. SS. rerum langob. et ital. 541 seqq. For apparitions of St. Michael, see also Vita S. Guidonis; Acta SS. III, Mart. 913.

From a flowery hill bathed in mystic light, the Saint's dark eyes look forth upon the multitude that surrounds him. He speaks, and the gentle voice is a fervid hymn to the God of peace and love. The rhythm of the lays heard in his gay youth accompanies the harmonious flow of words that melt the coldest hearts. And when Francis ceases, a feeling of infinite devotion that is awakened in the ecstatic heart of the people bursts forth in a chorus that rises solemn as a prayer.

Was it the Nazarene repeating, in the century of heresy, His Sermon on the Mount?

From these hills enveloped in sunshine and in divine hopes, Thomas of Celano cautiously leads away the pious figure to the shade of the cloister, and places him side by side with Saint Benedict.



APPENDIX I

THE DEATH OF SAINT FRANCIS

WE have already had occasion to remark that Thomas of Celano when narrating the story of Saint Francis' death and burial, did not allow himself to be carried away even by such supremely solemn events, but associated with the pale form of the man of Assisi other figures suggested by his classical studies. Probably, as we shall shortly see, Celano himself was not among those who were present at the long agony and death of the Saint. He reached the Porziuncola, however, no long time after: and the nature of his commission from the Pope, rightly conceived, must have guided Thomas in his search for and selection of the facts from which, with the help of his own art and memory, he drew the material for the last chapter, among the rest, of his biography. "All men are born and die in the same manner", some sceptic may observe: yet it is worth while to reflect that the founder of an Order destined to play so large a part in the Church and in Christendom, could not close his lips before his eyes! Generally speaking—and here Thomas stands among a very numerous company—hagiographers demand that the last end of their heroes shall be as solemn as their life. Further the Patriarch's farewell to his brethren—like that of Christ to His Apostles—involves the designation of his successor in the government of the

orphaned family. The last words of the Saints are their "will and testament". One can well understand the importance of the page on which they are inscribed.

Our task is not a heavy one. We begin with the *First Life*,¹ and give a somewhat abbreviated translation of Celano's narrative, with a minimum of explanatory notes.

While Saint Francis was in Siena for the cure of his eyes which had caused him so much suffering, he felt himself worse. The diseases of stomach and liver were aggravated by vomitings of blood, sure sign (so my kind medical friends assure me) that the cancer on the liver had spread to the stomach. Soon serious cardiac complications shewed themselves.

Elias who was afar off sped to his master's side. The sight of his trusted friend was of itself a tonic, so that the invalid found himself able, without extreme distress, to follow Elias into his cell at Cortona. After a short sojourn there, the disease resumed its original violence. The belly and all the limbs swelled up; the stomach refused to take food. Francis, utterly broken down, prayed Elias to have him removed to Assisi: *and the good son did that which his kind father had commanded.*

The whole city rejoiced at the Saint's arrival: why, Celano tells us, somewhat crudely. *The multitude hoped that Francis would die speedily*; for thus Assisi would have acquired a most precious relic in the corpse of the Saint!

The compilers of the *Speculum*, who have amplified at once bombastically and awkwardly the narratives of the First Life and the Second, spare the city Celano's taunt.²

¹ I Vita, 105 seqq. R. 83 seqq.

² c. 121. Says Bro. Elias to the Saint: *Licet homines bujus civitatis te*

The few words with which, in all probability, the Saint commended his beloved Porziuncola to the brethren are transformed in the *Speculum*—perhaps with a view to obliterating Celano's harsh phrase—into an affectionate greeting to the city of Assisi.¹

Meanwhile, as the malady advances, Francis loses strength. When asked by a certain Brother if he would have preferred some sharper martyrdom, even by the executioner's hand, to the long agony of his illness, he replied that he was resigned to the will of God. Yet he did not deny that even a few days of the pain that was then tormenting him would be quite unbearable. It seems as though question and answer alike find place in the narrative in order that Thomas may have full justification for his pompous apostrophe: *O martyr, o martyr, qui RIDENS et GAUDENS libentissime tolerabat, quod erat omnibus acerbissimum et gravissimum intueri*:² thus shamelessly pilfering from Sulpicius Severus, who exclaims: *O virum ineffabilem, nec labore victum, nec morte vincendum... nec mori timuerit, nec vivere recusaverit*...³ *Laetus ulceribus congaudens-que cruciatibus, qualibet inter tormenta RISISSET*.⁴

venerentur pro sancto, tamen quia credunt firmiter, propter banc infirmitatem tuam incurabilem, te in proximo morituum... The odious character which is intended to be attributed to Bro. Elias emerges here and elsewhere. Beneath is discernible the purpose of the *Speculum* to represent the man of Cortona as glad at the approaching death of the Saint, to whom he blurts out the news that his end is near. The words of Elias are the same that Thomas employs.

¹ c. 124. Fior. *Quarta consid.* ed. Cesari 128. The words are common: *Tom.* Dignum habete locum habitaculum Dei. *Spec.* Locus et habitatio illorum qui Te agnoscunt vere etc.

² I Vita, 107. R. 85. In the later legends exaggerations accumulate without limit. Bartolomeo da Pisa makes the Saint say: Domine, Te rogo, ut [de omnibus doloribus] *centuplum*, si Tibi placuerit, addas; Conform. (ed. Bononiae 1590; 315) III, fr. 4.

³ Ep. III; CV. 148.

⁴ Ep. II; CV. 144.

Resignation of the will to the Lord on one's deathbed is one of the natural notes of sanctity.¹

The physicians marvelled that the patient—now but skin and bone—still held out. Death came not to set him free, because his hour was not yet come. In common with not a few of the Saints, Francis knew by Divine revelation when his end was to be.² Elias, while he was with him at Foligno, had a vision. There appeared to him an old and venerable priest clad entirely in white, who said to him: "Arise and announce to Francis that eighteen years are past since his conversion: he shall have but two more years of life".³ The vision, as it happened, was vouchsafed to the man who would be most interested to know this date!⁴

When the Saint perceived that his last day was at hand, *vocatis ad se fratribus quos volebat... velut olim patriarcha Jacob suis filiis benedixit, immo velut alter Moyses ascensurus in montem, quem constituit ei Deus, filios Israelis benedictionibus ampliavit. Cumque a sinistra ipsius resideret frater Helyas, circumsedentibus reliquis filiis, cancellatis manibus, dexteram posuit super caput ejus, et exteriorum oculorum lumine privatus et usu, "super*

¹ Non ita inter vos vixi, ut pudeat me vivere; nec timeo mori, quia Dominum bonum habemus: *Paulinus*, Vita S. Ambr. c. 45. And St. Martin: Domine, si adhuc populo tuo sum necessarius, non recuso laborem; *fiat voluntas tua!* Ep. III, CV. 148.

² Vita S. Ambr. cit. 41: Ipse autem de sua morte ante praedixit. *Sulp. Sev.* Ep. III, 147: Martinus - obitum suum longe ante praesciit, dixitque fratribus dissolutionem sui corporis imminere. *Eugippii*, Vita S. Sev. c. 41: Diem etiam, quo transiturus esset idem S. Severinus e corpore, ante duos seu amplius annos, hac significatione monstravit.

³ I Vita 108, 109; R. 85-6.

⁴ Spec. c. 121 (237). Sabatier, unaware that the *Speculum* is simply repeating Celano's words, sets himself to study, the interrelation of ideas and facts which... come from the same narrative.

quem, inquit, teneo dexteram meam ? "Super fratrem Helyam" inquit. "Et sic ego volo" ait. Te, inquit, fili, in omnibus et super omnia benedico; et sicut in manibus tuis fratres meos et filios augmentavit Altissimus, ita super te et in te omnibus benedico. In coelo et in terra benedicat te Rex omnium Deus. Benedico te sicut possum et plusquam possum; et quod non possum ego, possit in te Qui omnia potest".

"Valete, filii omnes, in timore Dei; et permanete in ipso semper, quoniam futura est super vos temptatio maxima et tribulatio appropinquat. Felices qui in his, quae coeperunt, perseverabunt, a quibus nonnullos futura scandala separabunt. Ego enim ad Dominum propero, et ad Deum meum, cui devote in spiritu meo serviivi, iam ire confido".¹

All this took place in the Bishop's palace at Assisi; whence the Saint, at his own request, was soon removed to the Porziuncola.

And this is, as we said a little earlier, the Testament of Francis.

