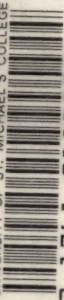


UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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THE PAPACY
AND
THE FIRST COUNCILS
OF THE CHURCH

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DOLAN



THE PAPACY

AND

THE FIRST COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH

BY

REV. THOMAS S. DOLAN

AUTHOR OF "PLAIN SERMONS," "THE SEE OF PETER AND
THE VOICE OF ANTIQUITY"

Τὰ ἀρχαῖα ἔθη κρατεῖτω
First Council of Nice, Canon vi

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FOREWORD

The preparation of a little work entitled "The See of Peter and the Voice of Antiquity," suggested to the writer the opportuneness of the present volume. That there exists a very considerable amount of religious unrest in the Anglican Communion, (at least in that part of it, which alone possesses any theological vitality), is beyond question. As a result of this unrest, the Kingdom of Christ is harvesting a multitude of souls. There is however, a large number of earnest seekers after truth, among the Anglicans, who have nailed their "credo" to the assumption, that the first six Œcumenical Councils of the Church, reveal no "Pope" as we Catholics understand that term. It was largely in defence of this position, that one of the most advanced Ritualists of our day, the Rev. Henry R. Percival D.D., was induced to write a bulky volume, under the caption, "The History of the Seven Œcumenical Councils of the Undivided Church."¹ He

¹ Percival admits seven councils in contradistinction to his confreres, who as a body admit only six.

finished his great and scholarly labor, emphasizing the contention, that the "Papal Claims" receive no support from the first great Synods of the Church. It is difficult for anyone acquainted with the work, readily to understand how, in the preparation of his book, the author failed to realize the utter hopelessness of the Anglican position.

I am not aware that we have in English any work, which has for its sole object the refutation of the above contention, and furthermore, as the development of the doctrine of Papal Supremacy and Infallibility, is nowhere more clearly traceable, than in the history of the first six Œcumenical Councils, I think I have sufficient reason, for bringing forward this volume. I may add, that the present undertaking may be of service to students of theology, from the fact, that the historical aspect of Dogmatic Theology is considerably overlooked in most manuals. It is not to be expected that a text book of dogma should at the same time, be a text book of the Church's history, yet no one whose view is worth considering, would maintain that a manual of Dogmatic Theology, can adequately fulfil its mission, without numberless historical references. Unfortunately, these references in the current text books, espe-

cially when they deal with Patristic Literature, and the history of the first Œcumenical Councils, are for a *considerable portion* scant, too infrequent, uncritical, and in some cases based upon documents now generally acknowledged to be spurious. This last named fact, was brought home to me forcibly, in a recent discussion with a distinguished theologian, who quoted with perfect aplomb, and a manifest consciousness of security, a passage from the pseudo-Clementine literature. The growing importance of historico-theological investigation, is becoming more and more manifest; and largely on account of the fact, that those who oppose us now, in the realm of religious controversy, are far more interested in the historical than in the philosophical side of theology. It is perfectly true, that all that this volume contains, and very much more along the same lines, can be found in the great collections and histories of Mansi, Hardouin, the Ballerini, Coustant, Baluze, Hefele and a host of others. The works of these celebrities, however, are not easily available, and are enormously voluminous. I have endeavored to place before the reader, a clear, succinct historical account of the ancient Councils, in so far as their relations with Rome are con-

cerned, and needless to state, I have drawn all my information from the above named writers.

Though the first six great Synods will form the principal object of this study, yet, I shall not confine myself to them, but shall notice at length, several minor councils, from the history of which, valuable testimony is available, for the establishing of my main proposition.

T. S. D.

St. Mary's, Laurel, Md., 1909.

INTRODUCTION

The Catholic position relative to Ecumenical Councils may be summed up as follows: First, the Bishop of Rome as successor of St. Peter, and Visible Head of the Church of Christ, *alone* possesses the *right* of summoning an Ecumenical Council; second, *none save him* has the *right* to preside at it when summoned; and third, to him *exclusively* belongs the *right* of confirming or rejecting its decrees.

Now the Pope may exercise these rights *personally*, or *through representatives*, commonly known in Church history as "legates." He may therefore commit the summoning of an Ecumenical Council to other bishops, or even to a Christian prince; or he may ratify the act of another, who has called one together. He may preside at the Council by his legates, and *through them* confirm or reject its decrees. He may even do this before the Council, either by sending a norm of orthodoxy to the assembly, or by commanding his legate to approve this enactment, or to disallow that. This is hardly the place to

enter into a discussion of the theological controversy concerning the necessity of further Papal confirmation, after perfect accord has been reached between the legates of Rome and the members of a Council. Bellarmin states with a great show of reason, that such a renewal of the confirmation is superfluous.¹

“We cannot discover,” says Dr. Adrain Fortescue, in his admirable and much needed work “The Orthodox Eastern Church,” “what Councils were œcumenical, by counting the number of their attendants. Many of them were quite small assemblies; at Nicæa in 325 A. D. about 318 bishops were present, at the second General Council only 150, at Ephesus 198, at the sixth 174. On the other hand, the Synod of Arminium (Rimini) in 359, mustered four hundred bishops; but it has never been counted œcumenical. Nor would it be possible to make the œcumenical character of a Council depend upon the attendance of representatives from all parts of the Church. There were very few Western bishops present at any of the earlier General Councils, only four at Nicæa, none at all at the second, and two at the third.”² The theory (so cherished by Anglicans) that the test of the

¹ Bellarmin. *De Conc. et Eccl.* II, 11.

² *Op. citat.*, p. 73.

œcumenical character is universal acceptance on the part of the Church, goes to pieces under inspection. "The Church," says Dr. Fortescue, "that is the great body of the faithful, and their bishops, want to know first, whether a Synod is œcumenical, before they can tell whether it is their duty to accept it. When 'The whole world groaned and wondered to find itself Arian,' it would have been of little use to tell a Christian, amid the endless confusion of Synods and anti-Synods, which all claimed to represent the Church, to accept that one as œcumenical which he and others like himself accepted. Moreover, there has always been a party (often a large party), which rejected these councils. The test of orthodoxy is to accept them; those Christians are orthodox who agree with the general councils. If, then, we say that those councils are general with which the orthodox agree, we have a perfect example of a vicious circle."¹

We must further add that a Synod lacking in itself an œcumenical character, (as for instance the second General Council held in Constantinople A. D. 381), may be endowed with this character, by subsequent Papal confirmation. It is perhaps unnecessary to add,

¹ The Orthodox Eastern Ch., p. 74.

that only those enactments of a Council bind the consciences of the faithful, which have Papal sanction.

In view of the universally admitted œcumenical character of the Council held A. D. 381 in Constantinople, I think the following statement of Dr. Tanquery, S. S., untenable. He speaks of Papal confirmation of the enactments of a Council, having no œcumenical character during its sessions. “*Equidem, quamdiu Papa has decisiones sanxerit, infalibiles erunt, sed quatenus decisiones papales; non sunt enim œcumenicæ, si procedunt a minore tantum parte corporis episcopalis legitimi.*”¹ The second of the great Synods, was not intended to be an œcumenical gathering. Theodoret tells us that the Emperor Theodosius summoned only the bishops belonging to his division of the Empire,² and only Orientals attended. It is practically certain that Pope Damasus was neither invited himself, nor asked to send legates. The Council’s œcumenical character, (which has reference *not* to its canons, but *solely* to its creed), was unquestionably the result of Papal acknowledgment, on the part of Popes Vigilius, Pelagius II and Greg-

¹ Synop. Theol. Dog. Vol. I, p. 504. Italics ours.

² Hist. Eccl. V, 6.

ory the Great. Dr. Tanquery's statement would hold true in the case of the Second Synod of Orange, held in 529. There were but fourteen bishops in that assembly. Pope Boniface solemnly confirmed its decrees on Grace, against the Semipelagians. These decrees are infallible, by virtue of the "decisio papalis." Rome, however, never gave any *note* to the Synod itself. In the case of the Second Ecumenical Synod however, although the confession proceeded "a minore tantum parte corporis episcopalis legitimi," the Council was confirmed by Rome *as an Ecumenical Synod*. The very same is true of the Fifth Ecumenical Synod.

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THE PAPACY

CHAPTER I

NICE AND SARDICA

I

It should be borne in mind well, as we approach our considerations on the Council of Nice (A. D. 325), that the bishops who attended that Synod, (at least the orthodox ones), were dominated by one idea, that namely, of vindicating the divinity of Jesus Christ. It is not remarkable then, that since no controversy concerning Rome's position in the Church had disturbed the faithful, very little attention was paid to the primacy of the Apostolic See, during the sessions of that first great assemblage of bishops. It was by no means ignored as will be shown presently, from contemporary history, but on the other hand only slight emphasis was placed upon it.

We have the testimonies of Eusebius,¹ Socrates,² Zozomen³ and Theodoret,⁴ that the Emperor Constantine directly summoned the Council of Nice. Rufinus testifies to the same fact, but adds that the Emperor was moved to act "ex sacerdotum sententia."⁵ Among the "sacerdotes," the Roman bishop unquestionably held the first place. At the Sixth Œcumenical Council, (Constant. III A. D. 680), during the eighteenth session, it was stated without dissent or controversy, that the first Synod held at Nice, was summoned by Constantine and Pope Sylvester.⁶ Anent this declaration of the sixth General Council, Dr. Percival blandly states, that he does not see upon what authority the Council made such a statement. But as the good Doctor was very far removed from the Nicene Synod, and as the Sixth Œcumenical Council was, comparatively speaking, rather near to it, we need not be distressed at his remark, and we may suppose, with at least fair reason, that the Sixth Council knew what it was talking about. But let us suppose for the sake of argument, that the Council actually erred in declaring that Constantine

¹ Vita. Const. III, 6.

² Hist. Eccl. I, 8.

³ Hist. Eccl. I, 17.

⁴ Hist. Eccl. I, 7.

⁵ Ruf. Hist. I, 1.

⁶ Hardouin, Act. 18, III, 1417.

and Sylvester convoked the Nicene Synod; and even then, the application of the first test is by no means prejudicial to the "Papal claims," since by sending legates to the Council, the Pope ratified the Emperor's act. However, it would be preposterous to brush aside the testimony of the sixth great Synod of the Church, particularly, since the declaration pointing to both Sylvester and Constantine as summoning the Nicene Council, was made in open session, and did not arouse the slightest suggestion of controversy.

While desiring to avoid any anticipation of our treatment of the relations between Rome and the Council of Chalcedon, I think it appropriate to quote here, the words of Lucentius, one of the Pope's legates at the same Synod. Setting forth the reasons why Paschasinus and Boniface, his co-legates and himself, cannot sit in council with Dioscorus, patriarch of Alexandria, and demanding the latter's expulsion from the Synod, Lucentius puts forth one accusation in the following terms. "He dared to hold a Council, without the authority of the Apostolic See, *a thing which had never occurred, nor can it occur.*"¹ It is well worthy of note, that his statement *was not called into question.*

¹ Labbe & Coussart, Counc. VI, Sess. I.

There is ample historical evidence, to establish the fact, that Constantine presided at the beginning of the Nicene Synod. Having addressed the assembly, however, he left the fathers to discuss by themselves, the questions which occasioned the convention. History is silent as to who was the ecclesiastical president, that is, so far as direct testimony is concerned. We are able, however, to arrive at a conclusion as to the presidency, by inspecting the lists of attendants and subscribers. Mansi, the Dominican Archbishop of Lucca gives us two of the extant lists, and Gelasius the remaining two. *In every one of these lists the first name is that of Hosius, the bishop of Cordova, and immediately follow the names of Vincentius and Vitus, two priests, who with Hosius, represented the Pope.* This is all the more significant from the fact, that the lists present a number of curious variations. Note well the facts, that the Patriarchs Eustathius and Alexander, the former of Antioch, the latter of Alexandria, were present, and yet this bishop, who did not even enjoy the rank of a metropolitan, and two priests, precede these ancient and apostolic thrones. Their subscriptions solve what would else be a riddle indeed. They sign "in the name of the Church of

Rome.”¹ The fact that they sign also in the names of all the churches of the West, would not justify their precedence. Hence they precede as legates of the successor of St. Peter; and since they preceded in subscribing, it is to be inferred that they were the ecclesiastical presidents at the sessions of the Council. Says Athanasius of Hosius: “When was there a Council held at which he did not preside?” *ποίας γὰρ οὐ καθήγησατο;*² Theodoret asks of him *ποίας γὰρ οὐχ ἡγήσατο συνόδου;* “over what Synod did he not rule?”³ Socrates, giving the names of the more prominent members of the Nicene Synod begins thus: “Hosius, Bishop of Cordova, Vitus and Vincentius, presbyters of Rome.”⁴ The original Greek expression referring to the presidency of the Synod is plural *πρόεδροι*, leaders, presidents. This plural expression reinforces the arguments drawn from the lists of signatures, and the testimonies of Athanasius, Theodoret and Socrates, so that in the *πρόεδροι*, we recognize Hosius and the Roman priests.

Let us now turn to the first part of the sixth canon of Nice: “*Τὰ ἀρχαῖα ἔθνη κρατεῖτω τὰ ἐν*

¹ In the two lists of Gelasius the above is the form. In Mansi's lists Hosius simply signs his name.

² *Apol. de Fuga*, C. V.

³ *H. E.* II, 15.

⁴ *H. E.* lib. I, C. 13.

Αιγύπτω καὶ Λιβύῃ καὶ Πενταπόλει ὥστε τὸν Ἀλεξανδρείας ἐπισκοποῦν πάντων τούτων ἔχειν τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὼ ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ ἐπίσκοπῳ τοῦτο οὐνηθεῖς ἐστίν. “Let the ancient customs obtain in Egypt, Lybia and Pentapolis, that in all these, the Alexandrian bishop shall have authority, since the same is customary also for the Roman bishop.” Numberless volumes have been written to tell us just what the above quoted portion of the sixth canon means. Interminable controversies have multiplied anent the same subject. Hefele says: “It is evident that the Council has not in view here, the primacy of the Bishop of Rome over the whole Church, but simply his power as a patriarch.” Though this statement is considerably supported by the very words of the canon, yet no one would risk the assertion, that the Greek text of this canon is unmistakably clear. A very early Latin version of the canons of Nice is the *Prisca*, in which we find the sixth canon worded thus: “*Antiqui moris est, ut urbis Romæ episcopus habeat principatum, ut suburbicaria loca et omnem provinciam suam, sollicitudine gubernet.*” In some other ancient Latin translations we have: “*Ecclesia Romana semper habuit primatum.*” “It is of ancient custom that the bishop of the city of Rome

should hold the primacy (*principatum*), so that he should rule over with diligence the suburbican places and his own entire province." This reading is unquestionably clearer than the Greek. That the above quoted statement of Hefele is open to question appears from the words of Paschasinus, Legate of Leo I at Chalcedon. The legate spoke as follows in the sixteenth session of Chalcedon: "Canon Six of the 318 Holy Fathers. 'The Roman Church hath always held the primacy. Let Egypt therefore so hold itself,' etc."¹ This reading of the sixth Canon of Nice, is found in several Mss., which antedate Chalcedon. Paschasinus is not speaking here of a patriarchal primacy, *so far as Rome is concerned*. The most superficial examination of the acts of Chalcedon's sixteenth session makes this perfectly clear. Although Constantine, the consistorial secretary of the Council of Chalcedon, immediately afterwards read the sixth Canon of Nice from the Greek, there is not the merest suggestion, that the version of Paschasinus was called into dispute. Says Hefele: "If the Greek text of the sixth Nicene canon, had been opposed at Chalcedon to the corrupt Latin text, which the legates read, on pur-

¹ Labbe & Cossart Conc. Vol. IV, Coll. 794.

pose and to prove its corruption, it was certainly very strange, that not the least remark was made on the relation of the two texts.”¹ Since no one has been absolutely certain as to the real meaning of the famous sixth canon in Greek,—the learned have quarrelled about it for centuries—it is rather gratuitous in Hefele, to speak with such perfect aplomb about the “corrupt Latin text.” We must say a word upon the Roman approval of the Nicene decisions. Were there no other testimonies of Papal confirmation, than the signatures of Bishop Hosius and the two presbyters Vitus and Vincentius, we would be amply supplied; but we have at hand testimonies, which not only demonstrate the *fact* of Rome’s approval of the Council, but what is more to the point, *the necessity of that approval*. Harduin tells us, that in 485 A. D. an Italian synod of some forty bishops from various parts of the peninsula, *unanimously declared*, that the Fathers of Nice had their decisions ratified by the authority of the Roman Church.² Again as we shall have occasion to observe in more detail later on, Pope Julius I, only a few years after the Council of Nice, declared that no ecclesiastical decrees should

¹ Councils. III, 426.