He asks where his hand is laid, and as if that were not enough, most vehemently confirming his wish (*ego sic volo*), like Jacob, he designates Elias for the governing of his family with a blessing. Here we begin to enjoy the fruits of Celano's useful reading and of the instructions given him from above. Saint Ambrose had written: *Benedictio cuiusque morituri, tantum virtutis habet, ut eam sibi sanctus propheta optaverit* (Job. 29, 13)... *Hic versiculus quantos benedici fecit!*² But the dying man

¹ I Vita 105. R. 85-6.

² De bono mortis, VIII, 36; CV. XXII, 734-5.

was Francis of Assisi; what a virtue would his words of benediction possess! Thomas remembered also the long discourse of Severinus to his brethren, which begins: "*Scitis quod beatus Iacob de saeculo recessurus, conditione mortis instante, filios suos adesse praecipiens, et propheticae benedictionis affatibus singulos quosque remunerans, mysteriorum arcana prodidit futurorum*":¹ and he knew by heart, the story of the death of Pachomius, another celebrated Founder of an Order: *Ante duos dies sanctae dormitionis suae, convocans universos fratres, ait ad eos: Ego quidem, charissimi, viam patrum securus ingredior; nam video me a Domino protinus evocari... Eligite, igitur, ex vobis fratrem, me praesente, qui post Deum, vobis praesit... quantum vero mea discretio perpendo, Petronium ego ad hoc opus idoneum iudico.*²

The right of electing the abbot was anciently recognised as belonging to the monks. In that return to cenobitic ideas of a more remote antiquity favoured by Gregory IX, it was judged opportune that this right should be tempered by the presence and the advice of the dying Patriarch.³

¹ *Eugippi, Vita Severini*, c. 43 (50).

² *Migne*, LXXIII, 271; *Rosweyde*, 137. For other instances of designations of his successor by the abbot, see *Vita Posthumii* c. 6; *ib.* 235-6; etc.

³ This designation by the abbot with the consent of the monks was evidently aimed at the bishops—to wrest from them the right of nominating the abbots. Roman legislation was indecisive. A *novella* of Justinian (V, 9) first recognised the rights of the bishops, then (CXXIII, 34) admitted the free election of the abbot. Cfr. *Knecht*, *Op. cit.* 58, 59. In Italy at any rate, the founders of the monasteries obtained for their convents by the so called charters *libertationis* (of which a vast number are extant), the renunciation of all eventual rights of the bishop. We cite only the most ancient of such documents: *Troya*, *Cod. Dipl. Long.* II, No. 349; anno 685 (?), in which the Bishop of Lucca promised to Barbino, abbot of S. Frediano, not to touch the property bestowed on the monastery by Faulone, and adds: *Et si abbas de banc luce migratus et dormierit cum patribus suis et si (?) [Monaci] ipsi eligerent sibi Abbatem ordinandum, ipsum sibi abbatem debeant ordinare.* The bishop only retained the prerogative of giving his benediction to the abbot-elect.

The Order was a new one, and it was essential that Francis should be succeeded by a man of firm and resolute character, who should give security for the continued government of the Minorites on those lines which Elias had been known to follow when taking the place of the Saint. And for this reason, too, Celano had not stinted his eulogies of the man of Cortona ! Every one is liable to mistakes !

Thomas heaps benediction on benediction upon the head of Elias and lavishes expressive phrases to shew what was the desire of Francis, who, as a matter of fact, subject as he was to the overbearing spirit of Elias, most probably differed very little from the views of his biographer in the matter.

The overt designation of Elias to be governor of the Order takes place, be it observed, in the Palace of the Bishop of Assisi.

We are dealing with a period which was marked by an energetic reaction of a still more ancient law against the old juridical and canonical institutions.¹ Both the Pope and those of the Brethren who might have been called politicians, had already fixed their eyes on the man who even in the Saint's life-time had known how to rule the family with a resolute and rigid hand. For that family, composed as it was of somewhat doubtful elements gathered at random, needed, after the disappearance of Francis, an iron hand to keep it in the line of duty.

We who, at a distance of so many centuries are on the look out for the benign diffusion of Franciscan ideals in the conscience of the epoch, cannot bring ourselves to conceive of the great movement of Assisi as a phenome-

¹ For the intervention of the episcopal and papal authority in the election of abbots, see *Decr. Greg. IX*, I, 6, c. 14, 16, 37 etc.

non ruled by certain cold considerations far removed from the high dreams of the "Poverello". But when it was a question of the security of the institution, the monks would lay aside all scruples, and put at the head of a convent, if necessary, the son of some powerful person who had entered the cloister simply and solely with a view to being made abbot.¹

I do not wish to discuss Lempp's book on Brother Elias, so I return to Saint Francis.

The political aims of Gregory IX made capital out of the Saint's affection for the man of Cortona. The Pope was acquainted with the strong and fearless nature of Elias, and therefore had no objection to his figuring, side by side with the great abbot of the *De Vitis Patrum*, as the favourite monk, receiving, in classical pose, the succession from the lips of the Saint so soon to be silent in death.

In S. Maria della Porziuncola, after several days of quiet, Francis feels that the Lord is drawing nigh. We have quitted the pomp of the episcopal Palace; and find ourselves in the tender intimacy of the home. It is not the Founder of the Order, but the Father who calls to his side *suos fratres et suos filios spirituales, praecipiens eis de morte propinqua, immo de vita proxima, in exultatione spiritus, alta voce laudes Domino decantare. Ipse vero, prout potuit, in illum davidicum psalmum erupit: Voce mea ad Dominum clamavi.*² In the same way (it may be mentioned incidentally) had another prepared him-

¹ Decr. Greg. IX, I, 6, 38 (Inn. III; Balut. XI, 262).

² I Vita, 109 (R. 87). Cfr. Vita S. Benedicti Abb. Clus. MG. SS. XII, 207: Ter illam b. Andreae antiphonam largo fletu ore rigatus, PROUT POTUIT cantavit: Domine Jesu Christe, Magister bone, etc.

self for the last great journey :—Severinus, who to his weeping brethren *maioris suffusione cunctantibus, ipse psalmum protulit ad canendum : Laudate Dominum in sanctis ejus.*¹

In the *Second Life* and the *Speculum* these chantings become hymns (*laudes*) of Francis' own composition.²

Celano continues : *Frater autem quidem de assistentibus quem Sanctus satis magno diligebat amore, pro fratribus omnibus plurimum existens sollicitus, cum haec intueretur, et Sancti cognosceret exitum appropinquare, dixit ad eum : "Benigne PATER heu ! absque PATRE iam remanent filii, et oculorum privantur lumine vero. Recordare igitur ORPHANORUM,"³ QUOS DESERIS,⁴ et omnibus culpis remis- sis, tam praesentes quam absentes, omnes tua sancta benedictione laetifica". Ad quem Sanctus : "Ecce (inquit) EGO VOCOR A DEO,"⁵ fili ; fratribus meis, tam absentibus quam praesentibus offensas omnes et culpas remitto ; et eos, sicut possum, absolvo, quibus TU HOC DENUNTIANS, EX PARTE MEA, OMNIBUS BENEDICES".*

Let the reader (if such there be) kindly glance at the notes at the foot of the page, and he will at once be in possession of some excellent examples of Celano's literary larcenies.

It is useless to ask who was that well-beloved disciple on whom Francis laid the pious task of blessing all in his name. So many things might be thought and said and

¹ Vita S. Severini, c. 43 (51 lin. 23-5).

² Il Vita III, 139 (R. 108) ; Spec. c. 122, 123. The extreme weakness of the Saint's condition at the time has obviously been forgotten !

³ Ioa. XIV, 20 : *Non relinquam vos ORPHANOS.*

⁴ Sulp. Sev. Ep. III ; CV. 148 : *Cur nos PATER DESERIS ?... Nostri... miserere QUOS DESERIS.*

⁵ Vita Pach. l. c. VIDEO ME A DOMINO EVOCARI.

even put forward as extremely probable conjectures. It is better, surely, to leave to others the task of building up legends in detail. Only this we may be allowed to add, that the Brother in question *might* be one of the first "companions", who in the intimacy of the Porziuncola had been bold enough to address the Father. In the *Second Life* Thomas administers a sharp rebuke to those who usurped to themselves that special benediction: *Nul-lus sibi hanc benedictionem usurpet, quam pro absentibus in praesentibus promulgavit*:¹ and the reason of the re-proof needs no further explanation.

If the *Second Life* had not escaped the general destruction of the legends that was instituted to make way for that of Saint Bonaventure, our knowledge of Celano's mania for putting himself to the fore might have led us to suspect an identity between the "well-beloved disciple" and our biographer, who, as a matter of fact had a material pledge of benediction in the shape of a relic of the Saint to give to Brother Jordanus, his old companion in the German mission, when that Brother reached Assisi.² But logic, which is valid in many regions of thought, frequently falls to pieces in the historical sphere over some trivial fact. If the doctrine of interpolations were to be extended to Franciscan studies, there would be room for the hypothesis that those words in the *Second Life* were a very late addition. For my part, however, I prefer to leave the texts as they have come down to us. Moreover Thomas was constrained by circumstances—the controlling influence of the multitude of witnesses, and the

¹ III, 139 (R. 108).

² *Jord.* c. 59; *Voigt*, l. c. 543. Jordanus takes the relic and—forgets that he has it with him. A miracle was required to jog his memory!

recent date of the events referred to—not to presume too much upon his own erudition or his mandate from Pope Gregory. Even for a rhetorician, *est modus in rebus*: and some scraps of truth seem to emerge, in fact, from the artistic labour of Celano.

Now let us return to the Saint's bedside. He *iussit denique codicem Evangeliorum portari, ET EVANGELIUM SECUNDUM IOANNEM SIBI LEGI POPOSCIT, ab eo loco ubi incipit: Ante sex dies Paschae, sciens Jesus etc.*¹

In the Second Life Brother Elias and the disciples disappear, and—more significant still—so does the reading from the Gospel according to Saint John. What brightens the Saint's last hour in this narrative, is the knowledge that he has the temporary use and not the proprietorship of the modest attire that has been lent him! Francis who towers up in the memory of his times, like Jesus himself, breaks bread and hands it to the brethren, whom he blesses. The strains that in the recesses of the humble Porziuncola resound around the Patriarch's death-bed are his own '*lodi*' (*verba quaedam quae olim composuerat*).²

In that shipwreck of sensations and ideas which shortly precedes death, the most vivid recollections of youth are apt to float to the surface: it is these that have left the profoundest impression on the consciousness, and oppose the onrush of its dissolution. Francis asks and desires to have read to him the Gospel of Saint John, the favourite scripture of heretics. Was this a fugitive return of the dying man to the ceremony of the *consolamentum*?

A Saint, who was to be shortly canonized by the Pope, (and let us remember, we are in the century of hetero-

¹ *Ioa.* XIII, 1.

² *II Vita* III, 139 (*R.* 108).

doxy *par excellence*) died so—like a thorough heretic! To minimise the impression produced by the fact, Celano borrows a description from Sulpicius Severus, and shews us the Saint breathing his last, like Saint Martin and many another champion of Christ, on hair-cloth and ashes.¹

And now that the Saint is dead our unctuous author may at last put into the narrative something entirely his own. It is, as it were, the reward that he allows himself for the laborious and detailed use of his learning. Listen to it. *Unus, autem, ex fratribus et discipulis eius, fama non modicum celebris, cuius nomen nunc existimo reticendum, quoniam dum vivit, non vult tanto praeconio gloriari, VIDIT animam sanctissimi Patris, RECTO TRAMITE, IN COELUM conscendere super aquas multas. ERAT enim QUASI STELLA... CANDIDA SUBVECTA NUBECULA.*²

We are already aware who was that Brother "no little famous"; we know him by his erudition. Thomas employs in his description of the vision a passage of the Dialogues of Saint Gregory, the Second Letter of Sulpicius Severus, and reminiscences of the book of that monk

¹ I Vita 52: Nullis sinebat stramentis seu vestibus operiri, sed nuda humus, tunica interposita, nuda suscipiebat membra. Ib. 110: lussit proinde se *superponi* cilicio et conspergi cinere, quia terra et cinis mox erat futurus.

Sulp. Sev. III, CV. 149: Nobili illo strato suo in cinere et cilicio recubans. Et cum a discipulis rogaretur, ut saltim vilia sibi *sineret stramenta subponi*, non decet, inquit, Christianum nisi in cinere mori. Read the hyperbolic narratives of Bartolomeo da Pisa: Lib. Conform. III, fr. 4; ed. cit. 319 v.

² I Vita 110; (R. 87-8). The Saint's soul, in the form of a star rises up to heaven *per multas aquas*. According to the mystical interpretation of Gregory the Great, water « *pluralitatis appellatione* » indicates the *septiformis donorum spiritualium gratia*: Moral. XI, in c. 12 Job; No. 14, or in the singular; *aqua scientia praedicationis accipitur*. Cfr. also Moral. XIX, in c. 28 Job; No. 9: Per aquam - bonorum mentes, *fidei praedicamenta sequentium*, designantur... Per Psalmistam dicitur: *Vox Domini super aquas* [Psalm. 28, 3]. Thomas, in his description of the apparition, certainly kept close to the best models of classical symbolism.

who had enlivened the long evenings of his sojourn in Germany.

Gregory the Great describes in the following words what was seen by two disciples of Saint Benedict immediately after that Saint's death: *VIDERUNT... quia strata palliis atque innumeris corusca lampadibus via, RECTO Orientis TRAMITE, ab eius cella IN COELUM usque tendebatur.*¹

The vain Sulpicius Severus is visited by the vision of Saint Martin who is on his way to Paradise. Even in the midst of his heavenward journey the Saint deigns to remember his biographer: *Repente S. Martinum episcopum videre mihi videor, praetextum toga CANDIDA vultu igneo, stellantibus oculis... adridensque mihi paululum libellum, quem de vita illius scripseram, dextera praeferebat... Mox... subito mihi in sublime sublatus eripitur; donec emensa aeris istius vastitate, cum tamen rapida NUBE SUBVECTUM acie sequeremur oculorum, patenti coelo receptus, videri ultra non potuit.*²

As if the foregoing sources of inspiration were not enough, Paulinus reminded Thomas how, above the body of Saint Ambrose, *plurimi... STELLAM... se vidisse narrabant.*³

A true theory on the significance of the appearance of stars is expounded by Caesarius. *Quod vero, he writes, super morientem, STELLA visa est, signum fuit quod sancta... anima, in magna virtutum celeritate, Christo soli iustitiae coniuncta est.*⁴

Celano had described the star as being bright as the sun and large as the moon, in order that there might be no mistake whatever about the sign.

¹ Dial. II, 37.

² CV. 142-3.

³ Vita cit. c. 48.

⁴ Caes. I, 6; (*Strange*, I, 15).

The soul had winged its flight into heaven; the body, object of the unanimous veneration of an entire people, attested, by the Divine *stigmata*, the other and more solemn miracle wrought in the person of the man of Assisi.

After the mournings and rejoicings of the Minors and of the *Povere Donne*,¹ Celano proceeds with a paraphrase of Sulpicius Severus, recording the miraculous beauty of those poor members: *Intuebantur... carnem illius, quae nigra fuerat prius, candore nimio renitentem, et ex sui pulchritudine beatae resurrectionis praemia pollicentem. Cernebant denique vultum eius, quasi vultum angeli, quasi viveret, non sicut mortuus esset.*²

Saint Bonaventure recounts in his Legend that the larks, wheeling round with unaccustomed gladness, assembled towards evening upon the roof of the cell where the Saint had breathed his last.³ Those creatures dear to the heart of Francis, and haters of darkness, were attracted, mistakenly, by the light which streamed out from the glorious pallet where he lay. Perchance they believed that a new sun was rising there, heralded by the red flames of dawn. On the contrary, it was a gloomy sunset. The "Poverello" had accomplished his most pure mission: and now the mission of the Order was free to begin.

¹ I Vita 112 (R. 88-9). *Catervatim tota civitas ruit. Sulp. Sev. Ep. III; CV. 150: Tota obviam corpori civitas ruit. I Vita l. c. Unusquisque autem cantabat canticum laetitiae... ib. 117: Sed virgineus pudor multo fletui imperabat. Ep. cit. Tum virginum chorus fletu abstines, prae pudore... Dum unusquisque et sibi praestat ut doleat, etc.*

² Ep. cit. 149-150: Testatique nobis sunt, qui ibidem fuerunt, vidisse se vultum eius tamquam vultum angeli: membra autem eius candida, tamquam nix, videbantur... iam enim sic videbatur, quasi in futurae resurrectionis gloria et natura demutatae carnis ostensus esset. Cfr. *Paulinus, Vita S. Ambr. c. 42: Post quod, facta est facies eius velut nix.*

³ Acta SS. II Oct. 662; No. 213.

APPENDIX II

THE LEGEND OF THE ROBBERS

Speculum perfectionis IV, 66 ; ed. *Sabatier* ; 123 seqq.

Qualiter docuit quosdam fratres lucrari animas quorumdam latronum per humilitatem et caritatem.

IN quodam eremitorio fratrum super Burgum Sancti Sepulcri veniebant latrones aliquando pro pane, qui latitabant in sylvis et expoliabant homines transeuntes : quidam fratres dicebant quod non erat bonum illis dare eleemosynam, alii vero ex compassione dabant ad movendum eos ad paenitentiam.