² Hard. II, 856.

be published, without Rome's consent, and that such was the law and the canon.¹ To the above we may add the testimony of Dionysius Exiguus who states that the decisions of Nice were sent to Rome for confirmation.²

“The fourth Œcumenical Council,” says Hefele, “looked upon the papal confirmation as absolutely necessary for ensuring the validity of the decrees of the Council; and there is no good ground for maintaining, that this was a new principle, and one which was not known and recognized at the time of the Nicene Council.”³ It would be childish to contend that the Roman confirmation was necessary to the fourth Œcumenical Council, and not to the first; and it would be (among other things), unquestionably courageous, to maintain that the Fathers of Chalcedon looked upon something as necessary, which was entirely superfluous.

The foregoing bit of evidence from Pope Julius I, had it not had the recognition of the orthodox church of the period, surely would have occasioned controversy, and yet apart from the retort of the semi-Arian ca-

¹ Socrat. II, 17.

² Hard. I, 311.

³ Hefele, Councils I, 44.

bal of Eusebians at Antioch, there is no word of debate on the words of the Pope.

II

We shall now turn our attention to the Council of Sardica, not an Œcumenical Synod it is true, nevertheless of great importance to us, from the fact that three of its canons bear directly upon the prerogatives of the Roman See. The date of this Synod was either 343 or 344. I am aware that both Socrates and Zozomen state, that it was convened A. D. 347. In the light of discoveries made by such eminently critical scholars as Scipio Maffei and the great collector Mansi, O. P., it becomes clear that the date set by Socrates and Zozomen is untenable. "We can now only hesitate," says Hefele, "between 343 and 344."

We shall now quote that part of the third canon of Sardica, which bears directly upon our purpose. Bishop Hosius said: ". . . But if mayhap a sentence has been pronounced against a bishop in any case, and he thinks his case to be not poor, but meritorious (*μη̄ σαθρὸν ἀλλὰ καλὸν*), in order that the judgment may be renewed (or perhaps better, the case be reopened (*αὐθις ἢ κρίσις ἀνανεωθη*),

let us, if it seems fitting to your charity, show honor to the memory of the Apostle Peter, and let those who acted as judges, in the case, write to Julius the Bishop of Rome, so that, if necessary, the case may be tried again, by the bishops living near the province, and let him appoint arbiters; but if it cannot be made clear, that his case is such as to merit a new trial, let the given sentence not be cancelled, but hold good as before." The foregoing is a literal translation of the Greek text. The Latin text of Dionysius Exiguus, differs from the Greek in a few points of minor detail. The Greek text does not say, *tot verbis*, whose function it was to decide, whether or not there should be a new opening of the case. Dionysius does: "et si (Julius) judicaverit renovandum esse iudicium, renovetur et det iudices." The Greek text however cannot possibly be understood in another sense. "εἰ δοκεῖ ὑμῶν τῇ ἀγάπῃ Πέτρου τοῦ ἀποστόλου τὴν μνήμην τιμήσωμεν, καὶ γραφῆναι παρὰ τουτων τῶν κρινάντων Ἰουλίῳ τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ Ῥώμης, ὥστε διὰ τῶν γειττιωντων τῇ ἐπαρχιά ἐπισκοπων, εἰ δέοι, ανανεωθῆναι τὸ δικαστήριον καὶ ἐπιγνωμονας αὐτος παράσχοι." The words "εἰ δέοι" "if it may be necessary," clearly refer to the judgment of the bishop of Rome (i. e. if he thinks it necessary), else why should they write to

him at all? Dionysius renders “*κρίσις*” by “*concilium*” which I think cannot be defended. The Latin *Prisca* renders it more correctly as “*judicium*.” Canon IV of the Sardican synod reads thus: “Bishop Gaudentius said: If it seems good to you, it is necessary to add to this decision full of sincere charity, which thou hast pronounced, that, if any bishop be deposed by those bishops living in the neighborhood, and declare that he has new matter in his defence, another bishop shall not be elected to his see, until the bishop of the Romans, judging, shall render decision, concerning this. Gr. “*ἐὰν μὴ ὁ τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐπίσκοπος ἐπιγνὼς περὶ τούτου ὄρον ἐξενέγκῃ.*” Lat. of Dionysius: “*Nisi causa fuerit in iudicio episcopi Romani determinata.*” Canon V which is a ratification and amplification of the two previous enactments, is as follows. “Bishop Hosius said: It has been determined that, if any bishop is accused, and the bishops of the same neighborhood convene and depose him from his see, and he as it were appealing, flees to the most blessed bishop of the Church of the Romans, and he consents to hear him, and thinks it just to reopen the examination of his case, let him deign to write to those fellow-bishops, who are nearest the province, that they

may go into the details with diligence and strictness, and vote on the matter, according to the assurance of truth. And if any one demand, that his case should be heard yet again, and at his supplication, it appears proper to persuade the bishop of the Romans to send presbyters a latere (ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰδίου πλευροῦ πρεσβυτερους αποστείλοι), it shall be in the power of that bishop, according as he thinks it proper, and judges it to be just,—that some be sent to act as judges, with the bishops, and possessing the authority of him who sent them. Let this also be decreed. But if he judges that the bishops are quite competent for both the examination and decision of the case, let him do as shall appear good to his most wise judgment.”¹

We have to deal now with two questions which have been the occasion of much controversy. First, did Sardica confer upon the bishops of Rome, prerogatives hitherto not possessed by them? Second, were these prerogatives conferred upon Julius *personally* to the exclusion of his successors? A number of distinguished scholars, notably Gallicans and Protestants, have answered the

¹ The translation is made from the Gr. text found in the collection of John of Constantinople (Saec. vi), as set forth by Beveridge the Anglican, in his *Synodicon* T. I, pp. 482, et sqq.

first question affirmatively. Very considerable testimony from the earlier history of the Church, abundantly proves the negative answer.

It will be of special interest to discover just how a Pope who lived before any Synod was convened at Sardica, understood his prerogatives in the matter of receiving appeals. Students of Church History, will recall readily the case of St. Athanasius appealing to Pope Julius, when the former was driven from the See of Alexandria. The historian Socrates thus describes the episode. "Athanasius after a lengthened journey at last reached Italy. . . . At the same time, Paul, bishop of Constantinople, Asclepas of Gaza, Marcellus of Ancyra and Lucius of Adrianople, having been accused on various charges, and expelled from their various churches, arrived at the imperial city. *There each laid his case before Julius the Bishop of Rome.* He on his part, *by reason of the Church of Rome's special privilege,* sent them back again into the East, fortifying them with commendatory letters; and at the same time *restored to each his own place,* and sharply rebuked those by whom they had been deposed. *Depending upon the signature of Bishop Julius,* the bishops departed

from Rome and again took possession of their own Churches.”¹

The action of Julius was assuredly wider in its scope, than the prerogatives formulated at Sardica would warrant. Julius does not bother about the forms that might hedge about an appeal. He simply acts from the consciousness that he was the successor of St. Peter, and as such was head of the Catholic Church, with a jurisdiction, corresponding to his position. Let us turn now to the famous epistle of Julius to the Eusebians at Antioch. Athanasius, adopts this Papal letter, by making it part of his defence against the imputations of his enemies. “I have read your epistle which was delivered to me by my presbyters Elpidius and Philoxenus,” writes Julius to the bishops at Antioch, “and I am surprised to see, that, though I wrote to you with both sincerity and charity, you have answered in a disrespectful and argumentative temper. . . . You force us to conclude, that even in the words by which you appear to show us reverence, you have expressed yourselves under the guise of sarcasm. . . . In ecclesiastical matters, it is not the show of eloquence that is needed, but the observance of the

¹ Soc. Hist. Eccl. lib. II, C. XV.

Apostolic Canons. . . . Supposing as you say, that some offense rested upon those persons (Athanasius et al.), the case ought to have been conducted against them, not after this manner, but according to the canon of the Church. . . . Are you ignorant, that the custom has been for word to be written *first to us, and then for a just decision to be sent from this place?* If then any such suspicion rested upon the bishop there (Athanasius), word of it should have been sent to the Church of this place; whereas, after neglecting to give us the proper information, and proceeding on their own authority, just as they pleased, now they desire to obtain our concurrence in their decisions, though we never condemned him. Not so have the constitutions of Paul, not so have the traditions of the Fathers directed. This is another form of proceeding, a novel method. . . . *What we have received from the blessed Apostle Peter, that I point out to you; and I should not have written this, as thinking that these things were known to all men, had not these proceedings troubled us so much.*"¹

The foregoing is exactly in line with an expression found in the letter of the Synod of Sardica to Pope Julius. "It is best and

¹ Athan. Apol. Contra Arian. Cap. II.

most fitting, that the priests (bishops) of all provinces, should bring their reports to the head, namely the chair of St. Peter."¹

Athanasius and his colleagues in misfortune did not wait for Sardica to tell them that they might go up to Rome. They had the same consciousness as had the presbyters of Alexandria in ante-Nicene times, when they appealed to Dionysius of Rome against their own bishop Dionysius of Alexandria; as had Fortunatus and Felix (unworthy though they were) when deposed by Cyprian, and as had Basilides deposed in Spain. They all went up to "the head, namely the chair of Peter."

Tillemont says that the form "if it is pleasing to your charity . . . let us honor the memory of the Apostle Peter," is very strong to show, that the Synod meant to confer a right, which the Pope hitherto had not enjoyed. Though this is abundantly refuted above, it will be of value to subjoin the following words of Hefele. "The formula, 'si placet,' has not here the meaning often ascribed to it by synods, i. e., 'if pleasing to you we will introduce a new thing'—in dogmatic expressions such a meaning would indeed be heterodox,—but: 'if pleasing to you,

¹ Hefele, II, p. 96.

we will declare and pronounce this or that.' In like manner, in the words of the third canon: 'Sancti Petri Apostoli memoriam honoremus,' there is no good ground for supposing, that the Synod had here conferred upon the Pope an entirely new right; for every direct acknowledgment of an ancient papal right, is always made out of reverence to St. Peter, as the person upon whom the primacy was conferred by Christ:"¹

"Mos enim solemnus est veteribus conciliis," says Natalis Alexander, (Gallican), "cum antiquas ecclesie consuetudines legesque non scriptas renovant, illas proponere, quasi de novo instituerint."²

The second question which we proposed to ourselves in this connexion is:—did the Synod have in mind Pope Julius *personally and not his successors*, in defining the matter of appeals? One of the best available answers to the argument proposed by some of our adversaries, that the name of Julius in the third canon indicates, that the legislation which the Synod adopted in the matter of appeals, was simply provisional, and not meant to apply to the successors of Julius, is given by the erudite Protestant Spittler

¹ Hef. II, 122.

² Hist. Eccl., Sec. IV, diss. 28, propos. I, p. 463a.

who says: "It is said that these Sardican decisions (Canon III, IV and V) were simply provisional, and intended for the present necessity; because Athanasius, so hardly pressed by the Arians, could only be rescued, by authorizing an appeal to the Bishop of Rome for a final judgment. Richer, in his History of the General Councils, has elaborately defended this opinion, and Horix, has also declared in its favor. But would not all secure use of the canons of the Councils be done away with, if this distinction between provisional and permanent synodal decisions were admitted? Is there any sure criterion for distinguishing those canons which were to be only provisional, from others, which were made for all future centuries? The Fathers of the Synod of Sardica express themselves quite generally; is it not, therefore, most arbitrary on our part to admit limitations? It is beyond question that these decisions were occasioned by the very critical state of the affairs of Athanasius; but is every thing only provisional that is occasioned by the circumstances of individuals? In this way the most important of the ancient canons might be set aside." ¹

¹ "Critical Examination of the Sardican Decisions." *Sammtlichen Werken-Spit.* Part VIII, p. 129.

Julius, as we have seen, was bravely exercising his Papal prerogatives, before the Fathers of Sardica ever thought of placing his name in their canons; and the facts which I have quoted from ante-Nicene times, joined to the testimony of Pope Julius, furnish an excellently supported negative answer to the second query.

CHAPTER II

THE SECOND ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL CONSTANTINOPLE A. D. 381.

The second of the General Councils of the Church presents a curious picture. No one disputes its title to the œcumenical character, yet it was not intended to be a General Council. The Emperor Theodosius I invited only the bishops of his division of the Empire to convene at Constantinople. It was a distinguished oriental gathering. Pope Damasus was neither present nor invited, and not a single Latin bishop attended. The Council of Ephesus completely ignored that of Constantinople, and it was only at Chalcedon that its creed obtained recognition.

Our investigation of this Synod, will be confined to its third canon, and the subsequent *conditioned* approval of the Council itself.

The Greek text of the third Canon is as follows: “Τὸν μὲντοι Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐπίσκοπον ἔχειν τὰ προεβεία της τιμης μετὰ τὸν τῆς Ῥώμης ἐπίσκοπον,

δια τὸ εἶναι αὐτὴν νεαν Ῥώμην.” “The Bishop of Constantinople however, shall have the prerogatives of honor, (or the rights of precedence or rank τὰ πρεσβεία), after the Bishop of Rome, because Constantinople is New Rome.” There have not been wanting Catholic authorities, who have endeavored to prove that this canon is spurious; but their efforts have been fruitless, owing to the abundant and unquestionable testimony in its favor. Some among the Greeks, have endeavored to construct a case for themselves out of the word “μετὰ” “after,” by contending, that this expression must be understood as indicating a chronological distinction, rather than one of honor or position. “Rome,” they say, “precedes Constantinople in point of time, but not in ecclesiastical rank.” There is absolutely nothing in the way of respectable evidence, to support this opinion. Zonaras, the Greek commentator, who can hardly be accused of any Roman bias, says: “In this place the Council takes action concerning Constantinople, to which it decrees the prerogative of honor, the first rank and preëminence after the Bishop of Rome, as being New Rome and the Queen of cities. Some desire to interpret the preposition μετὰ here, of time and not of inferiority

of rank. And they endeavor to strengthen this view, by a consideration of the twenty-eighth Canon of Chalcedon, contending that if Constantinople is to enjoy equal honors, the preposition *μετὰ* (i. e. after) cannot mean inferiority. But on the other hand, the one hundred and thirtieth novel of Justinian, Book V of the Imperial Constitutions, chapter third, interprets the canon otherwise. 'We decree,' it says, 'that the most holy Pope of Old Rome, according to the decrees of the holy Synod, is the first of all priests; and that the most blessed Bishop of Constantinople and of New Rome, should have the second place after the Apostolic Chair of the Elder Rome, and should be superior in honor to all others.' From this it is certainly clear, that 'after' denotes inferiority and subjection. Otherwise it would not be possible to protect this parity of rank in each see. For in rehearsing their names or assigning them places when they are to sit together, or fixing the order of their signatures, surely one must precede the other. Whoever therefore, endeavors to explain this word *μετὰ*, as referring to time only, and does not grant that it signifies an inferior position, distorts the passage, and robs it of a true and proper meaning. Moreover, in the

twenty-sixth Canon of the Council in Trullo, *μετὰ* undoubtedly indicates subjection, assigning the second place after Old Rome to Constantinople.”¹ No matter what was in the minds of those who framed the Canon, Rome simply repudiated the enactment. And when after a thousand years, Pope Innocent III allowed a special distinction to Constantinople, there was no doubt, nor could there be, as to the nature of that distinction. Innocent and the Twelfth General Council, for the sake of peace, allowed Constantinople to precede the other Apostolic thrones, but never for an instant, allowed the slightest infringement upon the rights of the Papacy. Furthermore, the precedence of Constantinople received recognition at Rome, only when the Latins had placed Thomas Morosini, a Latin patriarch, upon her episcopal throne. When Rome at length allowed the Greek Patriarch the first rank after the Bishop of Rome, at the Florentine Reunion of Greeks and Latins A. D. 1439, it was only after the promulgation of the famous Florentine decree, which sets forth in the clearest possible fashion, the prerogatives of St. Peter and his Successors, which decree, be it well remembered, was signed by

¹ Synodicon, T. I, p. 90. Beveridge the Anglican.

the Emperor John VIII, the Vice-general of Constantinople, (the Patriarch Joseph having died during the Council), the legates of the three other patriarchs, sixteen metropolitans, four deacons and a number of distinguished laymen. It should be added here, that the Patriarch Joseph of Constantinople, before he died, wrote down his acceptance of the union, and his acknowledgment of the Roman Primacy. "The Bishop of Rome," runs the decree, "is the Sovereign Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ, the Shepherd and Teacher of all Christians, to guide and rule the whole Church of God, though without prejudice to the rights and privileges of the other Patriarchs."¹

The following extracts from a letter addressed to the Empress Pulcheria, by Pope Leo the Great, point out very definitely, Rome's appreciation of the third canon of the Council now under inspection. "What more does the ruler of the Church of Constantinople covet, than he has gained? Or what will satisfy him, if the renown and magnificence of such a city be not enough? It is too arrogant and intemperate thus to transgress all proper limits, and, despising the ancient usages, to wish to seize upon the right

¹ Hefele, VIII, p. 681, et sqq.

of another: to enlarge the honor of one at the expense of the primacies of so many metropolitans; . . . to trample upon the decrees of the venerable Fathers (of Nice), *by alleging the consent of certain bishops, which after the course of so many years, has never succeeded in becoming effective. For it is contended, that this has been allowed practically (or connived at) for sixty years, and the said bishop thinks, that he is helped thereby; but it is futile for him to look for assistance from that which, even though he rashly presumed to desire it, yet he could never obtain.*"¹ He is if possible still more clear upon the subject, when he refers to the Council of Constantinople, in a letter to Anatolius, Bishop of that city. He is attacking that Synod as the foundation of the trouble occasioned by Canon XXVIII of Chalcedon. The authority of the one hundred and fifty who met A. D. 381, had been insisted upon, by certain orientals at Chalcedon, in opposition to the attitude of the Roman Legates, Paschasinus, Lucentius and Boniface. "Your purpose is by no means supported by the written consent of certain bishops, *given*

¹ This letter, No. CV., was written probably A.D. 451 or 452. The reference to sixty years is somewhat puzzling. The Canon of A.D. 381 is surely what Leo speaks of, and that was promulgated seventy years before.

as you declare sixty years since, and never brought to the knowledge of the Apostolic See by your predecessors; and this transaction which from its very inception was doomed to come to naught, and as a matter of fact has long since done so, you try to support by too late and futile means.”¹ His legates at Chalcedon declared that they simply ignored the canons of Constantinople.

Pope Gregory the Great is unmistakable upon the subject. Speaking of the aforesaid canons he says, that the Roman Church “*neither possesses nor accepts them.*”² He declares the œcumenical character of the Council of Constantinople, however, and compares it to one of the Gospels; but it must never be lost sight of, that this recognition is solely by reason of the creed of the Council.

The statement of Photius that Pope Damasus approved this Council,³ is entirely at variance with truth, as is evident from the facts narrated above. How could Leo I declare that its canons were never sent to Rome, and Gregory I state that the Roman Church neither accepted nor approved them,

¹ Ep. Leon, CVI.

² Lib. VII, Ep. XXXIV.

³ Phot. de Synodis—found in Mansi, Vol. III, p. 595.

had Damasus given them Papal sanction.

In 382, there assembled another Council at Constantinople, which formulated a synodal letter to Pope Damasus and a number of bishops gathered in a Council at Rome. This document after explaining why the bishops gathered at Constantinople, could not accept the invitation tendered them to go to Rome, and take part in the Council there, sets forth what had been done in the Synod of 381, particularly in the matter of condemning heresies. Though it speaks of the matter of Church-administration, and refers to the See of Constantinople, *there is not the faintest mention of the position claimed for it in the famous third canon.* This is all the more significant, since the Synod of 382 convened with a view of satisfying a Council of Latins, which had assembled immediately after the close of the Second General Council, and had censured the same for some of its acts.¹ Dr. Percival in his "History," gives this synodal letter in full. He carefully omits the answer of Pope Damasus. A perusal of the Pope's letter makes obvious the reason of the omission. I am quite persuaded, that the Doctor thought the epistle offensively "Papal." Theodoret has pre-

¹ Hef. Con. II, 371.

served to us this valuable document. The historian begins the chapter in which the letter is found, by telling us that it was addressed by Damasus to the bishops of the Eastern Empire. "Most honorable *sons*," says the Pontiff, "*since your love renders to the Apostolic See the reverence which is its due, you show the same in no small measure to ourselves.* For though in the holy church in which the holy apostle sat, and taught us *how to handle the helm which has been committed to us*, we nevertheless confess that we are unworthy of the honor. . . . Remain on steady ground, firm and unmoved in the faith, and henceforth allow neither your clergy nor laity to listen to foolish words and vain questions, *for we have already given a form, that he who professes himself a Christian may keep it, etc.* . . . May God keep you sound, *most honored sons.*"¹ The above excerpts are all sufficient to show, that the letter of Damasus is unquestionably a letter from a superior to inferiors.

Towards the close of the sixth century, there was a general recognition of the œcumenical character of the Council of Constantinople held in 381, but only as regards its

¹ Theodoret. Hist. Eccl. V, 10.

creed. Dr. Percival has endeavored to make a case against the historical argument for the Papacy, in his discussion of the third canon, in its relation to the twenty-eighth of Chalcedon, but without success. His reasoning, as we shall see further on, is feeble, and his misreading of history very palpable. Leo opposed these canons, not only to safeguard the prerogatives of his own see, but also in defense of the privileges of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, as decreed at the Council of Nice. When all has been said, it remains to be proved that the orientals *intended*, by the third canon, to minimize in any way the prerogatives of Old Rome. Ample testimony will be brought forward in our study of the Council of Chalcedon to show that the Petrine Primacy was well recognized at Constantinople, during the contest between Leo and the Emperor Marcian, concerning the Roman approval of the Canons of Chalcedon. But even though the opposition on the part of Leo concerned itself solely with the privation of the rights of the other Patriarchs, yet it would be a case involving the question of the supreme Roman jurisdiction, since, as we have seen, Pope Julius declared, only seventeen years after the council of Nice, that an *ancient canon for-*

bade the enacting of synodal decrees, without the consent of the Bishop of Rome. The statements of Allies and Percival,¹ that the third canon was in *full force* long before the Council of Chalcedon, are dealt a hard blow from the fact, that at the Latrocinium, summoned by the Emperor Theodosius II, to which Pope Leo I gave a reluctant consent, Bishop Flavian of Constantinople is mentioned *only in the fifth place*. The statement of Leo, that the enactment was a failure from the beginning, will offset in the mind of any impartial investigator, the two nineteenth century testimonies quoted above. It is but just to mention in this connection, that Allies abandoned all his anti-Papal positions subsequently, by becoming a Catholic and a valiant defender of the Fisherman's See.

Much more will be said anent Constantinople's struggle for preëminence in our study of the General Council of Chalcedon.

¹ History of the Seven Œcum. Conc., p. 179.

CHAPTER III

THE THIRD ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL

EPHESUS 431 A. D.

It may be said truthfully, that the early Synods of the Church, (and a few of the later ones), were characterized by a certain disorder, not to be expected in such august gatherings. None of those assemblies lacked men of wisdom, sanctity and zeal for God's glory; yet the lack of self-control, and the consequent personal vituperation, which made some of their sessions extremely entertaining if not edifying, were at times startlingly prominent. Nice was tempestuous. The Emperor Constantine having opened the first solemn session of the Council, with a speech, breathing both piety and respect for ecclesiastical authority, left the discussion of theological questions entirely to the bishops. Thereupon followed a most interesting, but utterly inelegant series of encounters. This made such an impression on the Emperor, that in his next address he seemed little short of disgusted.

We know very little about the deportment of the Fathers of the Second Œcumenical Council, but the little we know clearly proves, that at times it was far from peaceful. Gregory of Nazianzus left its sessions, declaring that he would never set foot in the Council again, and he kept his word. He resigned the See of Constantinople, because of an act of the Council, and when during the course of the following year, he was invited by the Emperor Theodosius to attend another Synod, he firmly declined, and declared that little good was to be hoped for from such assemblies.

The embroglio at Ephesus was indeed alarming. The actual sessions of the Council—all save the first—were peacefully conducted, but the cabals of Nestorius and John of Antioch, the former lodged in one part of the city surrounded by faithful henchmen, his house guarded by soldiers, and he contumaciously refusing to attend the synod; the latter in another dwelling of the same Ephesus, holding a rival synod, anathematizing right and left; the incidents of personal violence, and the starving of the orthodox bishops by the imperial commissioner; these happenings and the story of constant invective and recrimination, make up a nar-

native far from refreshing. Yet in the midst of all this horrible distraction and distress, the holy synod vindicated the “θεοτόκος,” the “God-bearer,” and in no early synod of the Church, have we more striking acknowledgments of the supremacy of the “Fisherman’s See.”

When Nestorius began to distinguish himself as an heretical incumbent of the bishopric of Constantinople, he arrested the attention of Cyril of Alexandria. Nestorius wrote to Pope Cœlestine concerning the question of the θεοτόκος, and thereupon Cœlestine communicated with Cyril, making enquiries as to the orthodoxy of Nestorius. Cyril’s answer to the Pope, shows what he considered his duty to Rome in the matter. “It would be more agreeable if we could remain silent,” he writes, “but God requires of us vigilance, and *ecclesiastical custom demands that I should inform your holiness. . . .* Now I believe myself bound to speak and to explain all that has occurred.”¹ He goes on to state, that he did not wish to threaten

¹ Compare this with the words of St. Cyprian to Pope Cornelius. “The matter was not such as ought immediately and with haste to be brought to your attention, as if it were great or to be dreaded. I did not think it necessary, that the foolishness of heretics should be hastily or urgently brought before you,” Ep. LIV. Cyprian’s testimony is nearly two hundred years older than Cyril’s.

Nestorius with excommunication, before he had informed the Pope, and that now Cœlestine is in position to determine what had best be done, and to communicate to the Eastern bishops his instructions on the matter.¹ “In consequence of this,” says Hefele, “Pope Cœlestine, in the year 430, held a synod at Rome, at which Nestorius was declared a heretic, and *threatened with deposition*, unless he revoked his errors within ten days after the reception of this decision. We still have a fragment of a speech made by the Pope at the Synod, in which he approves of the expression *θεοτόκος*, as well as the four letters, which he despatched, as the result of the Synod, to Nestorius, to his Church, to Cyril, and to John of Antioch, all dated the 11th of August, 430.”²

The inception of the Nestorian heresy was quickly followed by a universal demand for a General Council, and on Nov. 19th, 430, the Emperor Theodosius II, (who had a large endowment of religious zeal, and an equally generous amount of ignorance in matters theological), in his own name and that of Valentinian III, Emperor of the West, issued the summons to an Œcumenical Synod.

¹ Cyr. Ep. IX.

² Hef. III, p. 25.

Cœlestine in a letter to Theodosius, agrees to the holding of a Council, saying, however, that he would not attend personally, but would send legates. The tone of the Pope's letter is simply inexplicable, save upon the ground of Cœlestine's consciousness of supreme authority in the Church. He charges the Emperor to disallow the introduction of any novelties, or anything which might in any way disrupt the peace of the Church. He tells him that he should look upon the interests of religion, as superior to those of the state, and that the peace of his empire, is really of less moment than the peace of the Church.¹

Cœlestine appoints Cyril of Alexandria as his chief representative at the Council, and Arcadius and Projectus, two bishops, with a priest Philippus, as his other legates. His charge to them is very encouraging to our general purpose. They must adhere faithfully to Cyril, *but at the same time they must preserve inviolate the rights of the Apostolic See.* It was their business to hear the discussions; not to enter into debate, *but to give judgments upon the arguments of others.* When the Synod should have finished its business, in case of a victory for orthodoxy,

¹ Hardouin, Tom. I, p. 1473,

they should journey together with Cyril to Constantinople, and present the Apostolic Letters to the Emperor.¹ They were sent with the commission to insist upon that condemnation of Nestorius, which Cœlestine had promulgated, before any summons to the Council had been issued. The history of the Council itself, is the best evidence as to the manner in which this commission was carried forward.

The first session of the Council of Ephesus was held June 22, 431. At this session the solemn condemnation of Nestorius was pronounced. We must point out here a few samples of ingenious dishonesty on the part of some of our Anglican friends. The decree of Ephesus condemning Nestorius runs as follows: "The holy Synod declared: 'As in addition to other things, the impious Nestorius has not obeyed our citation, and did not receive the holy bishops who were sent by us to him, we were compelled to examine his ungodly doctrines. We discovered that he had held and published impious doctrines in his letters and treatises, as well as in discourses which he delivered in this city, and which have been testified to. *Unavoidably compelled by the canons, and by the*

¹ Hardouin, T. I, p. 1347.

letter of our most holy father and fellow minister Cœlestine, the Bishop of the Church of the Romans, we have come with many tears to this sorrowful sentence against him, that is, that our Lord Jesus Christ whom he has blasphemed, decrees by the holy Synod, that Nestorius be excluded from the episcopal rank, and from all sacerdotal communion.' "'¹ Dr. Wm. R. Clarke the translator of Hefele's "Councils," renders the phrase which I have italicized as follows; "urged by the canons, and in accordance with the letter of our most holy father." The original reads, "*αναγκαιώς καταπειχθέντες από τε των κανόνων, και εκ της επιστολης κ. τ. λ.*" Clarke's translation is a manifestation of either ignorance of Greek, or controversial dishonesty. Dr. Percival with commendable fairness, points out, that Canon Bright in his article on St. Cyril, in Smith and Wace's "Dictionary of Christian Biography," and Foulkes in his article on the Council of Ephesus, in Smith and Cheet-ham's "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities," *both omit the Greek given above, notwithstanding that there is no controversy as to the genuineness of the phrase.*² The words are not found in Robertson's "History

¹ Hardouin, Tom. I, p. 1422.

² It is found in all the "Concilia."

of the Church," and Dean Millman, *though citing in both Greek and Latin, the sentence of the decree of condemnation, in which these words occur, omits all mention of the Pope's letter.*¹ In view of the fact, that the favorite charges laid at our door by Anglicans, concern themselves with suppressions and interpolations, the above *facts* are doubly interesting. Dr. Clarke takes care to observe, that the bracketed notes found here and there in his translation are his own. The remark is entirely superfluous.

Two hundred bishops subscribed the condemnation of Nestorius, at the first session,² Cyril alone represented Cœlestine. The other legates as yet had not arrived. Cyril is designated in the acts, as the Pope's representative,³ and there has never been any question of his presidency.

The second session was held on July 10, 431, at which the three other legates were present, and at which was read the letter of Cœlestine to the Synod. No one may deny that the last part of this letter emphasizes the Papal supremacy, yet (as we shall see further on), instead of evoking criticism or dissension, it called forth manifestations of

¹ Lat. Chr., Bk. II, Cap. III.

² Mansi IV, p. 1226.

³ Mansi IV, p. 1279.

fidelity to the See of Peter. A close inspection of the history of the first three sessions of Ephesus, reveals the following facts. First, at the opening session the bishops entered into the theological merits of the case of Nestorius. They examined his heresy most minutely. Much patristic literature is brought to bear upon it. Then they condemned him. Second, at the following session, the three legates from Rome announce to the Council, that Nestorius *had been already condemned at Rome by Cœlestine*, and that it simply remained for the bishops to accede to Cœlestine's act. *The Council obeys*. They further demand that the transactions of the Council, previous to their arrival, should be read to them, *in order that they may confirm them* (βεβαιώσωμεν). Their demand was satisfied. Third, at the following session, there was perfect concord between the legates of Cœlestine and the Council, and at the petition of the Synod, the legates "*confirm with their signatures,*" the condemnation which the bishops had pronounced.

We will not busy ourselves here with the remaining sessions.