Iterim beatus Franciscus venit ad locum illum, quem fratres interrogaverunt, utrum esset bonum eis dare eleemosynam, et ait illis beatus Franciscus : " Si feceritis sicut dixero vobis, confido in Domino quod lucrabimini animas eorum. Ite ergo et acquirite de bono pane et de bono vino et deferte illis in sylva ubi morantur et clamate dicentes : ' Fratres latrones, venite ad nos quia fratres sumus et portamus vobis bonum panem et bonum vinum ! ' "

Illi statim venient. Vos autem extendite toaleam in terra et desuper ponite panem et vinum et servite humiliter et laetanter donec manducaverint. Post comestionem vero dicetis eis de verbo Domini, et finaliter petatis ob amorem Dei hanc primam petitionem, ut scilicet promittant vobis quod non

percutient nec alicui malum facient in persona. Si enim omnia simul peteritis non vos exaudirent, ipsi autem propter humilitatem et caritatem vestram statim promittent vobis.

Altera vero die propter bonam promissionem apportate eis cum pane et vino ova et caseum, et servite donec comederint. Et post comestionem dicetis eis: 'Quid hic statis tota die ad moriendum fame et tolerandum tot adversa, et cum hoc facitis tot mala voluntate et operatione, pro quibus perditis animas vestras, nisi ad Dominum convertamini? Melius est ut Domino serviatis, et ipse in hoc saeculo tribuet vobis necessaria corporum et finaliter salvabit animas vestras. Tunc eis Dominus inspirabit ut, propter humilitatem et patientiam vestram quam illis ostenderitis, convertantur' ''.

Fecerunt itaque fratres omnia sicut eis dixit beatus Franciscus, et ipsi latrones per gratiam et misericordiam Dei exaudiverunt et servaverunt de littera ad litteram, de puncto ad punctum, omnia quaecumque fratres ab eis humiliter petierunt. Imo, propter humilitatem et familiaritatem fratrum circa illos, coeperunt et ipsi fratribus humiliter servire portantes in humeris suis ligna usque ad eremitorium et tandem aliqui ex ipsis intraverunt religionem. Alii vero confitentes peccata sua egerunt paenitentiam de commissis, promittentes in manibus fratrum de cetero se velle vivere de labore manuum suarum et nunquam similia perpetrare.

Actus B. Francisci et sociorum ejus, c. 29; ed. *Sabatier* 97 seqq.¹

De tribus latronibus conversis per sanctum Franciscum quorum uni revelata fuit poena inferni et gloria paradisi.

Beatissimus pater Franciscus, cupiens omnes homines perducere ad salutem, mundum per diversas provincias circuibat : et quocumque ibat, quia divino Spiritu ducebatur, novam familiam Domino acquirebat. Unde sicut vas electum a Domino erat balsamum gratiae infundendo, propter quod perrexit in Scлавoniam, in Marchiam Triviginam, in Marchiam Anconitanam, in Apuliam, in Sarraciniam et in multas alias provincias, ubique multiplicando servos Domini nostri Jesu Christi.

Unde quum semel transiret per Montem Casalem, castrum quod est in districtu Burgi Sancti Sepulcri, recepit ibi unum juvenem nobilem de Burgo praedicto. Qui quum venisset ad beatum Franciscum, dixit ei : "Pater, ego vellem libentissime effici frater vester". Sanctus vero Franciscus respondit ei : "Fili, tu es unus juvenis delicatus et nobilis : forte paupertatem nostram et asperitatem non poteris sustinere".² Ille vero ait : "Pater, nonne vos estis homines sicut ego ? Sicut ergo vos qui estis mei similes sustinetis, sic et ego, cum adjutorio Dei, potero sustinere !" Quae responsio multum placuit sancto Francisco et statim recepit eum et benedixit, et fratrem Angelum appellavit. Qui ita gratiose se habuit quod paulo post ipsum in praedicto Monte Casali guardianum instituit.

¹ Fioretti, No. 26.

² An old monastic refrain ! *Passavanti*, Specchio della vera penitenza, ed. Milano, 1808 ; I, 26.

In illis autem diebus erant tres famosi latrones in partibus illis, qui undique multa maleficia perpetrabant. Isti latrones quadam die ad praedictum locum venerunt, rogantes fratrem Angelum guardianum ut eis de comestibilibus provideret. Ipse guardianus, rigida reprehensione eos redarguens, dixit eis: "Vos, fures et saevissimi homicidae, non solum non erubescitis labores aliorum praedari, sed insuper praesumitis, ut effrontes, eleemosynas, servis Dei exhibitas devorare! Quum non sitis digni quod vos terra sustineat! Quia et nullum hominem reveremini, et Deum qui vos creavit contemnitis. Ite ergo pro factis vestris et huc amplius nunquam accedatis!" Illi vero turbati valde cum indignatione maxima recesserunt. Et ecce eodem die sanctus Franciscus ad locum rediit, portans de quaesta quam cum socio fecerat unam tascam panis et unum butigulum vini.

Quum autem guardianus qualiter illos latrones repulerat retulisset, sanctus Franciscus dure redarguit ipsum, dicens quod impie gessit, quia peccatores melius reducuntur cum dulcedine pietatis quam increpatione crudeli.¹ "Nam et Christus, magister noster cujus Evangelium servare promissimus: *Non, inquit, opus est valentibus medicus, sed male habentibus et non veni vocare justos sed peccatores*, et ideo frequenter cum peccatoribus manducabat. Quia ergo contra caritatem et contra exemplum Jesu Christi fecisti, per sanctam obedientiam praecipio tibi quod statim accipias tascam istam panum et vasculum vini quod acquisieram. Et sollicite per montes et valles dictos latrones quaeras, donec invenias. Et panes istos omnes et vinum praesentabis eis ex parte mea, et postea coram illis genuflectens,

¹ Cfr. S. Greg. M. Reg. Pastor. II, 10.

de incurialitate et crudelitate tua dicas humiliter culpam tuam. Et roga illos ex parte mea quod amplius mala ista non faciant, sed Deum timeant et proximos non offendant. Et si haec fecerint, ego promitto eis de necessariis pro eorum corporibus continue providere. Et quum illis haec humiliter dixeris, revertaris”.

Interim tunc sanctus Franciscus pro illis rogabat Dominum, ut illorum corda ad paenitentiam emolliret.

Unde factum est quod, quum eleemosynas illas a sancto Francisco transmissas latrones illi comederent, ad invicem conferre coeperunt et dicere: “Heu! nos miseros et infelices, quos durus et infernalis cruciatus exspectat! qui pergitimus non solum praedando homines et vulnerando sed etiam occidendo: et tamen de tam horrendis sceleribus et homicidiis nullo Dei timore et compunctione conscientiae stimulamur. Et ecce iste sanctus frater, qui venit modo ad nos, propter aliqua verba valde justa propter nostram malitiam in nos irrogata, se coram nobis tam humiliter accusavit. Et insuper sancti patris tam liberale promissum retulit, et panis et vini beneficium attulit caritatis. Vere isti sunt sancti Dei, qui caelestem patriam promerentur. Nos, filii perditionis aeternae, per flammam ultrices quotidie nobis nostri nefandis sceleribus cumulamus! Nescio utrum de patris facinoribus et commissis flagitiis possimus a Deo misericordiam invenire”. Uno vero illorum praedicta verba dicente, reliqui duo dixerunt: “Quid ergo faciendum est nobis?” Et ille: “Eamus, inquit, ad sanctum Franciscum, et si ipse nobis confidentiam tribuat quod possimus de magnis peccatis nostris misericordiam invenire a Deo, quidquid ipse mandaverit faciamus, ut possimus animas nostras de inferni barathro liberare”.

In quo consilio omnes tres concorditer consenserunt. Et

venerunt festinanter ad sanctum Franciscum, dicentes : "Pater, nos propter multa et pessima peccata nostra non confidimus posse misericordiam Dei invenire ; sed tu, si confidis quod Deus ad suam misericordiam non recipiat, ecce parati sumus tecum paenitentiam facere et in omnibus quae nobis praeceperis obedire". Quos sanctus Franciscus benigne et caritative recipiens, exemplis eos multiplicibus exhortando, certos eos de invenienda Dei misericordia reddidit. Et insuper se illis acquisitum a Domino ipsam misericordiam et gratiam repromisit. Instruens illos etiam quomodo divinae misericordiae immensurabilis magnitudo cuncta peccata nostra, etiam si infinita essent, praecellit ; et quomodo, testante Evangelio et apostolo Paulo, Christus in hunc mundum pro peccatoribus venit redimendis.

Propter quae salubria hortamenta tres dicti latrones abrenuntiaverunt mundo, et recepti a sancto patre, sibi tam habitu quam animo adhaeserunt...

Exempla of Jacques de Vitry ; ed. *Crane*, No. 68 ; 29 seqq.

... De quodam abbate valde religioso audivi quod, cum quidam latro pessimus, quasi homo desperatus et princeps latronum, regionem in quam habitabat predaretur, multos spoliens et jugulans, abbas ille equum ascendens ivit ad locum, ubi latro cum sociis suis morabatur. Videntes autem illum a longe concurrerunt ut equum illi auferrent et vestibus spoliarent. Cumque abbas quereretur a principe latronum quid vellet ; "Volo, inquit, equum illum et omnia vestimenta tua". Cui abbas : "Aliquanto tempore equum istum equitavi et vestibus istis usus sum, non est justum

ut bona Dei solus habeam, sed tibi et sociis tuis, si indigetis, volo communicare”.

Ait latro : “Hodie equum et vestes vendemus, ut panem et vinum et carnes emamus”. Cui abbas : “Fili, quare tamen laboras pro victu tuo et exponis te periculo? Veni mecum ad monasterium et ego quamdiu volueris, melius procurabo te et omnia necessaria tibi dabo”. Cui latro : “Non possem manducare fabas vestras et olera, nec bibere vinum corruptum aut cervisiam vestram”. Cui abbas : “Dabo tibi panem album et vinum optimum et tot fercula carniū et piscium quot desiderat anima tua”.

Cumque vix ille acquiesceret ut aliquanto tempore probaret quid ei facere vellet abbas, postquam veniret ad monasterium, duxit eum abbas in cameram valde pulchram et fecit fieri magnum ignem et lectum pulchrum et suavem coopertoriis preciosis, assignans ei monachum, qui omnia quaecumque desideraret sibi prepararet, precepitque abbas monacho ut omni die, postquam latro splendide comedisset, ipse coram eo non nisi panem et aquam comederet.

Cumque latro pluribus diebus monachus ille artam dietam observantem vidisset, cepit cogitare quod monachus ille multa mala fecisset, qui tam duram faciebat penitentiam, et quadam die quesivit ab eo : “Frater, quid fecisti qui te omni die ita affligis, si homines interfecisti?” Cui monachus : “Absit, domine, quod unquam hominem contristaverim, nedum occiderim ; ego enim a puericia mea hoc monasterium intravi”. Cui latro : “Si fornicationem vel adulterium vel sacrilegium fecisti?” Cui ille, pre ammiratione se signando, ait : “Domine, quid est quod dixisti? Deus tantam iniquitatem avertat a me! Ego nec unquam feminam tetigi”. “Quid igitur fecisti quod ita corpus tuum affligis?” Ait monachus : “Domine, propter Dominum

hec facio ut jejunando, orando, alia opera penitencie faciendo, Dominum mihi propitium reddam”.

Audiens latro valde compunctus est, et cepit intra se cogitare : Quam miser sum et infelix, qui tot mala, tot furta, tot homicidia, tot adulteria et sacrilegia semper feci et nunquam vel una die jejunavi ! Et iste monachus innocens tantam penitentiam omni die facit ; et, vocato abbate, cecidit ad pedes ejus, rogans eum ut in collegio fratrum reciperet ipsum. Qui postea diu in monasterio adeo se afflixit, quod omnes alios abstinencia et religione superavit, et ita abbas *exemplo monachi*, qui ministrabat latroni, non solum animam ejus lucratus est Deo, sed multos a morte liberavit, quos latro ille spoliasset et jugulasset.

Ecce quantum prodest EXEMPLUM BONUM, e contrario valde nocet EXEMPLUM MALUM.

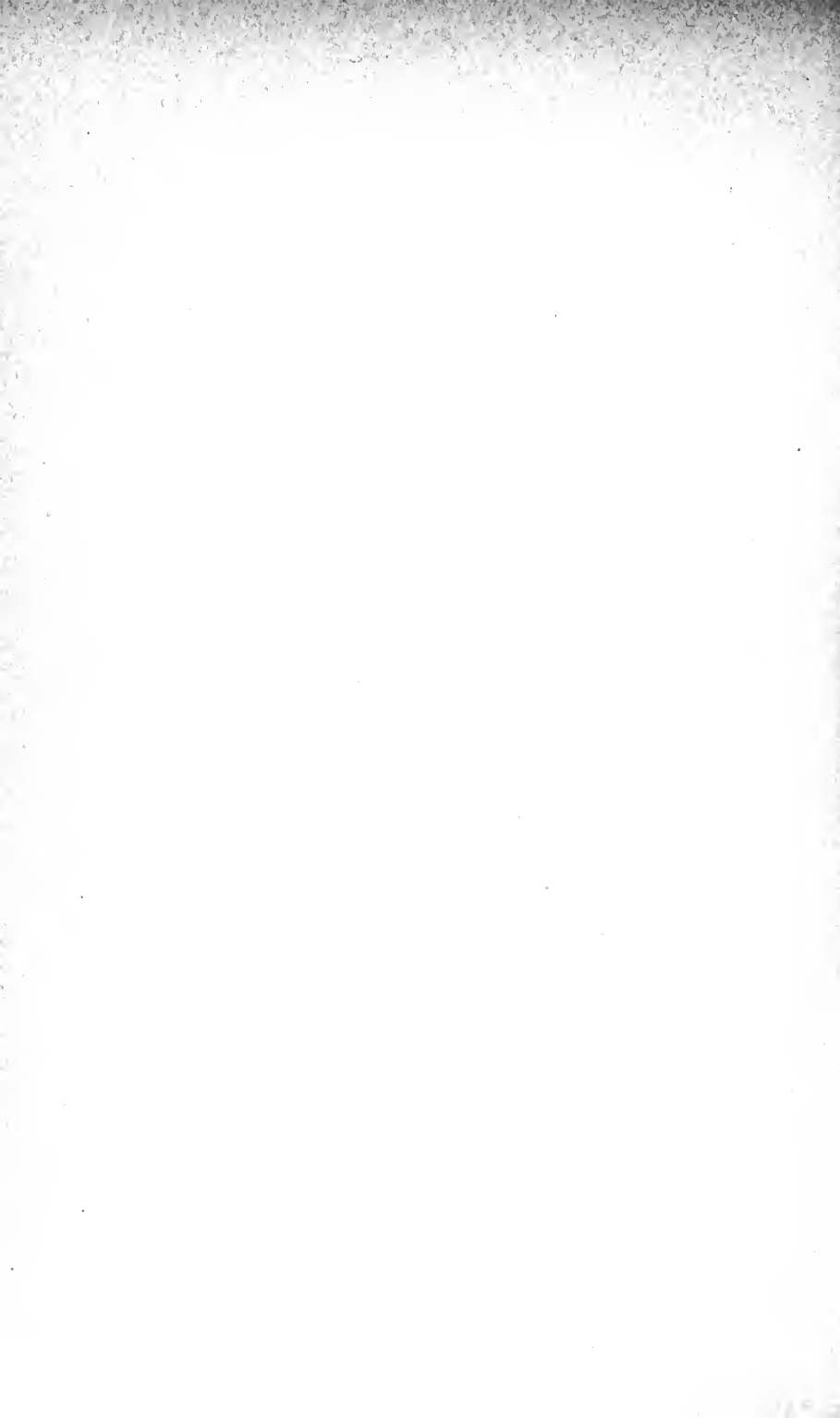
We have already observed that Sabatier makes two contentions ; (1) that the *Speculum* is original, and (2) that the narrative is a commentary on C. VII of the Old Rule. The truth is that both the *Speculum* and the *Actus* borrow directly, but independently, from the charming Legend of Jacques de Vitry, who, in his turn, is not original either. We recall the earliest *exempla* of the “Lives of the Fathers” and of Saint Gregory the Great. If the Ancient Rule adopted the principle of welcoming even *latrones* with open arms, this is due indeed to the character of the Brotherhood ; but the latter is, in its turn, a reproduction of old monastic norms.

Abbots frequently succeeded in introducing such criminals into the cloister, so that *homines flagitios pro suis criminibus, variis suppliciis deputati, beneficio Ordinis sint liberati*.¹

¹ *Caes.* I, 31 ; (*Strange*, I, 36).

With the narratives of the two Franciscan texts before us we can almost reconstruct the *exemplum* of Jacques de Vitry in its original form ; what is lacking in the one is found in the other. The *Speculum* is, on the whole, more faithful to the French narrative, of which it preserves the original lines. Saint Francis is pictured as shewing how to convert offenders by gentleness ; and if he does not actually prepare for them a rich feast and magnificent chamber, at any rate he has spread for them some kind of a table-cloth.