Let us now return to a fuller consideration of the second session, at which was read the Papal document. This letter of



Cœlestine is a trifle lengthy, and, though a few excerpts from it might suffice for our general purpose, yet, since taken in its entirety, it manifests on the part of the writer, a consciousness, that he is chiefly responsible (humanly speaking), for the safe-guarding of the “*depositum fidei*,” I have thought it well to reproduce the letter in full. Previous to the reading of the document, the acts of the Synod tell us that Philip, one of the legates, said: “A considerable time ago, our most holy and blessed Pope Cœlestine, the Bishop of the Apostolic See, by his letters to the holy and most righteous Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria, pronounced a sentence on the present case, which letters have been shown to your holy Council. Again, and for the confirmation of the Catholic faith, through us he has sent letters, which you will command (*κελούσατε*) to be read in a becoming manner, and to be placed in the ecclesiastical minutes.” Arcadius, another of the legates said: “Let your holiness command that the letters of the holy and ever-to-be-mentioned with reverence Pope Cœlestine, Bishop of the Apostolic See, which through us have been carried hither, be read, from which your holiness will perceive what solicitude he has for all the Churches.” Projectus, the other leg-

ate from Rome, makes a similar request, and finally Cyril commanded that the letter be read. "Let the letter," says he, "which has been received from the most blessed and holy Cœlestine, Bishop of the Apostolic See, be read with becoming respect, to the holy Synod."¹

"Cœlestine the Bishop to the holy Synod gathered together at Ephesus, brethren beloved and desired, salutation in the Lord. A Council of priests (bishops) testifies to the presence of the Holy Ghost. For that which we read is true, since Truth can tell no lie, that is, the assurance of the Gospel (namely), 'Wherever two or three are gathered in my name, lo, I am in the midst of them.' And since this is true, if the Holy Ghost is not wanting to such a small number, with how much greater reason can we believe, that he is in the midst of such a multitude of saintly ones, gathered together. Every Council is holy on account of a particular reverence which is its due, for in every such Synod, the respect which should be paid to that most renowned Synod of the Apostles, of which we read, must never be lost sight of."² The

¹All three extracts are from Labbe and Cossart, S. J., Conc., Tom. III. Col. 609. Father Labbe's work was continued and finished by Fr. Cossart.

²The Latin text of the letter is extremely clumsy, which

Master whom they had received, and whom they were to preach, was never wanting to this (Synod), but as Lord and Master he was ever present, and those who taught were never deserted by their teacher. For their teacher was he who had sent them, and who had commanded what was to be taught. He was their teacher, who declares, that in his Apostles, he himself is heard. The duty of preaching has been imposed upon all the Lord's priests in common, for we who preach the name of the Lord in the Apostles' stead, in various countries, are bound by right of an inherited duty, to undertake this care, for said he to them. 'Going teach all nations.' You beloved brethren must see, that we have received a general command: for he wishes that the office which he thus bestowed upon all the Apostles in common, should be fulfilled by all of us. We must follow our predecessors. Let all of us then, since we are partakers in their honor, endeavor to perform their labors. And we manifest our care in preaching the very doctrines which they taught, to which we are forbidden to add anything, according to the warning of the Apostle. For the duty of safe-guarding

necessarily makes a literal rendition somewhat awkward. The Greek is clearer, but most probably the text we follow is the original Latin.

what is entrusted to our care, is no less honorable than that of handing it down. They planted the seed of the faith. The object of our solicitude should be, that the advent of our great Father of the family, to whom certainly this sufficiency of the Apostles is due, may find a hundred fold of uncorrupt fruit. For the vessel of election tells us, that unless God gives the increase, it is not enough to plant and to water. Therefore we must endeavor together, to preserve the faith, which has descended to us by virtue of the Apostolic Succession. It is expected of us, that we walk according to the Apostle, for now it is our faith, and not our external conduct,¹ that is called into question. We must seize spiritual weapons, because it is a spiritual warfare, and these weapons are words; and so we shall wax firm in the faith of our King. Now the holy Apostle Paul warns us all to remain in that place, wherein he commanded Timothy to remain. The same place, and the same cause, impose upon us the same obligation. We must both study and perform, what he then commanded him to do. No one should think otherwise, and let no one give ear to strange fables. We must be unani-

¹ "Species" may mean so many things. "Appearance" would be quite literal, but to my mind without much sense.

mous, thinking the same thing. We must do nothing out of contention or vanity. We must be of one mind and of one heart, for the faith which is ours is attacked. The whole body should both suffer and mourn with us. He who is to judge the world, is Himself called into judgment; He who is to examine all, is Himself subjected to examination; He who redeemed us is calumniated. Gird ye, beloved brethren, with the armour of God. You know what helmet must protect our head, what breast-plate must cover our breast. For this is not the first occasion, upon which the ecclesiastical camps have had you for captains. Let no one fear but that by the Lord's favor, who maketh two to be one, that arms will be relinquished, and peace will come, since the cause itself is its own best defence.

“We must look once more at the words of our teacher, in which he makes special reference to bishops. ‘Take heed to yourselves and to the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has placed you as bishops, that you rule over the Church of God, which he hath bought with his blood.’

“We read that they who listened to this at Ephesus, where you are assembled were called thence. To them therefore to whom

this preaching of the faith was known, to them also, let your defence of the same faith be known. We must manifest to them our constancy, with that respect which belongs to matters of grave import; which things, by reason of religious understanding, peace has for a long time protected. Let those things which have been handed down intact from the Apostles, be proclaimed by you, for the sayings of rebellious opposition can have no success against the King of kings, nor can falsehood prevail over the interests of truth.

“I exhort you most holy brethren that charity be looked upon as the bond by which we should be united,¹ according to the voice of John the Apostle, whose relics we venerate in that city. Common prayer should be offered to the Lord. For we can have some conception of what influence the divine presence will exercise, through the supplication of such a multitude of priests, by reflecting upon the fact, that the very place was moved, where the Twelve together offered up their prayer. And what was the burden of that prayer? It was that they might obtain grace to speak confidently the word of God, and to

¹The translation here is somewhat free, but does no violence to the Latin text, which in so many places is almost unmanageable.

act through its power, both of which they received through the goodness of Christ our God. And now what other thing is to be asked for by your holy Council, except that with confidence ye may speak the word of the Lord? What else, than that he may bestow upon you the grace to safe-guard that, which he has given you to preach; that being filled with the Holy Spirit, as it is written, you may proclaim that one truth, which that spirit has revealed to you, although by various voices.

“Moved by these reflections (for as says the Apostle, ‘I speak to them that know the law, and I speak wisdom among those who are perfect’), remain steadfast in the Catholic faith, and defend the peace of the Churches, for so it is said to those past, present and future, asking and protecting “those things which belong to the peace of Jerusalem.”

“Out of our solicitude we have sent our holy brothers and fellow priests, who are united with us, and most sound men, Arcadius and Projectus, the bishops, and Philip our priest; that they may be present, *and may carry out what things have already been decreed by us.*¹ To the performing of which, we do not doubt that your holiness will agree, when it

¹“Quae a nobis antea statuta sunt, exequantur.”

is seen that what has been decreed is for the safety of the whole Church.”¹

Notwithstanding the barbarous latinity, the patches of obscurity, and the palpable disjointedness of the foregoing epistle, it is impossible honestly to view it as a whole, otherwise than as a letter from one who regarded himself as the head of the Church. The idea of a bishop not invested with supreme authority in the Church, daring thus to write to an Œcumenical Council, and unmistakably informing them, that he sends his legates to *secure the adoption of measures, which he had previously determined upon, imports an assurance that is simply incredible*; and the submissive reception of Cœlestine's letter, together with the obsequious following out of his direction, on the part of the Synod, constitute an irrefragable bulwark of testimony for the Papacy in the ancient Church. Later on we shall discuss an Anglican view of Rome's relations with the Ephesine Synod, but meanwhile we must return to the history of the second session.

After the reading (of the epistle) in Latin, Juvenal, the bishop of Jerusalem, said: “Let the writings of the most religious and

¹ Migne, Patrol. Lat., Tom. I, Col. 505. Also in Labbe & Cossart, Conc.

most blessed Bishop of great Rome, which have now been read, be placed upon the minutes.”

Philip the priest of the Apostolic See, and Legate, said: “The custom has been sufficiently satisfied, that the letters of the Apostolic See should first be read in Latin. Since, however, your holiness has asked that they be read in Greek too, it is expedient, that your holiness’s desire should be satisfied. We have seen to it, that this be done, and that the Latin be translated into Greek. Command, therefore, that it be both read and received in your presence.”¹

The letter was accordingly read in Greek, and the acclamations which followed, clearly show the minds of the bishops regarding Cœlestine. “This is a just judgment. Thanks to Cœlestine another Paul, to Cyril, a new Paul, to Cœlestine *the guardian* of the faith. To Cœlestine one with the Synod. The whole Council offers its thanks to Cœlestine.”²

Projectus, one of the legates from Rome, called the attention of the Council, to the necessity of examining well the direction (τύπον) contained in Cœlestine’s writings, and

¹ Labbe & Cossart, Tom. III, Col. 609.

² Ibid., Col. 617.

he exhorted the bishops to see to it, *that Cœlestine's definition be carried out "to the extreme limit, according to the canon of the common faith, and the custom of the Catholic Church."*¹ Firmus, bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia said: "The Apostolic and Holy See of Cœlestine, the most holy bishop, hath already given a sentence and direction (*ψηφον καὶ τύπον*) in this case, through the letters sent to the bishops beloved of God, namely, Cyril of Alexandria, Juvenal of Jerusalem, Rufus of Thessalonica, and to both the holy churches of Constantinople and Antioch. This we also have followed, . . . and carried into effect the direction (*τύπον*), having pronounced against him a sentence both canonical and apostolical."²

Arcadius then requested the Synod, to read what had been enacted in the first session; since he and his fellow legates had not arrived until it was over. Philip the priest and legate made the same request, but his wording is somewhat more interesting. "We are thankful to the holy and august Synod, that when the letters of our holy and blessed Pope had been read to you, . . . you joined yourselves to the holy head by

¹ Labbe & Cossart, III, Col. 617; Mansi, Vol. IV, p. 1287; Hardouin I, p. 1471.

² Ibid.

your holy acclamations. For your holiness is not ignorant, that the head of the whole faith, the head of the Apostles, is the blessed Apostle Peter. And since our lowliness . . . has arrived, we ask that you command that the things done in this holy Synod, before our advent, be submitted to (or laid before) us, that, according to the mind of our blessed Pope, and of this present holy gathering, we may likewise confirm their determination." After Philip, Theodotus, Bishop of Ancyra spoke, and seconded all that Philip had said, assuring him that his demand would be granted.

It is quite clear from the history of the Council, that after the second session, the acts of the first were given to the Roman legates for their private perusal; for Juvenal, Bishop of Jerusalem, directly the third session had been opened, asked the legates if they had both read the acts of the first session, and understood their force. Philip the legate, though stating that they, (i. e. he and his colleagues), had both read and approved the acts in question, yet persisted in his demand, that they should hear those same acts publicly read in the conciliar session. His reason is set forth in the following words: "so that we may follow the direction (τύπη) of the

most holy Pope Cœlestine, (who laid this charge upon us), and of your holiness too, and that we may ratify (or confirm *βεβαιωσαι*) the sentence.”¹ Memnon, the Bishop of Ephesus, ordered the chief notary of the Synod to comply with the demand of Philip, and the acts thereupon were read. The speech of Philip to the Council after the aforesaid reading, contains a glorious testimony for Rome’s position at the time. “*There is no doubt,*” says he, “*and in truth it has ever been known,* that the holy and most blessed Peter, ruler and head of the Apostles, pillar of the faith and foundation of the Catholic Church, received the keys of the kingdom from our Lord Jesus Christ, Savior and Redeemer of men, and that to him was given the power of binding and loosing sins; who even to this time and forever *lives and judges in his successors.* The holy and most blessed Pope Cœlestine, according to proper order, is his successor and holds his place, etc.”² It would be impossible to find a more thoroughly “Papal” statement, than the above, in the acts of either Trent or the Vatican. Surely there would have been some expression of protest from the Fathers of Ephesus,

¹ Labbe & Cossart, Conc. III, C. 621.

² Labbe & Cossart, T. III, Col. 621; Mansi, T. IV, p. 1299; Hardouin I, p. 1482.

had they not been profoundly convinced, that Philip had stated aright the position of the successor of St. Peter. Yet we have no record of even a murmur of dissent. We have on the other hand, in the words of Cyril the president of the Council, the fullest and most unequivocal approval. Following the utterance of Philip, from which we have just quoted, the legates in turn, formally utter the condemnation of Nestorius, *each carefully stating, before mentioning the act of the Synod, that he condemns, following the prescriptions of the Pope.* The words of Cyril anent the action of the legates, are well worthy of reproduction here. “The declarations which have just been made by Arcadius and Projectus the most holy and religious bishops, and also by Philip the most pious presbyter of the Church of Rome, are clear to the holy Synod. They have made their declarations representing the Apostolic See, and the entire holy Synod of the beloved-of-God and most holy bishops of the West. *Hence let those things which were defined by the most holy Cælestine, the God-beloved bishop, be carried into effect, and the vote cast against the heretic Nestorius by the holy Synod, which convened in the city of Ephesus, be generally agreed to; for this purpose, let*

the transactions of yesterday and to-day, be added to the acts which are already set down, *and let them be laid before their holiness, so that, according to the custom, by their subscription, their canonical agreement with us all may be shown forth.*"¹

The subscriptions are strangely ordered. Cyril signed first as we would expect, then Philip, who, be it noted was only a priest. Following Philip we have the name of Juvenal of Jerusalem, then the names of the other Roman legates, both of whom were bishops.² There must have been some reason for the constant prominence of Philip the priest, but that reason is nowhere stated in the histories at our disposal. We would naturally expect the leadership to be invested in either Arcadius or Projectus, since these enjoyed the episcopal rank. The insertion of Juvenal's name between those of two Roman legates, is a bit curious. The acts of the fourth session, however, furnish us with another list, which is headed by Cyril, who is again mentioned as Cœlestine's representative, then comes the names of the three papal legates, (Philip the presbyter holding last

¹ Labbe & Cossart, T. III, Col. 621; Mansi IV, 1300; Hardouin I, p. 1482.

² Mansi IV, p. 1302.

place among them) ; after these Juvenal and the other attendants.¹

Dr. Percival remarks, that the statement of Philip,² concerning the custom of reading Papal letters to members of Synods, first in Latin, “seems the climax of improbable statements.” It would seem to be the most probable thing in the world, that the legates should read a Roman decree in the Latin tongue, and that after this presentation, it should be translated into Greek for the sake of the Orientals. This certainly was done at subsequent Councils, and there is no reason for suspecting the genuineness of this portion of the Acts of Ephesus, nor is there the faintest suggestion of foundation, for regarding the reading of the letter of Cœlestine alternately in Latin and Greek, as the climax of improbabilities. The statement is absurd. In the constant struggle between Percival’s natural honesty and his Protestant prejudice, the former is at times on the point of being vanquished.

We may be allowed the reflection here, that one of the disturbing influences in several of the early Councils, was the fact, that the Lat-

¹ Mansi IV, p. 1306.

² Found in the acts of the second session after the letter of Cœlestine has been heard.

ins generally knew no Greek, and the Greeks not only knew no Latin, but had an ill-concealed contempt for that tongue. Distrust and suspicion were very natural results of such a situation.

Dr. Percival devotes considerable space, to an endeavor to minimize the actual value of Cœlestine's condemnation of Nestorius, *as it was presented to the Council*. He uses to an apparent advantage, an abridged translation of the Seventh Book of Bossuet's famous "Defence of the French Clergy." The illustrious "Eagle of Meaux" creates in the reader's mind the impression, that his head was Roman, whilst his heart was Gallican. He makes statement after statement concerning the supremacy of the Apostolic See, which he of course acknowledges, and straightway exercises his genius to discover *how little* these statements may mean, when in his mind's eye the Pope is contrasted with a General Council. The great French bishop seems equally zealous in the matter of insisting upon Cœlestine's pontifical authority, and in that of maintaining that its validity depended upon the placet of the Ephesine Synod. It is not surprising. He was devoted to Gallicanism, as was many a good ecclesiastic of his period. But even the genius

of a Bossuet, can never cast into shadow the fact, that Cœlestine's letters were the dominating influence of the Council of Ephesus. The examination of the theological grounds upon which the Papal condemnation was founded, which took place at the first session, by no means obscured the condemnation itself, nor suspended its power, as Percival contends. The Œcumenical Council with the Pope has the same divinely bestowed prerogatives of infallibly teaching the whole Church "de fide et moribus," as has the Pope himself. But to contend that the act of the Pope, waits for its validity upon the dictum of the Council, is to lay down a proposition, which receives absolutely no encouragement from the Acts of Ephesus. It is not a matter of marvel, that Percival remarks in a foot-note,¹ that there are many things in these acts, "which would induce the reader to suspect, that they are not in good shape." That is, if the reader have the same view-point as our friend. Were I to stand in his position, I should regard them hopelessly. From the stand-point of a Catholic, the Acts of Ephesus are a source of strength and confirmation. The Vatican definition of Papal Infallibility, deprives Œcumenical Councils

¹ Op. citat., p. 219.

neither of being nor action. The germ of that definition is clearly observable in the words of Cœlestine and his legates. He sends them to carry out, what had been determined by him, in a matter *de fide*. And his legates never tire of declaring to the bishops at Ephesus, that he as the successor of St. Peter, is the pillar of the Church, and that the sentence or judgment (*ψηφον*), had been furnished for the Council *by him*.

Dr. Percival betrays himself into an awkward blunder, when he says that the pontifical sentence which gave Nestorius only ten days from its receipt, in which to retract, or be cut off from communion, was ignored by the Synod.¹ “Cyril on his part,” says Hefele, “found it necessary to ask of Pope Cœlestine, whether Nestorius should be allowed to appear at the proposed Synod as a member, or whether the sentence of deposition pronounced against him, after the period of time allowed for recanting had elapsed, should now still have effect. We no longer possess this letter itself, but we have the answer of the Pope dated May 7, 431, which gives a beautiful proof of his peace-loving disposition, and in which he says, ‘God willeth not the death of a sinner,’ but his con-

¹ *Op. citat.*, p. 193.

version, and that Cyril should do everything, in order to restore the peace of the Church, and win back Nestorius to the truth.”¹

We leave the Council of Ephesus with the pleasant reflection, that the history of that ancient Synod, reveals with a glorious clearness, two doctrines so near to the Catholic heart, namely, that Mary is in very truth God’s mother, and the successor of Peter is the captain, the ruler and the guide of God’s people on earth.

¹ Councils III, pp. 41, 42.

CHAPTER IV

THE LATROCINIUM

The Robber Synod of Ephesus, though having no conciliar rank in the annals of the Church, is however, of importance here; since the history of Rome's attitude towards that gathering of ecclesiastical worthies, and the correspondence between Pope Leo I and the Emperor Theodosius II anent the same, both contribute very substantial evidence, for the main contention, with which this book is concerned.

The Latrocinium as it is pleasantly styled by Leo I, was convoked by Theodosius II, against the will of the Pope, and at the request of Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, a thoroughbred ecclesiastical bandit, and Eutyches, Archimandrite of Constantinople, and now famous heretic. It was the express wish of Theodosius, that Leo should attend in person. This the Pope declined to do, setting forth reasons, but he notified the Emperor, that he would send Julius a bishop, Renatus a priest, and Hilarus a deacon, to

represent him and the interests of the Apostolic See. The question which agitated the Eastern Church, and which occasioned the Council, was that of the orthodoxy of Eutyches. Leo entrusted to his legate four letters, to the Emperor Theodosius, to the Empress Pulcheria, to Flavian, Bishop of Constantinople and to the Synod respectively. We find in his letter to Theodosius the following passage which needs no commentary. "I have sent my brethren Julius the bishop, Renatus the presbyter, and my son Hilarus the deacon, to represent me, as the case demands, and they shall carry with them such a disposition of justice and benignity, that although the whole miserable error (Eutychanism) is condemned, (for there is no doubt as to what the right doctrines of the Christian faith are), yet, if he who has erred repents and begs forgiveness, he may receive the help of sacerdotal consideration; seeing that in *the appeal which he made to us*, he secured for himself the right of obtaining our pardon, by pledging himself to reform whatever in his opinion disagreed with ours. But what the Catholic Church universally believes and teaches with respect to the Incarnation of our Lord, is more fully set forth in the letter, which I have sent to my brother

and fellow-bishop Flavian.”¹ The reader will recall readily, the mode of procedure adopted by Pope Cœlestine, in his relation to the Council of Ephesus. He sent his legates, to see that the members of the Synod acceded to what he had already defined, (“ut, quae a nobis antea statuta sunt exequantur”). Leo does the very same thing with reference to the Robber Synod. The letter which he addressed to Flavian, was a dogmatic document exposing the true Catholic doctrine, and condemning the heresy of Eutyches. This letter Leo intended as a *norm* for the Council’s action. One of the chief reasons for his utter repudiation of the Synod was (as we shall see further on), that this “epistola dogmatica” was not read and accepted therein. The passage quoted above from his letter to Theodosius, clearly shows, that Leo considered it his prerogative, to handle the case of Eutyches by himself, and without the aid of a Council. Eutyches himself seemed to share the same conviction before the Synod. “I take refuge with you the defender of religion;” he writes to Leo, “I beseech you not to be prejudiced against me; . . . but to pronounce the sentence, which to you shall seem right upon the faith,

¹ Ep. XXIX.

and for the future not to permit any calumny to be spoken against me; . . . nor let any one be expelled and cut off from the number of the orthodox, who has spent seventy years of his life in continence and chastity, etc.”¹ Leo’s letter to Pulcheria relative to the prospective Synod, touching upon the necessity of punishing Eutyches, should he persist in his error, says: “The moderation of the Apostolic See, restricts its gentleness (or leniency) in such wise, as to treat the contumacious with severity, while desiring to extend forgiveness to those who submit to correction.”² We find in the same letter the following passage: “Consider that in these my brethren (the legates), whom I have sent in my stead, I also am present with the rest who appear. I have explained to them both clearly and completely, *what is to be maintained* in view of the sufficient exposition of the case, which by a minute report has been furnished me, and by the defendant’s own declaration to me.”³ The letter which Leo addresses to the Synod itself, is fraught with the same consciousness of supremacy. He writes that the Emperor “has paid such respect to *the Divine institutions, as to ap-*

¹ Ep. XXI inter Epp. Leonis.

² Ep. XXXI.

³ Ep. XXXI.

ply to the authority of the Apostolic See for a proper determination; as though he desired it to be declared by the most blessed Peter himself, what was praised in his confession."¹

There is no need of our going into the melancholy details of that lamentable cabal of Ephesus, further than to draw the reader's attention to the following facts. *a)* Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, whom Leo delicately calls the "Egyptian plunderer," was the self-constituted president of the assembly. *β)* The Papal representatives received no proper recognition. *γ)* The letter of Leo to the Synod, and the "epistola dogmatica" addressed to Flavian, then the Bishop of Constantinople, *but to be read in the Council*, were neither read nor received. *δ)* Flavian after a ruthlessly unjust condemnation by Dioscorus, *made an appeal to Leo which the legates then present accepted.*² During the sessions (or session) of the Synod, at which the legates were in attendance, they refused to sit at all, since the presidency was not accorded them, and

¹ Ep. XXXIII.

² We may be permitted the observation here, that the Acts of the Latrocinium as we have them are far from satisfactory. Other testimonies of antiquity show these Acts to be in considerable measure false. The facts rehearsed above, however, can be substantiated.

stood *extra ordinem*.¹ The above mentioned appeal of Flavian to Rome, is attested by Leo,² Valentinian III, Emperor of the West³ and the Empress Galla Placidia.⁴

The Emperor Theodosius confirmed the Robber Synod by an imperial edict. Needless to state, this robust measure on the part of a sovereign, who was interminably interested in religious controversy, but who was invariably on the wrong side, had no value, and did not command respect, even throughout that portion of the Empire, under his control; for the bishops of Syria, Pontus and Asia, repudiated the Robber Synod, and adhered to Flavian and the Apostolic See. Theodoret the Bishop of Cyrus, appealed from the sentence of deposition passed upon him at the Robber Synod by Dioscorus, to Pope Leo, and the wording of the appeal is much to our purpose. "If Paul the messenger of truth, the trumpet of the Holy Spirit, appealed to the great Peter for a decision from him, for those who argued about the Law at Antioch, much more do we, of so little account, run to the Apostolic See, to procure from you remedies for the wounds of

¹ Breviarium of Liberatus (Saec. VI).

² Ep. LIV.

³ Ep. LV, inter Leonis Epp.

⁴ Ep. LVI, inter Leonis Epp.

the churches. . . . I await the verdict of your Apostolic See. . . . I appeal to your just tribunal. . . . I await your sentence, and if you command me to abide by my condemnation, I will abide by it.”¹ Let the reader remember that this testimony, is from an oriental bishop of the fifth century, and that it is an appeal from what the Emperor regarded as an Œcumenical Synod, to the Chair of Peter.

Rome condemned the Latrocinium in unmeasured terms, and repudiated its acts. This was to be expected as a matter of course. In a letter from Leo to the Emperor Theodosius, we find the following passage. “From the beginning, in the Synods which have been convoked, we have received such liberty of speech from the most holy Peter, prince of the Apostles, as to possess the power both to maintain the Truth, in the interests of peace, and to permit no one to shake it from its firm position, but at once to oppose (or repel) the mischief. . . . The Council of bishops which you commanded to be held at Ephesus, on account of Flavian, works mischief to the Faith itself, and inflicts injuries on all the

¹ Ep. LII, inter Leon. Epp.

churches.”¹ These words stand best without comment. Leo had due regard for the imperial purple, but that regard does not prevent him from writing in the most straight-forward and fearless manner, to the Emperor, when the rights of the Apostolic See have not been properly respected. Farther on in the same document, he bids the Emperor to have due regard for Peter’s glory. In another letter to Theodosius he declares, that Dioscorus usurped the headship at Ephesus: “he who claimed for himself the chief place.” He further states that his legates could not be coerced at Ephesus, and that “they rigorously protested, as they should, *that the Apostolic See would never recognize what was being passed*”² [by the Council]. Writing to Pulcheria Augusta, he plainly says, that his representatives had “brought the Faith fully set forth and explained, from the see of the blessed Apostle Peter to the holy Synod.”³

All this is very suggestive of Pope Cœlestine’s attitude towards the real Ephesine Synod.

The tragic death of Theodosius II, July 28,

¹ Ep. XLIII.

² Ep. XLIII.

³ Ep. XLV.

A. D. 450,¹ was providential for the cause of Leo. Marcian and Pulcheria who succeeded Theodosius, both championed the cause of orthodoxy. The Emperor wrote² to Leo, and assured him of his willingness to aid in convoking a Council, which Leo had authorized (*σου ἀθροεντωντος*).³

The candid reader of ecclesiastical history, is bound to admit that Leo I *alone* swept from the annals of the Church, all recognition of the Robber Synod as a Council. His reasons for repudiating that deplorable gathering, whose sessions were filled with every violence short of actual murder, were, a) Dioscorus constituted himself the president of the Synod; β) the Papal letter to the Council was not permitted to be read; and γ) the dogmatic declaration of Leo on the Eutychian heresy, was neither accepted nor promulgated by the assembly.

The espousing of the cause of Leo, on the part of the Emperor Marcian, was (as is clear from his own letters)⁴ because he recognized the rights of Rome, both in condemning the cabal at Ephesus, and in insisting

¹ He died in consequence of a fall from his horse.

² Epp. LXXIII, et LXXVI, inter Leon. Epp.

³ Lat. "te auctore," Dr. Clarke, the translator of Hefele's "Councils," *gently* translates the Greek into "at your suggestion."

⁴ Epp. LXXIII and LXXVI, inter Epp. Leon.

upon the convocation of a new Council.¹ No one acquainted with the history of the period, can avoid seeing what notion Leo had of his own authority. After recording his unqualified protest against the Latrocinium to Theodosius, he wrote² to the Archimandrites of Constantinople, warning them against, any recognition of that spurious Synod, and finally, he firmly but tactfully refused to accede to the request of Theodosius, that the Apostolic See should confirm Anatolius in the See of Constantinople, until Anatolius should send to Leo, a satisfactory profession of faith. His letter to Anatolius, after satisfactory evidence of that bishop's orthodoxy had been received in Rome, is a striking manifestation of Papal power in the fifth century. Referring to those bishops who in terror of Dioscorus, had subscribed at the Latrocinium, but who had since repented of their weakness, he says: "We approve of that which was settled upon, in the presence of our legates and by their coöperation," (with regard to the aforesaid bishops), "that is, that at present, they should be satisfied with the communion of their own churches;

¹ Leo requested Theodosius to call a council after the Latrocinium. Theodosius refused, stating that everything had been *peacefully* (sic!) settled at Ephesus.

² Epp. L et LI.

but we wish our representatives, whom we have sent, to hold council with you, and arrive at some arrangement, whereby those who condemn their evil doings, with full assurance of a penitent spirit, and elect rather to accuse themselves, than to make a defence of their action, may be rejoiced by being at peace and in communion with us. . . . The blessing of communion with us, must neither harshly be held back, nor inconsiderately granted.”¹ He was opposed very naturally, to the retention of the names of Dioscorus, Juvenal and Eustathius, the ring-leaders of the affray at Ephesus, upon the diptychs at Constantinople. “It behooves you,” he writes to Anatolius, “to carry out what our adherents said ought to be done,” (i. e. the removing of the names). . . . “*It is our will*, that what we have written to you, should be made known to all men, that they who serve our God, may give thanks for the consummation of peace with the Apostolic See. *You will be further instructed concerning other persons and matters, in a letter which you shall receive from our legates.*”² In another letter to the same bishop of Constantinople, and upon the same subject, (i. e. the readmitting of the bishops,

¹ Ep. LXXX.

² Ibid.

who through fear had agreed to the Euty-chian formula at Ephesus), we find the following splendid testimony for the Papacy. "Although I trust that you are devoted to every good work, yet that your activity may produce more result, it was necessary and proper for me, to send my brethren Lucentius the bishop, and Basil the priest, to ally themselves with you, that nothing which concerns the interests of the whole Church, may be done slothfully or without decision. As long as you, *to whom we have committed the carrying out of our will* are present there, all things can be so carried forward, that neither kindness nor justice may be overlooked, etc. . . . If these men (i. e. the delinquent bishops) give such evidence of repentance, as shall appear unquestionable, *let their case be reserved for the maturer deliberation of the Apostolic See.*"¹ Making another reference to the names of Bishops Dioscorus, Juvenal and Eustathius in the present letter, he writes: "In the church over which the Lord wills you to rule, *let none such, as we have already written, have their names read at the altar, etc.*"

Can the reader conceive, upon what grounds, save those of the Catholic doctrine

¹ Ep. LXXXV.

of Papal Supremacy, could Leo have dared to use so lofty a tone, and to declare so unmistakably his universal jurisdiction, when addressing the bishop of the city of the Cæsars, the pride of their hearts, the ecclesiastical advancement of which, was always an object of their ambition? And if Leo's words were based upon an unwarranted assumption, how explain the acquiescence of Anatolius? He had been an underling of Dioscorus, in fact he was his secretary at the Latrocinium. He had been infected with Eutychianism, and yet having reached the exalted throne of Constantinople, he submits humbly to the condition which Leo imposed as the price of Roman recognition, and bows to the Pope's subsequent directions. Pride afterward turned his head, and encouraged by the misguided Emperor Marcian, he aroused Leo's indignation, as we shall see further on; but the attitude of Leo towards Anatolius, and the latter's submission with which we are at present concerned, can only be explained on the ground, that Anatolius knew that Leo, as head of the universal Church, enjoyed a primacy of jurisdiction, and Leo was undeniably persuaded, that in this, Anatolius was perfectly right. It was a conviction on the part of the Bishop of Constantinople, of the truth of the

words of Galla Placidia Augusta, in a letter to her son Theodosius II, that it was necessary to submit to the “standard and decision of the Apostolic See;” and that controversy in the Church must be settled by referring to the Apostolic See, “wherein without doubt, he first held the primacy, who was regarded as worthy to receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven.”¹

¹ Ep. LVI, inter Epp. Leon.

CHAPTER V

THE FOURTH ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL CHALCEDON A. D. 451

The Council of Chalcedon is in some respects, the most interesting of all the early Synods. It was a notably larger gathering of bishops than had convened on any previous occasion. Although overwhelmingly Oriental in its representation, the supremacy of the Roman See was, there, strikingly emphasized. The authority of Rome was put to a severe test, anent the famous twenty-eighth canon of the Council, but, as we shall see in detail further on, the See of Peter stood the test well, and was gloriously vindicated. The Synod was summoned, mainly to correct the mistakes of the Latrocinium, and though free from the horrors which characterized that dreadful assembly, still, its sessions were enlivened by a very robust turbulence. The imperial commissioners suggested very clearly to the Fathers, in the midst of one uproar, the propriety of endeavoring to act like bishops.