The *Actus* begin the narrative differently, but retain the bandits' reflexions on their own desperate life, comparing it with that of the Brethren, at once innocent and austere.



APPENDIX III

THE WOLF OF GUBBIO

A propos of this subject one is fain to repeat the proverb (without the corrections of "Conte zio" of the *Promessi Sposi*), "The wolf may lose his hide, but not his vices". For wolf and vices here have reference not to the Friars, but to the present writer : who, in virtue of his profession, which stands as it were midway between Law and History, is apt to delude himself with the idea that he can give a clear and persuasive explanation of the famous miracle of Gubbio as it appears in the *Actus* and, later, in the *Fioretti*.¹

Sabatier observes that in Celano's Second Life² "il y a quelques mots sur des loups de Greccio", and that in the MS of Assisi No. 651 [Fioretti] f. 37 there is a marginal note in Papini's handwriting : "Who says it first?" (*Cbi lo dice il primo?*) To this acute question I do not feel competent to give a completely satisfactory answer ; but perhaps it will not be difficult for me to shew how that "primo scrittore" has ingeniously put together his charming little story, starting from Thomas of Celano.

It may be remarked at once that Sabatier is altogether right in sending us back to the Second Life, in which

¹ *Actus* No. 23. Fior. 21. Cfr. Liber. conform. ed. Bononiae 1590 ; I, fructus 10 (140).

² Op. c. 77 nota 1. II Vita II, 5 R. 26.

occur the following words, spoken by the Saint to the men of Greccio: "*Si quisque vestrum confiteatur peccata, [et] dignos faciat poenitentiae fructus, fideiubeo vobis, quoniam pestilentia haec omnis abscedet*". It is in consideration of the Saint's *fideiussio*—his "going bail"—that peace was made between the wolf and the people of Gubbio: the whole ceremony is, therefore, based on the "word" of Francis. From the prose of Thomas of Celano the germ-thought passed into the brain of the romancer, who subsequently worked it up in his own way but with real juridical knowledge and remarkably fine artistic taste.

In his charming preface to the *Actus*¹ Sabatier brings before us again the opinion of certain critics who are inclined to see in the narrative a terrible baron, described in semblance of a wolf, tamed by the Seraphic Man of Assisi, as Ezzelino by Saint Anthony of Padua. Yet the writer to whom we owe so much, though he regards the idea itself as a good one, adds that the conversion of animals figures too frequently in hagiology to make it of any account. The true cause of the fame of this narrative is to be sought not in its simple and limpid literary clothing, but in the *Franciscan spirit* by which it is entirely animated. According to mediaeval ideas wolves, brigands and heretics are alike outside the pale of the law. This is not, however, the mind of Saint Francis. For him, the world wants not only justice: the severe goddess is preceded by "*cortesia*". At the Saint's bidding brother Wolf begs pardon of the citizens of Gubbio, *de incurialitate et crudelitate sua*, for that he also has transgressed the rules of *curialitas*, a quality that is dear to God.²

¹ Op. c. XII.

² Fior. No. 26; Actus No. 19.

It will be well, however, to obtain a really clear idea of the meaning of this word. *Curialitas* comes from *curia*, as *cortesia* from *corte*. The old engine of Roman finance lost its classical signification in the language of the Middle Ages.¹ At Naples the *curia* means the college of Notaries; but ordinarily the name is applied to any assembly of public or private character: and *curialitas* is the complex of rules that renders possible and, in certain cases happy and pleasant, the reunion of many people in the same place for a definite purpose. *Gentilezza*, in the modern sense, is the consequence of such a discipline, necessarily imposed on those who meet together.² And this too may be numbered among the various senses of the word; but the principal signification seems to be the aptitude to live together with others, observing the rules and social usages which must be respected in the interests of all if there is to be such a thing as social life at all. I remember that Odofred relates how the students in the first months of their happy common life are very *curiales* towards one another: afterwards this *curialitas* vanishes, and they come to blows. It is but one step from *curialitas* to *iniuria*. A man who is *curialis* in the sense in which the word is constantly used by Salimbene,³ is a person of a sociable and happy disposition, who feels at home in company and puts others at their ease; who far from vexing or annoying his neighbour, keeps his fellows in good spirits by his own amiability. Our Statutes called those citizens *selvatici* who lived an isolated life in the country and had

¹ Maassen, in Sitzungsber. der phil. hist. Classe der k. Akad. d. Wiss. Wien, 1876; LXXXIX, 251-2.

² Boncompagni, Cedrus, l. c. 164. Ioculatorem P. - qui vestre curie... voluit interesse, *curialitati* vestre attentius commendamus.

³ Chr. 10: Valens homo, *curialis* et liberalis etc.

no taste for a peaceful existence within city walls, in the levelling atmosphere of democracy. And those folk, when forcibly transported into the city, were themselves uncomfortable in their new environment, and a disturbance to those who were obliged, to their own damage, to enter into relations with a class of people that was haughty and not in the least *curiale*.

Saint Francis, when he made the wolf confess to having been *incurialis* and *crudelis*, certainly did not claim that the beast had been, or became, *gentile* after his confession. And still less is there in the narrative what Sabatier imagines to be there. Brother wolf, even for a wolf, had behaved so atrociously that his chances were poor indeed had not the Saint arranged matters for him!

The *incurialitas* of which the beast accuses himself provides us by anticipation with a suggestion as to what the wolf really is:—a poor outlaw, (as we shall shortly see) constrained to kill and rob for his own living. And now we understand how his ill deeds are due to a life savage and *incurialis*. Brother Wolf, in a phrase we still use, *s'era dato alla macchia*—he had “taken to the woods”—: and had made himself an enemy of society instead of imploring its pardon and pity. *Curialitas* presupposes an honest life; for he mingles gladly in the society of others who meditates no assaults upon his neighbours and fears none at their hands. In other words Brother Wolf confesses to having led the life of a—wolf; and to have committed cruel acts.

Now that the beast is a little quiet let us approach him and see what sort of an animal he is. The wolf of Gubbio is not different from his fellows. I remark only one difference, and that a slight one. Once upon a time

wolves were much more numerous and formidable in Italy than they are now. During the Middle Ages the lands abandoned by agriculture were invaded by forests and thickets, the congenial home of the lupine family. Many names of places in Italy, such as *Montelupo*, *Montelupone*, *Lupara*, *Lupaiole* still remain to witness the haunts of wolves, who were driven by hunger to extraordinary boldness.

Our friend Salimbene (who, at any rate, is not grudging of his information) records how the bitter cold and the pangs of starvation drove the wolves to enter wittim the bounds of cities, where many were hanged and strung up in the *piazza* like true and proper criminals.¹ I will not pause to make a fresh disquisition here on the mediaeval juridical ideas as to the penal responsibility of the lower animals. The subject is an old one, and a mere reference to it will suffice.²

One remark I will make : that a wild beast in the literal sense of the word might easily be interchanged with the so-called "rational" species ; by virtue of the legal parallel. Gibbet and ruthless chase aimed at keeping off the wolves : even ecclesiastics were exhorted to join in the pursuit ;³ and the Statutes of the Communes promised a good handful of money to him who should have presented to the city steward a sample of the hated tribe.⁴

And now to draw our conclusion : the wolf who plays

¹ Chr. 43. Cfr. 77, 141. The starved wolf will even eat soil ! *Vincent. Bel. Spec. hist.* XIX, 85.

² *J. Grimm*, in *Zeitschr. für gesch. Rechtswiss.* II, 343 and *Deutsche Rechtssalterth.* IV ed. II, 343 ; *Michelet*, *Origines du droit français* (éd. 1890) ; 278 seqq. *Pertile*, in *Atti del R. Istituto Veneto* T. IV. Serie VI, an. 1886 etc. Cfr. *D'Ancona*, *Studj di critica lett.* [1880] ; 338 ; (*Novellino*, No. 90).

³ *Mansi*, XXI, 121 : *Concil. Campost.* an. 1014 c. 15.

⁴ E. g. *Zdekauer*, *Const. del Comune di Siena* for the year 1262 ; 80 ; *Bonaini*, *Stat. di Pisa*, I, 147 etc.

his part in so many Italian fairy tales, might just as well figure also in the stories of the *Fioretti*. But the cities were not troubled by wolves alone; they were exposed to dangers of a far more serious kind. The continual struggles between city and city and between factions and parties within the city's bosom; the principle of private *vendetta*—delightful legacy left by Germany!—the systematic disorder (a contradiction in terms justified by the facts); created a special class of men—the *banditi* or outlaws. And these, in turn, strove with all their might to drive forth from the nest those who had cast them out, and the grim game shewed never a sign of cessation.¹

Now let us see how it is that Brother Wolf belongs not only to the Franciscans but also to those who write the history of Law. According to ancient German law the *latro*, and hence the man to whom is refused that which he himself has violated in others, viz: peace, is called "Wolf" (*uuargus*). When the German has committed a crime of such a kind that, essentially, or by the will of society, cannot be expiated by a legal penalty, the community solemnly deprives him of Peace. Such a criminal is considered as a being who has lost even the outward form of humanity—he is a *wolf*, a *capo lupino*. Any one may slay him with impunity, and no one ought to give him shelter or victual. The king's "ban" puts him outside the royal protection: he is no longer a man.²

¹ *Salimbene*, Chr. 395-6. In the Life of Aegidius the Minorites are compared to wolves, who never come out of their den, *nisi pro magna necessitate*: Acta SS. T. III Apr. 231.