Upon the accession of Marcian and Pulcheria to the throne, Pope Leo I desired to hold an Œcumenical Council. Subsequently, however, he was anxious for its postponement, because so many of the bishops of the West, had been suddenly plunged into affliction, by the incursions of Attila; and could not therefore, desert their flocks, by attending the Synod. Leo, accordingly, wrote to the Emperor the expression of his wish, but before receiving the Pope's letter, Marcian in his own name, and that of Valentinian III, Emperor of the West, issued the summons to an Œcumenical Council, to be held at Nicæa, and which was to have opened on September 1, 451. "If the Emperor had been more accurately acquainted with the views of the Pope," says Arendt, "he would have been induced to desist from carrying out his intention (of summoning the Council). However, as he knew nothing of this, he was forced to believe, that in accordance with the previous views of Leo, he was only doing what he wished."¹

When Leo heard of the imperial summons, he at once despatched a letter to the Emperor Marcian, in which document, we find both an expression of dissatisfaction,

¹ Leo der Gr., S. 264.



and an acquiescence in the will of Marcian.

Although the bishops actually convened at Nicæa, in response to the imperial mandate, yet no actual session was held in that city. Marcian was anxious to attend the Council, but, for political reasons, was afraid to go so far away from Constantinople, and so he determined, that the bishops should sit at Chalcedon, which was much nearer the capital; so that he might be enabled to attend at least some of the sessions. He was anxious to have Leo attend in person, and the Pope makes mention of the Emperor's wish, in a letter which he sent to the Synod, naming his legates. "In such wise does he (the Emperor) reverence the rights and dignity of the most blessed Apostle Peter, as to ask us by letter, to deign to be present at your venerable Synod. This however is permitted neither by the circumstances of the times, nor by custom. However, in these brethren Paschasinus and Lucentius, bishops, Boniface and Basil presbyters, who have been delegated by the Apostolic See, let it be understood by the brethren, that *I am presiding at the Synod*; for my presence is not lacking to you, who am represented by my vicars, and have this long time been really with you in proclaiming the Catholic Faith: hence it is

impossible for you, not to know, what in accordance with the ancient traditions, we believe, *or to doubt what we desire.*"¹ Let the reader note well the perfect assurance of Leo regarding the presidency. The letter in its entirety, is pervaded with a tone of superiority and direction. A distinguished Anglican scholar says in a note upon this letter. "The right of presiding, which he here virtually claims for his delegates, *seems*² actually to have been accorded to them by the Council."³ One is reminded of Hamlet's indignant expression to his mother, "Seems madam! nay it is." There is not the slightest ground for rational doubt, that they presided; and they assuredly made their presidency felt. What is very much to our purpose here, is the fact, that the legates presided at Chalcedon before the reading of the Papal document to the members of the Synod. According to the brothers Ballerini⁴ and Hefele, the above quoted epistle of Leo was read Oct. 31, 451; whereas the Council began its sittings Oct. 8. The imperial commissioners were the "business managers" of the Council it is true, but the Roman legates were un-

¹ Ep. XCIII.

² Italics ours.

³ Feltoc, "Select Letters of Leo the Great."

⁴ Councils III, 286.

doubtedly the spiritual presidents. Of course, by the very presence of the commissioners, and the attitude of the Emperor towards the Council, (as previously in the cases of Nice, Constantinople and Ephesus), was constituted a piece of intolerable arrogance. One of the gravest curses that menaced the Church, from the holding of the first of the Œcumenical Synods until the time of Charlemagne, was an attempted erastianism, which found expression in the constant meddling of the Byzantine Emperors in ecclesiastical affairs. One readily understands how the bishops at Nicæa in 325, were particularly obsequious to Constantine, since he had made the life of Christians tolerable. But the sycophantic attitude of bishops and even Popes from 325 on, especially anent the holding of Councils, is little short of disgusting. Leo I was really the first Pope, who had the courage to speak to Cæsar, with the assurance which his position as head of the Church inspired.

Paschasinus, one of the Papal representatives at Chalcedon, opened the proceedings of the Council, by making the following declaration. "We have received commands from the most blessed and apostolic Bishop of the city of Rome, *who is head of all the churches,*

which commands direct, that Dioscorus is not to be permitted to sit in this assembly, but should he endeavor to take his seat, he must be cast out. We must follow the directions given us. If now your highnesses so order, let him be expelled or we take our leave.”¹

Dioscorus, as the reader is aware, was the Bishop of Alexandria, the grounds for whose expulsion from the Synod, were set forth at the request of the imperial commissioners, by Lucentius, another of the legates from Rome. “He attempted to pronounce sentence upon one over whom he had no jurisdiction, and *he dared to conduct a synod without the authority of the Apostolic See; a thing which has never been done and which never can be done.*” “Σύνοδον ἐτόλμησε ποιῆσαι ἐπιτροπῆς δίχα του ἀποστολικοῦ θρονου. κ. τ. λ.” I have ventured to translate “ποιῆσαι” by “to conduct,” since the ordinary rendition “to hold” involves us in a peculiar difficulty. The legate of course refers to the Robber Synod, to the convocation of which, we know Leo to have agreed, albeit unwillingly. Dioscorus was the *unauthorized* president of that assembly, hence “to conduct” seems a more satisfactory rendering of ποιῆσαι. This translation does no violence to the Greek,

¹ Labbe & Cossart, Concilia, Vol. IV, Col. 93.

since the same verb is used by classical authors in the sense of "to subjugate, to control," etc.

"Paschasinus holding the place of the Apostolic See said: 'We cannot disobey the decrees of the most blessed and apostolic Pope, who rules the Apostolic See, nor the ecclesiastical canons, nor the traditions of the Fathers.'"¹

The commissioners after making a tart remark, to the effect, that the legates of the Pope wished to act both as judges and accusers, *commanded Dioscorus to leave his place and to sit down in the midst*; that is to leave the ranks of those having a title to vote. This satisfied the Roman legates.²

"It should be remarked," says Dr. Clarke, the English translator of Hefele's History of the Councils, "that there is no trustworthy evidence whatever, that the Pope either joined in convoking the Synod of Nicæa, or was represented by the president."³ The learned doctor makes this remark as a criticism of the declaration of Lucentius, quoted above, regarding the holding or conducting of Œcumenical Synods. It is beyond question,

¹ Labbe & Cossart, Conc. Tom.. IV, Col. 93.

² Labbe & Cossart, Vol. IV, Col. 93, and Mansi, Vol. VI, p. 584, et sqq.

³ Hef. III, p. 299.

that the legate could not have meant Synods of every description. The utter falsity of Clarke's bland assertion, is shown in our treatment of the convocation and presidency of the Nicene Synod.

If there was not a general recognition of Rome's supremacy in the Council, is it not amazing, that the action of the legates, and particularly the declaration of Lucentius concerning the illegality of presiding over Synods without warrant from Rome, brought forth no protest? We shall see further on, the mind of the Council most explicitly set forth, when we come to consider the synodal letter, which this assembly addressed to Leo. But with only the evidence so far laid down, we are forced to acknowledge Rome's power, or to set about devising some explanation of the passivity of the Fathers.

During the second session of the Synod Leo's famous "Epistola Dogmatica" on the Incarnation, but aimed particularly at Eutychianism, was read. Leo had addressed this document to Flavian, former Bishop of Constantinople, requesting him to have it read at the Robber Synod. The letter, as the reader is aware, was suppressed by Dioscorus at Ephesus, and in a somewhat abbreviated form, it was read in Greek at Chal-

cedon. After the reading the bishops exclaimed: "This is the faith of the Fathers, this is the faith of the Apostles! We all believe thus, the orthodox believe thus! Anathema to him who believes otherwise! Peter hath spoken by Leo: thus Cyril taught! This is the true faith."¹

After these acclamations, there was some questioning on the part of a number of bishops from Illyricum, as to several passages in this letter of Leo, commonly known as the "Tome." The imperial commissioners ordered a recess for five days, during which "the doubting might be instructed." The third session was held before the expiration of the five days, and in the fourth session, as we shall see, the whole Council accepted the definition of Leo.

We have in the history of the third session, the plainest conceivable evidence of the presidency of the Papal representatives. Eusebius, Bishop of Dorylaeum, had placed before the Council at the first session, a series of accusations against Dioscorus, which were largely descriptive of that gentleman's exploits at Ephesus, during the Latrocinium. Eusebius had notified Ætius, Arch-deacon of Constantinople, and first notary of the

¹ Mansi, Tom. VI, p. 971.

Synod, that he had a second arraignment of Dioscorus, which he wished to produce at the third session. Ætius opened the session with this intelligence. Anent the statement of Ætius, the Papal legate Paschasinus rose and said, that *Leo had commissioned him to preside in his place, and that therefore all that was brought forward at the Synod, must be submitted to his examination, (διαλαῖς) and that he now commanded the reading of the accusation.*¹ I think that we may conclude without any stretch of fancy, that Paschasinus was not only deeply conscious of his presidency, but had made up his mind to impress it upon the entire assembly. We are not concerned here with the list of harrowing charges made in the third session against Dioscorus, but it should be noted, that when a delegation of clerics and laymen, had come from Alexandria to accuse Dioscorus before the Synod, their accusations were addressed to the “Arch-bishop and Patriarch of Great Rome, and to the holy and Œcumenical Synod.”² One of the gravest charges brought against the Alexandrian bishop, was that he “dared to pronounce a sentence of excommunication against the Apostolic See of Rome.” When all the accusations had

¹ Mansi, T. VI, p. 986.

² Mansi VI, p. 1006.

been laid before the Synod, and Dioscorus had shown himself contumacious by refusing to obey the citations of the Fathers, to appear before the Council in his own defense, Paschasinus proposed the question of proceeding against Dioscorus, with the canonical penalties. A number of bishops expressed their opinions, and *particularly requested the legates to pronounce judgment.* The legates speaking together, pronounced the following sentence. "It has been made manifest, in this and the previous session,¹ what Dioscorus has attempted to do against the holy order and discipline of the Church. To pass over many other things, he had received again into communion Eutyches, as being of the same opinions as himself, though he had rightly been deposed by Flavian his bishop, and this he did in a way altogether irregular, before he began to act in coöperation with the other bishops at the Synod.² These other bishops and members of the Synod, *had obtained pardon from the Apostolic See,* for that which they did there against their will, and *they had submitted themselves to the holy Arch-bishop Leo, and to the most holy Ecumenical Synod.* But Dioscorus

¹ This refers back to the first session.

² Robber Synod.

had, even to the present time, stubbornly persisted in that, for which he should have long since repented. In addition to this, he had not permitted the epistle of Leo to Flavian to be read at Ephesus, notwithstanding that he had been repeatedly asked to do so, and had promised to do so under oath. . . . Therefore the most holy Arch-bishop of Rome, Leo, has, by us, and the present holy Synod, together with the thrice blessed and most glorious Peter, who is the rock and foundation of the Catholic Church, and of the orthodox faith, pronounced this Dioscorus to be deprived of his bishopric, and to have forfeited all spiritual honor. Therefore, let this most holy and great Synod sentence this same Dioscorus to the canonical punishments.”¹

“All those present,” says Hefele, “the Patriarchs Anatolius of Constantinople, and Maximus of Antioch at their head, assented to this judgment, and subscribed the deposition of Dioscorus.”² An unbiassed inspection of the minutes of the third session, forces one to the conclusion, that the legates of Leo actually conducted the trial of Dioscorus.

In the beginning of the fourth session of the Synod, there was rehearsed from the Acts

¹ Mansi VI, pp. 1038, et sqq. Labbe & Cossart, Vol. IV, Col. 368.

² Hef. III, 328.

of the second session, the decree granting five days' delay, before the final ballot on the doctrinal definition of Leo. After the reading of said decree, the imperial commissioners requested the Synod to pronounce upon Leo's letter. Between the second and fourth session, conferences had been held by certain of the bishops, with a view to clearing up portions of the "Tome," which had caused perplexities to some few of the Fathers. The legate Paschasinus in response to the request of the commissioners, in his own name, and in that of his colleagues said: . . . The letter of the most holy man Leo, *Archbishop of all the Churches, who condemned the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches, shows with clearness, what is the true faith, and this the Synod also holds and permits nothing to be added to it, or taken away from it.*"¹ This declaration was preceded by a confession of the rule of faith ratified at Nicæa and Constantinople, together with an acknowledgment of the orthodoxy of Cyril's exposition of the creed, at the Council of Ephesus. After the words of Paschasinus had been translated into Greek for the Fathers, all the bishops cried out: "We all believe thus, in this we were baptized and do

¹ Mansi VII, p. 7, et seq.

baptize; thus we believe." Then followed the oaths of all the bishops present, by which they subscribed; and nearly all stated that they had already subscribed the Leonine letter. Even the bishops of Illyricum subscribed a special statement, which was read on their behalf by Bishop Sozon of Philippi, and in which they declared themselves "thoroughly convinced of the orthodoxy of the most holy father and Arch-bishop Leo." A few bishops from Palestine who had found difficulty in endeavoring to grasp certain phrases of the "Tome," likewise in a special document, declared that they "had subscribed" the letter of Leo.¹

During the same session, thirteen bishops from Egypt were introduced by the commissioners. These professed to be orthodox, but declined to subscribe the "Tome," alleging that they could only do so as followers of their patriarch, the Bishop of Alexandria, and that if they dared otherwise to subscribe, they would be killed on their return to Egypt. Their statement was scouted quite naturally, by the Synod, which demanded their subscriptions, after calling them (according to custom), dishonest heretics. The Egyptians persisted, however, begging that a new bishop

¹ Mansi, T. VII, pp. 10-31.

be elected for Alexandria at once, and then they would willingly subscribe; otherwise they preferred being killed by the Fathers of the Council, rather than by the Egyptians, which was very discreet on their part, especially since the Fathers of Chalcedon did not seem murderously inclined. Lucentius, the legate, demanded that the Egyptian bishops in question, furnish securities for remaining in Chalcedon, until a successor to Dioscorus should be chosen, and this demand having been endorsed by the imperial commissioners, they were allowed to remain in peace. Lucentius observed very truly, anent their refusal to subscribe, that their subscriptions were of no account, in view of the unquestionably Œcumenical character of the Synod.¹

The conciliar confession or decree on faith, was drawn up at the fifth session. Previous to its formulation, the Roman legates, suspecting by reason of a new disputation, which had arisen in the Synod, that the contents and sense of Leo's letter might be tampered with, said: "If the letter of Leo be not agreed to, we demand our papers, so that we may return home, and that a Synod may be held in the West."²

¹ Mansi VII, 50-63.

² Labbe & Cossart, Tom. V. Coll. 555.

This is not the place to enter into the details of the discussion which followed this demand. The commissioners appointed nineteen bishops to confer with the Roman legates, in the oratory of the Church of St. Euphemia, with a view to drawing up a formula of the decree on faith, which decree was subscribed by the Council. It embodies the recognition of Nicæa, Constantinople and Ephesus, a literal insertion of the creeds of Nicæa and Constantinople, and a doctrinal statement on the Incarnation in perfect agreement with the "Tome." This statement declares the Synod's acceptance of Cyril's exposition at Ephesus, and that of Leo against Eutyches "which" says the confession, "agrees with the doctrine of St. Peter, as a pillar against all heretics, and for the confirmation of the orthodox dogmas."¹ Let the reader bear well in mind, that the *Council had accepted as a dogmatic definition*, the "Tome" of Leo in the fourth session. The decree "de fide" in the fifth, was the Council's profession of faith, in the technical sense. Hefele maintains, that to this session probably belongs the *προσφωνητικὸς* (allocutio), of the Synod to the Emperor Marcian. It contains the following reference to the Pope. "God has

¹ Mansi VII, pp. 111, 112.

provided the Synod with a defender against every error, in the person of the Roman bishop, who like the fiery Peter, wishes to lead every one to God.”¹

The restoration of Theodoret to the bishopric of Cyrus, of which he had been deprived by the Latrocinium, took place during the eighth session of Chalcedon. After declaring his faith, and pronouncing an anathema against Nestorius, the imperial commissioners spoke thus of him to the Synod. “All doubt respecting Theodoret is now put aside, for here in your presence, he has anathematized Nestorius, and has been received again by the holy Arch-bishop Leo; it remains now that by your sentence, he receive again his see, as Leo has already assured him.”²

During the tenth session, the commissioners wished to have read those decrees of the Robber Synod, which had reference to Ibas, the Bishop of Edessa, who had been deposed by the pseudo-Synod of Ephesus, and whose case was now before the Synod of Chalcedon. The Papal legates objected to the reading of the aforesaid decrees, on the grounds, that such an assembly as the Robber Synod, could

¹ Mansi gives this allocutio at the end of the minutes of the Council.