² *Wilda*, Das Strafrecht der Germ., 1842; 278 seqq. *Brunner*, Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte, 1879 I, 67 seqq. *Kohler*, Das Strafrecht der ital. Statuten 1898; 56 seqq. For the word, *warg*, *warc*, see *Schade*, Altdeutsches Wörterbuch; 1097-8.

And he never can become a man again unless and until he wins "peace" again.

Over the outlaw of the Middle Ages looms this German conception, albeit in an attenuated form. In French he is said to be *excommunié comme un loup-garou*; at Bergamo the magistrate to whom falls the function of outlawing has for his device a wolf's head.¹ (In the *Fioretti* I find traces of German thought. Brother Juniper has Alboino in mind: he is fain to make out of his departed friend's skull two bowls, one to eat out of, and one to drink).² To resume: Brother Wolf is a personage quite easy to recognise even under a wolf's guise. He is, in fact, *an outlaw reconciled to his city by the Saint with the exact forms and ceremonies prescribed by law and practically observed at that epoch.*

The old penalists write that it was customary for an ecclesiastic to give to the outlaw, and receive from him, the word of peace, in the name of those whom he had offended.³ In the Italian Communes there was a special

¹ *Grimm*, Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer, II, 334. Stat. Berg. ed. 1749; 474-5.

² *Grimm*, Geschichte der deutschen Sprache, 1848; I, 142 seqq.

³ *A propos* of this subject there is a letter, which comes to mind, of Pope Gregory I to Dono bishop of Messina (Ep. VI, 37; MG. I, 414). A certain Giorgio—who from the tenor of the letter would have been a criminal desirous to change his life—wished to fix his home in Messina, and with that in view obtained from the Pope a commendatory letter to the bishop of that city: who would thus acquire not a new lamb but a somewhat formidable wolf, to judge by the man's past. Gregory writes to Dono that he was induced to grant Giorgio's request because the man *A PRAVA SE PROMISIT ACTIONE COMPESCERE*. It seems as though the Pope himself did not place too much faith in Giorgio's good intentions, for he urges the bishop of Messina *revocare adhortationibus suis ad viam Deo placitam* the erring brother, and adds: *et si adiuvante Domino, UT PROMISIT, AB OMNI SE PRAVITATE SUSPENDENS, VIVERE HONESTE VOLUERIT, FRATERNITAS VESTRA* (that is, the bishop of Messina) *PRO MERCEDE SUA... EIUS SUSTENTATIONI SUBVENIAT, NE FORSITAN AD MALE AGENDUM EXCUSATIONEM SIBI EX NECESSITATE VIDEATUR ADSUMERE.*

Giorgio of Messina and Brother Wolf have a strange resemblance to one

magistracy appointed to provide for the reconciliation of outlaws when such function was not reserved for the Podestà. In order to be readmitted into the city, the condemned man from whom the ban was removed had to obtain peace from the offended citizens, or if the latter had delegated the granting of peace to another, their own ratification must be subsequently given. But that was not enough. The outlaw was further obliged to offer, by the most binding solemn assurances, security that in his new life he would abstain from every form of violence.¹

But I am sure that the reader must be tired of my prose: I pass him on therefore to the pleasant reading of the *Fioretti*. There he shall read a page of the penal and civil procedure of the thirteenth century, with an exquisite commentary thereupon. Saint Francis having quieted the beast, addressed him thus: "*I desire to make peace between thee and them in such wise that thou shalt not offend them any more, and that they shall pardon thee for all past offences and neither men nor dogs shall any more pursue thee*".

The Saint, then, as intermediary, promises peace to the beast, and receives the like assurance from him by a shake of the paw, a most classical mode of contracting an obligation to live without giving offence to one's fellow-citizens. Finally Francis displays Brother Wolf humbled and peni-

another. In each case it is the ecclesiastical authority that receives the promise of amendment and gives the word of peace to the penitent; in each case also it is suggested most opportunely that succour be given to the newly-tamed rebel, who, if he be well fed, becomes at once quiet and harmless. So the most powerful incentive to a return to the wicked life is removed. How old—yet ever new—is the figure of *Frate Lupo*!

¹ *Nelli de S. Gem.*, De Bannitis; in Tract. tract. crim. Venet. 1556; 184 seqq. *Pertile*, Storia del diritto italiano II ed. V, 337 seqq. Cfr. Stat. di Ravenna del sec. XIII (Rav. 1904). R. 186.

tent, to the assembled people, i. e., the company of the offended persons. It only remains to expound the compact, and obtain its formal approbation; and so we read; "*then all the people with one voice promised to give him nourishment continually*". The wolf has become a harmless lamb.¹

Now let us examine the fringe of the narrative. The words of Sabatier at once suggest themselves: the power of the saints even over animals is most mighty; and it is not worth while to collect examples of it. But here we no longer agree with Sabatier. I choose from the narratives those that most closely resemble the miracle of Gubbio.

To begin with, in a redaction of the famous work known as *Gesta Romanorum* we read how a city was beleaguered by venomous beasts, among which the worst of all was a dragon, who demanded of the citizens nothing less than an animal every day, on pain of devouring men: *unum animal, aliter homines devorasset*.² More wonderful still are the old miracles of the *De Vitis Patrum*. A hyena knocks with its head at the cell of Macarius: it wishes the hermit to restore the sight to its little blind cub, and it obtains this boon. There is gratitude even among hyenas: the savage beast comes back to the wonder-worker bearing the gift of a sheep's hide. The Saint reflected that the hide was indication of a crime committed through gratitude by the beast, to whom he trenchantly declares: "I do not accept criminal gifts". *Hyaena autem humi inclinato capite, genu flectebat ad pedes sancti, et ponebat pellem. Ipse autem ei dicebat: Dixi me non accepturum,*

¹ Hist. Laus. c. 52; in Migne, LXXIII, 1159: *ex lupo in simplicem et innocentem agnum mutatum*; cfr. Actus 79: *iam factus quasi agnus ex lupo*.

² Ed. Dick, c. 217 [230].

*nisi iuraveris te non amplius offensuram pauperes, comedendo eorum oves. Illa vero ad hoc quoque capite suo annuit.*¹ Brother Wolf also does the same, *se ingeniculus cum inclinatione capitis*, but being more *au fait* with polite customs, he does not forget to hold out his paw in token of good faith.² Still, the attitude of the two beasts is identical.³

The compiler of the Legend of Gubbio had in mind also other beasts who had shewn themselves amenable to the commands of friars or respectful to saints. For instance Florentius, who had need of a guardian for his flocks, invoked the aid of God. And lo! up comes a bear, *qui dum ad terram caput deprimeret, nihilque feritatis in suis motibus demonstraret, aperte dabat intelligi, quod ad viri Dei obsequium venisset.* But alas! monkish spitefulness knows no bounds! Florentius became extremely fond of his bear, honest guardian of his flocks, *quem ex simplicitate multa FRATREM vocare consueverat.* But his fellow-monks of another convent, jealous of the miracle killed his beloved beast!⁴ Brother Bear was in truth more of a gentleman than Brother Wolf, yet his end was less happy; for *Frate Lupo* passed peacefully away as a retired pensioner among the people of Gubbio.

The same book that has given us *Frate Orso*, viz: the Dialogues of Gregory the Great, speaks also of another formidable bear.

It is well known that in the Gothic period the orthodox clergy took sides with the Greeks. Cerbonius, bishop of

¹ Hist. Laus. c. 19, 20 l. c. 1118.

² Actus, 81.

³ Arch. Giur. LXX, (1903); *Tamassia*, Fidem facere.

⁴ Dial. III, 15.