² Mansi, Tom. VII, 187.

not justly be called a Council, and that *nothing should be read from it, since the apostolic Bishop of Rome had rejected all its decrees, with the sole exception of the raising of Maximus to the See of Antioch.* The bishops made no objection whatever to the stand of the legates, and the proposed reading did not take place.

Although Ibas had been accused of numberless villainies, the hearing of his case at Chalcedon, determined his judges in his favor. The charges against him had been well sifted, when the commissioners proposed the reading of the Acts of the Latrocinium concerning him. The commissioners did not press their demand for the reading, when the legates objected, but immediately asked: “What then is the sentence which the holy Council will pronounce upon Ibas? *The Roman legates thereupon arose and pronounced judgment in favor of Ibas, declaring that he was worthy of his bishopric.* Anatolius of Constantinople and Maximus of Antioch immediately followed with statements in perfect accord with that of the legates, and the votes of the whole Council, ratifying this judgment, immediately followed.¹

The famous 28th canon of Chalcedon was

¹ Mansi VII, 255–269.

passed in the absence of the Roman legates, at the fifteenth session of the Synod. We give both the Greek and English text of that portion of the canon, which is of interest here: Καὶ γὰρ τῷ θρόνῳ τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης διὰ τὸ βασιλεύειν τὴν πόλιν ἐκείνην οἱ πατέρες εἰκότως ἀποδεδώκασι τὰ πρεσβεῖα, καὶ τῷ αὐτῷ σκοπῷ κινούμενοι οἱ εκατὸν πενήκοντα θεοφιλέστατοι ἐπίσκοποι τὰ ἴσα πρεσβεῖα ἀπένειμαν τῷ τῆς νέας Ῥώμης ἀγιωτάτῳ θρόνῳ, εὐλόγως κρίναντες τὴν βασιλεία καὶ συγκλήτῳ τιμηθεῖσαν πόλιν, καὶ τῶν ἴσων ἀπολαύουσαν πρεσβείων τῇ πρεσβυτέρα βασιλίδι Ῥώμη, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐκκλησιαστικοῖς ὡς ἐκείνην μεγαλύνεσθαι πράγμασι, δευτέραν μετ' ἐκείνην ὑπαρχουσαν, κ. τ. λ. "And with good reason, have the fathers given its privileges to the elder Rome, because of its being the royal city; and because of the same reasons, the 150 God-beloved bishops, have bestowed equal (*ἴσα*) privileges upon the most holy throne of New Rome, justly judging that the city honored by the royal power and the senate, and which enjoys the same distinctions as the ancient royal city, should be rendered prominent also in ecclesiastical things, and hold the second place after that."¹

The first thing which arrests our attention in perusing this canon, is the *cause* which the Synod assigns for Old Rome's prestige

¹ Mansi VIII, 369.

and privileges; namely, that she was the imperial city. This statement has not a shred of historical evidence, upon which to rest. As Hefele well says. "If any one had been able in the course of time, to grant for the first time its prerogatives to the Roman See, this would have been possible only to an Œcumenical Council, as the see of Constantinople was able to receive its privileges, only through two Œcumenical Synods. But the first Œcumenical Council of Nicæa, *did not first establish the ecclesiastical rank of Rome, but simply recognized it*, as its 6th canon shows, *and as the whole of ancient history testifies.*"¹ Rome's præminence antedated any conciliar concession whatever, and the statement of the Council of Chalcedon is a monstrous contradiction of known history. The prerogatives of Rome were already real, when Corinth sent its appeal to Rome, and had her domestic schism healed by Pope Clement;² when Ignatius wrote to the Roman Church, as to the one "holding the dignity of the first place," and "presiding over the congregation of charity;"³ when Irenæus declared her to be the greatest, most ancient and universally known church, with which all

¹ Hef. Coneil. III, 412, 413. Italics ours.

² Ep. ad Romanos.

³ Ep. ad Romanos.

others must agree by reason of her greater power;¹ when Tertullian maintained, that from the Roman Church came the very authority of the apostles themselves;² when Cyprian called her the chair of Peter, the principal church, whence sacerdotal unity takes its rise.³ Yes, verily, Rome's preëminence was already a great fact, when Victor excommunicated the churches of Asia,⁴ when Dionysius of Rome called to account Dionysius of Alexandria, because of a suspicion of heresy attaching to the latter;⁵ and when Stephen with his "nil innovetur" nullified the main proceeding of the famous Council of Carthage, held under Cyprian's presidency.⁶

Let us now study briefly the history of the 28th canon of Chalcedon. The sixteenth and last session of the Council was held Nov. 1, 451.⁷ The 28th canon was really the occasion of this session. The Papal legates first of all, demanded leave to make a statement, which the commissioners granted. Paschasinus then paid a compliment to the zeal of the Emperors, for the healing of schisms in the Church, and the defence of the faith,

¹ Adv. Hares. lib. III, C. 4.

² Contra Haereticos XXXVI.

³ Ep. LIV.

⁴ Socrat., H. E. V. 22.

⁵ Athan., De Synod Armin. et Seleuc. III, 43.

⁶ Hefele, Conc. I. p. 101.

⁷ Mansi VII, Acts of this session, pp. 423-454.

after which, he said: "Yesterday however, after your highnesses and our littleness had left the assembly, a decree was made, which we look upon as contrary to the canons, and to ecclesiastical order. We request that this (decree) be now read."

The consistorial secretary of the Synod read the canon. It is worthy of observation, that not more than half of the bishops whose names appear in the minutes of the Council, subscribed the decree. The legate Lucentius suggested, that those who had signed, had done so through force. Those who had subscribed, however, stoutly denied this. The legates maintained unequivocally, that the canon was a distinct violation of the 6th canon of Nicæa, and that it rested upon the unauthorized decrees of Constantinople. Lucentius very pertinently added: "If the bishops of Constantinople have since that time (381), exercised these privileges, why are they now demanded? They have not had them, however, according to the canons." His colleague Boniface, the priest, in answer to an inquiry from Ætius, as to any special instructions, which Leo might have given to his legates on the disputed point said, that the Pope had given them this command: "The decree of the holy fathers (at Nicæa),

you must not permit to be transgressed, and you must under all circumstances *protect my prerogative* in your person. And if any, upon the ground of the greatness of their cities, should make efforts to claim any thing for themselves, this you must oppose with full determination.”

Some discussion followed, during which the 6th Nicene canon was read in both Greek and Latin, with one very notable difference. The Latin version began with the following words: “*Ecclesia Romana semper habuit primatum,*” which are absent in the Greek. Paschasinus read the Latin. Ætius there-upon handed the consistorial secretary a copy of the canon in Greek, which was read to the Synod. Notwithstanding the reference to the Roman Primacy in the Latin text, we have not in the history of the Council, the slightest suggestion of any discussion of the matter.

The sentence of the imperial commissioners, pronounced after listening in silence to the discussion for some time, is as follows. “From what has been brought forward on each side, we understand that the primacy of all (*πρὸ πάντων τὰ πρωτεῖα*), and the principal dignity (*τὴν ἐξάιρετον τιμὴν*), is, according to the canons, to be reserved for the most beloved of

God, Arch-bishop of Old Rome, but that the most reverend Arch-bishop of the imperial city of Constantinople, which is New Rome, should have the honor of the same primacy.” This pronouncement is nothing short of absurd. How in heaven’s name is it possible, for the Bishop of Old Rome to have the first right of all; the chieftest rank of honor, and another to be endowed with the very same primacy—the same first right of all, the same chief rank of honor? The commissioners knew very well the difficulty of their position. Their knowledge of Leo was such, as to make them realize that if the 28th canon—the fabric of their royal master’s brain—was to pass with Leo, it must be necessarily framed in such wise, that the offense to Rome should be well concealed.

The final protest on the part of the legates was pronounced by Lucentius. “The Apostolic See,” said he, “has commanded that everything should be done in our presence, and therefore, we beseech your highnesses, (the commissioners), to command that whatever was done yesterday in our absence, and against the canons, should be annulled. If not, our protest must be set down in the Acts, so that we may know what information we must furnish to the apostolic bishop, *who*

rules over the whole Church; so that he may take action with regard to the injustice done to his own see, and the disregard shown to the canons."

We come now to the consideration of the synodal letter of Chalcedon to Pope Leo. I have thought it expedient to place nearly the whole of this document before the reader.

“What is a stronger motive for joy than the faith? What better incentive to exultation, than the blessed knowledge, which the Redeemer Himself gave us from above for salvation, saying: ‘Go ye and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them,’ etc. And this golden chain leading down from the giver of the command unto us, you yourself have steadfastly preserved, *being set as the mouthpiece unto all of blessed Peter, and bestowing the blessedness of his faith upon all. Whence we also, taking you as our leader in all that is good, have shown to the children of the Church their heritage of truth. . . .* And we were all most happy, enjoying ourselves as at a royal banquet, with the spiritual food, *which Christ gave us through your letter, and we seemed to behold actually in our midst, the Heavenly Bridegroom himself. For if where two or three are gathered together in His name, He*

has said, that there He is in the midst of them, must he not have been much more particularly present with 520 priests, who preferred the spread of knowledge concerning him, to their country or their comfort? *Of whom you were the chief, as head to the members, bestowing your good counsel (εὐβουλίαν), in the persons of those who represented you.*" The letter, referring to the causes which prompted the Synod's action against Dioscorus, enumerates amongst others, the following charges. "He (Dioscorus) acquitted by his terror-won votes Eutyches, who had been condemned for heresy, and restored to him the dignity of which *your holiness had deprived him, as being unfit for it,*¹ . . . and like the wildest of beasts, . . . he stretched forth his rage *even against him, to whom was committed the care of the vineyard by the Redeemer,* we mean of course your holiness. . . . And we further inform you, that we have arrived at decisions on other things, also for the good conduct and stability of church affairs, being convinced, that when your holiness hears of them, you *will approve and accept them.* . . . We have ratified

¹ This is an explicit acknowledgment on the part of the Council, that the bishop of Rome had a right to depose an archimandrite of Constantinople.

the canon of the 150 holy Fathers, who convened at Constantinople, in the reign of Theodosius the Great, of holy memory, which decrees that after your most holy and Apostolic See, the See of Constantinople shall have the precedence, holding the second place: for we are convinced that with your usual solicitude for others, you have often shared that Apostolic prestige which is yours by right, with the Church in Constantinople, by virtue of your great unselfishness, in sharing all your own good things with your spiritual relations. Therefore, *deign most holy and blessed father to accept as your own wish*, and as furthering good government, the measures which we have determined upon, for the removing of all confusion, and rendering stable, church order. For the delegates of your holiness, the most religious bishops Paschasinus and Lucentius, and with them the pious presbyter Boniface, *vigorously resisted these decisions*, from a determined wish, that this good work also, should have its beginnings in your foresight, in order, that the establishment of discipline *as well as of faith*, should be attributed to you. . . . The Œcumenical Synod, . . . confidently corroborated this decision, as if it were inaugurated by you,

with your accustomed solicitude, *knowing that every success of the children, redounds to the glory of the parent. Therefore we beg of you to honor our decision with your approval; and as in all things honorable, we have submitted to the head, so may the head fulfil what is appropriate for the children.* And so will our religious Emperors receive their measure of reverence, who have ratified as law, the judgment of your holiness, and the See of Constantinople shall receive its reward, for having always shown such loyalty towards you, in the concerns of religion, and for having so zealously joined itself to you in full agreement.”¹

This letter is an undeniable acknowledgment of Leo's headship of the universal Church, and a confession of the necessity of his confirmation of the decrees of the Council. That portion of the document which refers to the 28th canon, is a notable toning down of the words of the canon itself. There is no mention of “τὰ ἰσα πρεσβεία,” “the same prerogatives.” There is an unmistakable note of supplication, which irreparably damages the contention of those, who would maintain, that by this canon, Rome and Constantinople were placed on the same level. If the Synod had jurisdiction to ar-

¹ Mansi VI, p. 147 et sqq.

range the position of New Rome, why then implore and entreat Leo as head, father, leader, to look upon the enactment of the canon, as his own gracious act, the condescension of a good parent towards dutiful sons? These humble sentiments are again found in a letter of Anatolius, Bishop of Constantinople, to Leo, written shortly after the synodal document. Anatolius assures Leo, that unquestionably the honor of Rome is greater than that of Constantinople, even in the face of the 28th canon.¹

“Leo,” as Hefele well says, “was not the man to be caught by fine words.” The Greeks were wily, but the successor of the Fisherman was alert, and keenly alive to the prerogatives of his own see, and jealous of the rights of the other patriarchs, for he had the care of all. His answer to the synodal letter is found in his epistle to the Emperor Marcian, shortly after the close of the Council:² “Let the city of Constantinople possess, as we indeed wish, its high rank, and under the protection of the right hand of God, enjoy long your clemency’s reign. *Yet things secular stand on one basis—things divine upon another; and there can be no*

¹ Ep. CI, inter Leonis epistolas.

² Ep. CIV, inter Leon. epistolas.

sure building, save on that rock which the Lord laid as a foundation. . . . Let Anatolius be content that by your aid, and *by my favor and approval*, he has obtained the bishopric of so great a city. Let him not contemn a city, which is imperial, though he cannot make it an apostolic see. For the privileges of the churches, settled by the canons of the holy Fathers, and determined by the decisions of the Council of Nicæa, cannot be upset by any unjust act, nor replaced by any novelty. *And in the faithful performance of this work, I by the help of Christ, am bound to display an inflexible devotion; for it is a charge entrusted to me, and it furthers my damnation, if the laws sanctioned by the Fathers, and drawn up under the influence of the Holy Spirit at Nicæa, for the rule of the whole Church, are violated with my consent.*"¹

Leo's letter to Pulcheria Augusta, written at the same time, deals with the same subject, but somewhat more briefly. "The assent of the bishops" (to the 28th canon), he

¹ The Ballerini maintain that Leo's rejection of the 28th canon was because of its invasion of the rights of the other patriarchs. Quesnel holds that Leo's action was prompted by the attack upon his own see, which the canon involved. The minutes of the Council, and the letters of Leo, would seem to indicate that he had in view his own and the other apostolic sees, when annulling the measure.

writes, "we do not recognize, and by *the authority of the blessed Apostle Peter we absolutely annul.*"¹ In his letter to Anatholius, anent what he calls the "unlawful ambition" of Constantinople, Leo says, that the sole object of the Synod was to give to the world a declaration on a matter of faith, but after this was accomplished, a haughty pride had manifested itself, in endeavoring by misuse of the Synod, to exalt the See of Constantinople to a position, to which it could not attain. "Upon this ground, our brothers sent by the Apostolic See, *who presided at the Synod in my stead*, resisted with praiseworthy firmness, their illegal efforts, openly protesting against the introduction of any objectionable novelty. . . . You accuse yourself by *refusing to obey them*, concerning your unlawful projects, vainly seeking what cannot be granted, hungering for what is bad for your soul's welfare, and for which our consent can never be obtained."²

The Emperor Marcian, in a letter of February 11, 453, strenuously urged Leo to confirm the Council of Chalcedon. The Pope upon the receipt of the Emperor's communication, sent out, on March 21, 453, an encyclical, addressed to all the Fathers of the

¹ Ep. CV.

² Ep. CVI.

Council. "I do not doubt, brethren," writes Leo in this letter, "that you are all aware, how willingly I have confirmed the doctrinal decree of the Synod of Chalcedon. You could have learned this, not only from the assent of my legates, but also from my letters to Anatolius of Constantinople, *if he had communicated to you the answer of the Apostolic See.*¹ But in order that no one may doubt my confirming of that, which was decreed at the Synod of Chalcedon, by universal consent, regarding the faith, I have forwarded this letter to all my brethren and fellow-bishops, who attended the afore-named Synod, and at my request, the Emperor will send it to you, that all of you may know, that not only by my legates, *but by my own confirmation*, I have agreed to what was done at the Synod; *but only, as it is necessary always to repeat, in regard to the subject of the faith, by reason of which, the General Council was convened at the command of the Emperors, in agreement with the Apostolic See.*"² The rest of the letter

¹The answer here spoken of, was partly suppressed by Anatolius, who in some respects was an apt pupil of his old master, Dioscorus. In the churches of the Greek Empire, only the papal approval of the doctrinal decree was read; the rejection of the 28th canon was not made public. See Ep. CXXVII.

² Ep. CXIV.

is devoted to the rejection of the 28th canon, and a protestation of his determination to perform his duty as “the guardian of the Catholic faith and the ecclesiastical canons.”