Populonia dared to give shelter to certain imperial soldiers, to protect them from the persecution of king Totila. Unfortunately for the bishop, the king himself came up, caught Cerbonius red-handed, and condemned him to a most cruel death. A monstrous bear was told off to devour the poor prelate. Preparations are made for the bloody spectacle; great crowds assemble, excited by the morbid traditions of the Circus. *Episcopus deductus in medium est... Dimissus... ursus ex cavea est, qui accensus et concitus Episcopum petiit, sed subito suae feritatis oblitus, deflexa cervice, submissoque humiliter capite, lambere Episcopi pedes coëpit... Tunc populus, qui ad spectaculum venerat mortis, magno clamore, versus est in admirationem venerationis.*¹

Brother Wolf did just the same as soon as he saw Saint Francis. *Multis cernentibus de locis in quibus ad spectandum ascenderant, lupus ille terribilis contra S. Franciscum et socium aperto ore cucurrit... Statim se ad pedes sancti, iam factus quasi agnus ex lupo, capite, inclinato, prostravit... Omnes ad plateam simul convenerunt... tunc omnes ibi congregati cum clamore valido promiserunt... Et facta est tanta admiratio... ut omnes clamarent ad sidera.*

Here we have the missing stones of our broken mosaic. The Franciscan has worked in Gregorian and pre-Gregorian fragments into its representation of the wolf-outlaw and the figure of the Saint of Assisi.

A little learned pedantry reveals the old work that lies underneath the surface. What then? Art is justified, and the *Fioretti*, be they Franciscan or not, will always

¹ Dial. III, 11.

be read. Before it becomes a statue, that on which art works is—raw material and thought. Neither of these is created by the artist, who yet well deserves his name when he works with such grace as is shewn by the friar, or friars, responsible for the authorship of the *Fioretti*.

And what about the answer to Papini's question? It is easy and certain. We may say that the miracle of Gubbio began to be written when the *Historia Lausiaca* was put together. It was continued by Gregory the Great, and finished by the authors of the *Actus*. It seems as though the Saint of Assisi were like the sun. The buds that sleep within their winter covering, warmed by his beams, awake... and burst into flower.

APPENDIX IV

INDEX OF THE SOURCES OF THE "FIORETTI"

- Fior. No. 1. Actus B. Fr. N. 1.
Fior. No. 2. Actus B. Fr. N. 1 § 10 seqq. - *S. August. Confess.*
VIII, 12. Vita Ant. c. 2. *Migne*, Patr. Lat. LXXIII, 127.
Fior. No. 3. Actus B. Fr. N. 2 - *Thom. Vita* I, 53; *Rosedale*, 45.
Fior. No. 4. Actus B. Fr. N. 3 - *Regula* a. 1221 c. 3, 9, 14;
a. 1223, c. 3.
Fior. No. 5. Actus B. Fr. N. 4.
Fior. No. 6. Actus B. Fr. N. 5 - *Gen.* XXVII.
Fior. No. 7. Actus B. Fr. N. 6 - *Greg. M. Dial.* II, 1.
Fior. No. 8. Actus B. Fr. N. 7 - *Thom. Vita* II, *Rosedale*, 75.
Cfr. *Math.* V, 10 seqq. *Paul.* I Cor. XIII.
Fior. No. 9. Actus B. Fr. N. 8 - *Thom. Vita* I, 20; *Rosedale*,
43. *Migne*, Op. c. 744, 751. Cfr. *Dial.* cit. I, 5. Cfr. Prima con-
siderazione delle stimmate.
Fior. No. 10. Actus B. Fr. No. 10 - *Dial.* cit. II, 20; *Migne*,
Op. cit. 961, 1034.
Fior. No. 11. Actus B. Fr. N. 11 - Cfr. 10 and 12.
Fior. No. 12. Actus B. Fr. N. 12 - *Migne*, Op. cit. 949-50;
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Fior. No. 13. Actus B. Fr. N. 13 - *Migne*, Op. cit. 263; Vita
Pach. c. 45.
Fior. No. 14. Actus B. Fr. N. 14 - *Migne*, Op. cit. 263.
Fior. No. 15. Actus B. Fr. N. 15 - *Dial.* cit. II, 33; cfr. *Migne*,
Op. c. 759-61.
Fior. No. 16. Actus B. Fr. N. 16 - *Thom. Vita* I; 58; *Rose-*
dale, 48.
Fior. No. 17. Actus B. Fr. N. 19 - *Greg. M. Hom. in Evang.*
II, 34; N. 18.
Fior. No. 18. Actus B. Fr. N. 20 - *Migne*, Op. cit. 438 seqq.
Fior. No. 19. Actus B. Fr. N. 21 - *Dial.* cit. I, 9.

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Fior. No. 20. Actus B. Fr. N. 22 - *Caes. Dial. mir. IV, 4*; ed. *Strange I, 175*.

Fior. No. 21. Actus B. Fr. N. 23 - See Appendix III.

Fior. No. 22. Actus B. Fr. N. 24.

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Fior. No. 44. V. Patr. *Rosweyde, 875. Caes. VII, 9, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23*; *III, 21 ecc.*

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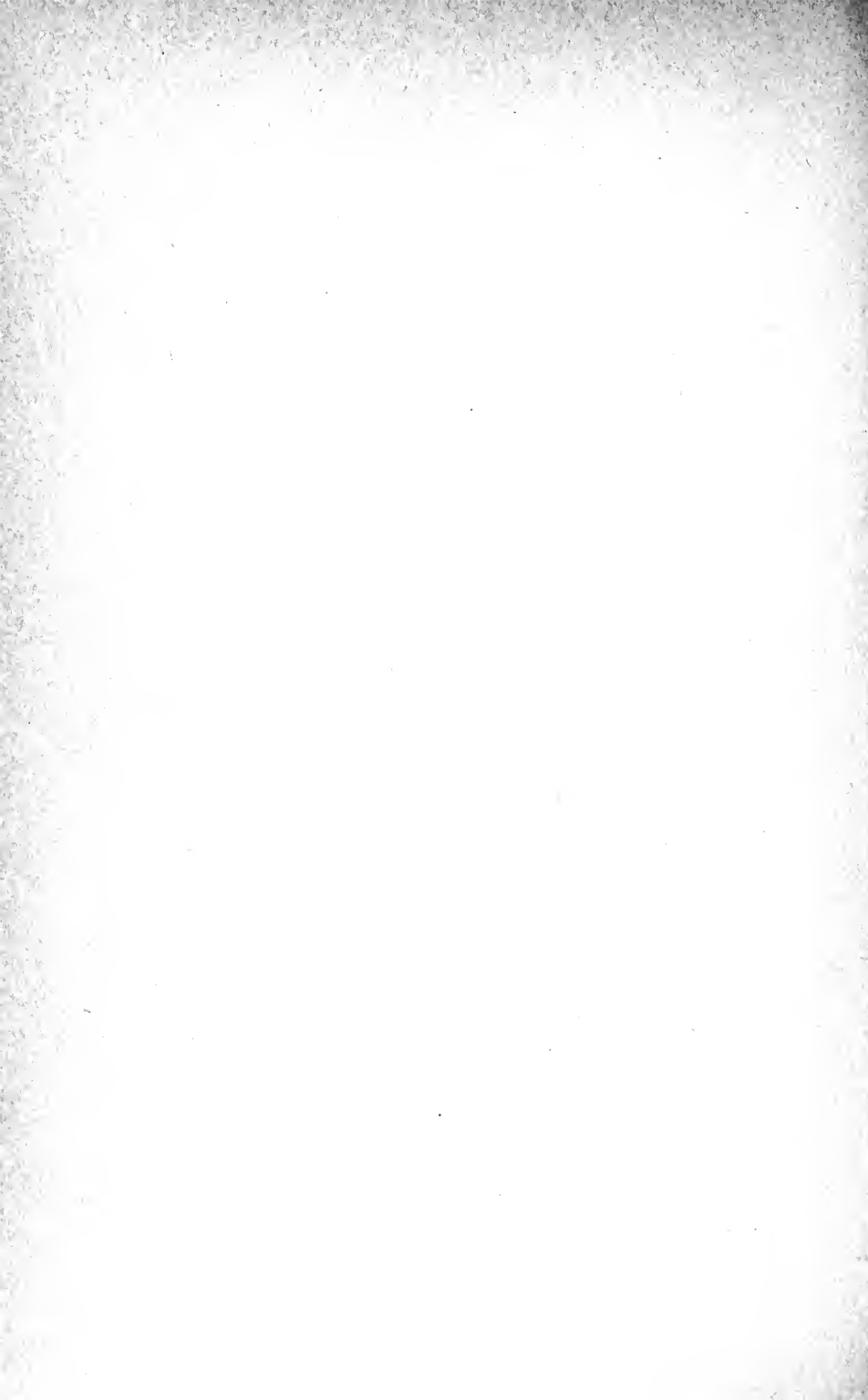
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A
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 OF
T. FISHER UNWIN'S
PUBLICATIONS.

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