There is abundant proof in the letters of Leo, that, though vehemently insisting upon the inviolability of the canons, he in no way ascribes the origin of Rome’s honor and jurisdiction, to any thing less than a divine source. This is even more evident in his sermons. His efforts in behalf of the other apostolic thrones, were never crowned with much success, because of the helplessness into which Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem had sunk, through cowardly fear of Constantinople. The constant opposition of the brave bishop of Rome, however, seemed at length, to produce an indifference to the troublous 28th canon, on the part of the Greeks themselves. Anatolius himself, in a letter to Leo, expressly states that the validity of the canon depended upon the confirmation of Rome. He writes that no selfishness on his part is to blame for the canon, since he had always loved peace and humility, (in which Anatolius, Greek-like, lied with perfect aplomb), but that the bishops of his province, and the clergy of his diocese, demanded the enactment, “*sed gestorum vis*

*omnis et confirmatio, auctoritati vestrae Be-
atitudinis fuerit reservata.*"¹

"The Greeks," says Hefele, "for a long time made no further appeal to this canon, and even omitted it from their collections, so that they too, adduced only twenty-seven canons of Chalcedon."² Dionysius Exiguus, Isidore, the Prisca, the Arabic collection of Josephus Ægyptius, and the Greek of John of Antioch—all as Hefele points out, have but twenty-seven canons of Chalcedon.

Aided and abetted by the Byzantine Emperors, the bishops of Constantinople continued to exercise the privileges which they had been gradually arrogating to themselves, since the Second Œcumenical Council. The assurances of Anatolius to Leo were never fulfilled. Rome's attitude, however, did not change. Leo was not satisfied with repudiating the 28th canon of Chalcedon, but vigorously maintained that the measure upon which it was built, namely, the 3rd canon of Constantinople, had no ecclesiastical value whatever. This is clearly set forth in one of his letters to Anatolius,³ and in another to the Empress Pulcheria.⁴ These facts have been insisted upon in our treatment of the

¹ Ep. CXXXII, inter Leon. Epp.

² Hef. III, p. 447.

³ Ep. CVI.

⁴ Ep. CV.

Second Œcumenical Council, where we also touched upon sufficiently, the granting to the patriarch Thomas Morosini, the rank of honor second to Rome, when a Latin patriarchate had been set up in Constantinople, and the same concession to the Greeks at the Florentine reunion. There is no more hopeless task possible, than that of securing respectable evidence in favor of the contention, that Rome ever *tacitly or expressly* approved the 28th canon of Chalcedon, as that measure was drafted. Nothing was farther from the mind of Rome, when she made the concession to the Greeks at Florence than “τὰ ἴσα πρεσβεία.” The glorious definition of Papal Supremacy, which the Greeks subscribed there, is all sufficient proof of our contention to any reasonable enquirer after truth. Much has been made of the assertion of Paschasinus, the legate of Rome, at the opening session of Chalcedon. “We will, please God, recognize Anatolius, the present bishop of Constantinople, as the *first* (after us).”¹ This would seem, at first view, to indicate on the part of Paschasinus, a recognition of the 3rd canon of Constantinople. But as Hefele shows, a knowledge of the situation makes clear how easy it was, for Paschasinus to con-

¹ Mansi VI, p. 607.

cede to Anatolius the second place, without sacrificing a jot or a tittle of the Roman position. Dioscorus of Alexandria and Juvenal of Jerusalem, were both in the position of accused persons before the Synod; and there was a warm discussion at the time, as to whether Maximus or Domnus was the legitimate bishop of Antioch.

From the brief survey which we have made of the history of the Council of Chalcedon, in its relation to the Papacy, the following propositions appear quite beyond the pale of reasonable question:

1. The Council was summoned at the request, and with the concurrence of the Pope.

2. The presidency of the Synod was in the hands of the Pope's legates.

3. This presidency was boldly insisted upon during the conciliar sessions.

4. The Synod subscribed the "Tome" of Leo as a dogmatic definition.

5. The Synod declared unequivocally, that Leo was *head of the Council and head of the Church*; it addressed him as "Father" and *entreated his approval and ratification of the Council's enactments*.

6. Leo's legates repudiated the 28th canon, and Leo himself declared that by the *authority of the blessed Apostle Peter* he solemnly annulled it.

7. Rome never approved it.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIFTH ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL, CONSTANTINOPLE, A. D. 553

The Emperor Justinian, like his predecessor, Theodosius II, was over-fond of devoting his time to theological questions. There was, however, this distinction to be observed between the two, that Theodosius was thoroughly ignorant of the theological questions with which he dealt, and Justinian was just as thoroughly well informed upon the matters of the same sort, which agitated part of his reign. His passion for dogmatizing, found one very famous expression, in the edict of the three chapters, “τὰ τρία κεφαλαία.” A word of explanation concerning the three chapters will not be out of place here. The original three chapters were three propositions anathematizing Theodore of Mopsuestia personally, certain writings of Theodoret of Cyrus, and one letter of Ibas of Edessa. The edict of Justinian, in which the foregoing was evidently the meaning attaching to the three chapters, soon came to

have another interpretation, which has become the historical one. Instead of meaning these three propositions, the three chapters now signify the persons and writings designated in them.

Poor Theodore of Mopsuestia, in his efforts to combat the errors of Apollinaris, became unconsciously the parent of a famous heresy, on account of which, his pupil Nestorius, has gone down to eternal disgrace. Theodoret, the bishop of Cyrus, and well known ecclesiastical historian, had opposed himself to Cyril of Alexandria, Papal legate at Ephesus, and had joined the cabal of John of Antioch, while the first Ephesine Synod was being held. He anathematized Nestorianism at Chalcedon, as we have seen, and was received into communion by the Fathers of the Synod, and was restored to his diocese.¹ Ibas the bishop of Edessa, had written a letter to Maris the bishop of Hadaschir in Persia, in which he insultingly attacked both Cyril and the Synod of Ephesus, and expressed himself in a sufficiently dangerous manner, to justify suspicions of Nestorianism. The latter part of the document, however, clearly

¹ This was subsequent to his appeal to the Pope, which we already noticed.

expresses belief in the unity of the one Lord, and the real duality of the natures. The Council of Chalcedon exonerated Ibas, and restored to him his see, on condition, that he would anathematize Nestorianism anew, which he did.

When Justinian had set himself to reuniting the Acephali (a Monophysite sect), with the Church, he determined upon sending them a lengthy doctrinal argument, as the proper means to the end he had in view. Acidas, bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, a sycophantic hanger-on, at the imperial court, represented to the Emperor, that the most facile way by which to reach the Acephali, would be by an imperial anathema upon the person and writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the Nestorian writings of Theodoret of Cyrus, and the letter of Ibas of Edessa to Maris the Persian. The motives of Acidas were altogether questionable, but we are not concerned with them in detail now. Justinian issued the famous edict of the three chapters, most probably in 544. It is now lost, but we have at hand a very considerable amount of information about it, from Facundus, Liberatus, Noris, Mansi, Hardouin, Garnier, S. J., Hefele and a number of other historians.

It should not be a matter for marvel, that many orthodox contemporaries looked upon the publication of the edict, as an indirect insult to the Fourth Œcumenical Synod. When it was proposed to Mennas, the bishop of Constantinople, by the imperial officials, for his subscription, he refused to sign, upon the grounds, that it was a reflection upon the Council of Chalcedon, and that *he could not act in such a matter, without the cognizance of the See of Rome*. When after much discussion, he at last subscribed, it was on condition, that, should Pope Vigilius disagree with the edict, his subscription should be returned.¹ The officials of Justinian promised under oath to respect this condition. The other patriarchs of the East subscribed, the while feebly protesting against the measure. Mennas subsequently grew enthusiastic over the edict, and began to use coercive measures to compel his suffragans to subscribe. Some of these bishops sent a protest against the action of Mennas to Stephen, the resident Papal envoy at Constantinople. Stephen broke off church-communion with Mennas in consequence. The East was gained to the Emperor's side, by every species of un-

¹ Facundus Defensio Trium Capitulorum, lib. IV, cap. 4. Facundus was bishop of Hermione and a contemporary of Vigilius.

scrupulous means. Africa and Italy were vigorously opposed to his edict. Justinian recognizing the importance of Rome, in the matter of succeeding with his plans, commanded Pope Vigilius to repair to Constantinople.¹ The Pope started on the journey most unwillingly, and as a matter of fact, only reached Constantinople, after a whole year had elapsed. When he arrived at the imperial city, he promptly excommunicated for four months, Mennas and all the other bishops, who had subscribed the edict. Mennas, under the imperial ægis, returned the compliment, by removing the name of Vigilius, from the diptychs of the cathedral of Constantinople.²

“Before long,” says Hefele, “Vigilius changed his view in a most astonishing way. It is not fully known just how it happened. We know for certain, that the Emperor had personal intercourse with him frequently, and that again and again he sent state officials and bishops to him, with a view to induce him to agree with Mennas and the rest.

¹ Vigilius has been called the weakest of all the occupants of the Holy See. This is perhaps too sweeping a judgment. He was both weak and shifty, but his attitude towards Justinian during his seven years imprisonment (for such it really was) was far from an expression of weakness.

² In 552 his name was restored and placed first, *i.e.*, before even that of the Bishop of Constantinople.

The vehement Facundus (Defens, Trium Capit, lib. iv, c. iv) maintains that he was not violently dealt with, but that he was overcome by bribery and ambition. The Italian clergy, on the contrary, speak of the imprisonment and the serious persecution of the Pope, and narrate that on one occasion, he said to his persecutors "Contestor, quia etsi me captivum tenetis, beatum Petrum apostolum, captivum facere non potestis."¹ After some time, however, Vigilius first gave privately a promise, that he would anathematize the three chapters."²

Shortly after the arrival of Vigilius in Constantinople, a number of conferences were held under his presidency. It appears from the available accounts, that the number of bishops then sojourning in Constantinople, who attended these conferences, was very considerable. Facundus leaves one under the impression, that the number was close to a hundred, since seventy were there, not counting those who had already subscribed the Emperor's edict. The same author, who attended these conferences himself, refers repeatedly to Vigilius as "the Judge." The object of these conferences is set forth by Hefele, who condenses the mat-

¹ Mansi IX, p. 153.

² Hef., Conc. IV, 249, 250.

ter of Facundus in the following words. They were instituted "for the examination of the anathematisms of the three chapters, laid before them by the Emperor for a *judicium* or *examen* on the question, whether the Pope could agree to give the final decision, whilst the bishops present had only to give counsels."¹ These conferences resulted unsatisfactorily. In fact, Vigilius broke up the last one in a most unceremonious manner, declaring that each of the bishops should communicate with him in writing, setting forth each his own opinion upon the three chapters. These unhappy bishops were forced by the minions of Justinian, to subscribe their anathematisms to the three chapters, and to deposit their subscriptions, in the hands of Vigilius, who privately informed Facundus,² that he did not propose to approve them, or to pay any attention to them, but "quantum mutatus ab illo," in April, 548, he published his famous "Judicatum," in which he anathematized the three chapters, and sold out completely to the Emperor. His steadiness of purpose, since his arrival in the imperial city, was of

¹ Hef. Conc. IV, 251. Italics ours. Facundus Contra. Mocianum, p. 814.

² Facundus did not subscribe, as he defended the three chapters, in consequence of which he had to flee.

the weather-cock variety, as the reader will see without great effort. A terrible storm broke upon him at once. The bishops of Dalmatia, Illyria and Africa, withdrew from communion with Rome. The bishops of Africa went so far as to assemble in Carthage in 550, under the presidency of Reperatus, bishop of that city, and pronounce against Vigilius a sentence of excommunication, which they declared would hold good, until he should retract the Judicatum. The local disturbances in Constantinople, and the surrounding territory, anent the publication of the Judicatum, were fraught with great bitterness and enmity, between the opponents and defenders of the three chapters, both of whom were very numerous. This feeling of animosity frequently expressed itself in bloody fights, the combatants generally selecting a church as an arena. These disorders frightened both Vigilius and Justinian to such an extent, that the Pope, with the Emperor's consent, publicly withdrew the Judicatum, and the Emperor proposed a great Synod for the final consideration of the three chapters. Without waiting for its convocation, however, Justinian with amazing inconsistency, issued a new edict which was a substantial repetition of the first. This

fact makes clear to the reader, how very anxious he was for a Council to settle the question. The Pope at once protested against the Emperor's enactment, and at a gathering of bishops in his palace said: "Entreat the God-fearing Emperor, to withdraw the edicts which he has issued, and await the œcumenical decision on the subject under discussion, until the Latin bishops, who have protested,¹ shall come to the Synod, or send their suffrages in writing. In case he should ignore your petition, you must not give your consent to any measure that will tend to a schism in the Church. Should you do so, which I do not believe, you must realize that you shall be excommunicated from the Apostolic See of Peter, from that time."² As the three chapters were condemned by the Fifth Œcumenical Synod, which Vigilius afterward confirmed, it should be stated here, that his threatened excommunication was aimed at those who would assent to the Emperor's dogmatizing, as proceeding from a non-ecclesiastical source, having no œcumenical character, and hence not possessing any rightful claim to obedience in the Church. Justinian's act was an invasion of the rights

¹ Against the *Judicatum* and the first edict.

² Mansi IX, p. 50.

of the “*corpus docens*” of the Church. No matter what the trend of subsequent events, the position of Vigilius here was thoroughly correct.

The Emperor did not withdraw his edict, but on the contrary, in concert with Mennas of Constantinople, Acidas of Cæsarea in Capadocia and their adherents, ignored the protest of Vigilius, and acted in a way “as to oppose all ecclesiastical ordinances, and to infringe the rights of the Apostolic See.”¹ This Vigilius tells us himself. In the summer of 551, he excommunicated both Acidas and Mennas, “*ex persona et auctoritate beati Petri Apostoli.*”

Vigilius assented to the convocation of an Œcumenical Synod, in a letter to Eutychius, the successor of Mennas. This document bears the date of January 8, 553. He says that he is altogether willing that a general consultation *under his presidency*, *servata æquitate*, should be held upon the subject of the three chapters; and that all schism might be removed by a common decision, in accord with the four holy Synods.²

Shortly before the actual convocation of the Council, a lively discussion took place between the Pope and the Emperor, as to the

¹ Mansi IX, 51.

² Mansi IX, p. 187.

number of representatives who should be invited from the various patriarchates, to attend the Synod. The details of this discussion need not be rehearsed here. It suffices to say, that the history of the episode reveals the fact, that Justinian was dishonest in his dealing with the Pope, besides being altogether without his own proper sphere. It was only another example of the curse of Byzantine erastianism, abetted by hireling bishops of the East. Vigilius declined to submit to the dictation of Justinian, and flatly refused to attend the Synod at all, declaring that he would hand down his judgment in writing.¹

The Synod was convoked by the Emperor, and opened May 5, 553, without the Pope's consent. About 160 bishops attended the sessions. During the opening session, a letter from the Emperor to the Synod was read, in the course of which, Justinian emphasized the fact, that Vigilius had ignored both his entreaties and commands to attend the Synod. The members of the Synod evidently felt keenly the anomaly of the situation, namely, a Council being held, with the Pope in the immediate neighborhood, refusing either to come himself to its sessions, or to

¹ Mansi IX, 60, et sqq.

send a representative. Hence there went forth from the Secretarium of the bishop's church in Constantinople, where the Council convened, the three Oriental patriarchs and an attendant deputation, to the Placidia palace, where Vigilius lived, to entreat him to come to the sessions. Vigilius told them that he was too ill to treat with them that day, but that they should return on the following day, and he would be prepared to give them a definite reply. This intelligence was communicated to the assembly. During the second session, the deputation gave to the Synod the Pope's reply. He refused to attend the Synod, and asked for a delay of twenty days. An odd request surely, since the matter of the three chapters had been under discussion for seven years, during which period Vigilius had lived in Constantinople. The Emperor thereupon sent a delegation of bishops and lay officials, to advise Vigilius anew, upon the necessity of attending the Council, but without success.

While the sessions were in progress, Vigilius showed both his versatility and his regard for the Synod, by the publication of his "Constitutum," or memorial to the Emperor. In this he complains, that the bishops assembled in Council, have not observed the

established manner of convening; and *that they should not, in opposition to the rule of the Church, give their judgment before the appearance of the sentence of the Apostolic See.* The Constitutum, in so far as the three chapters are concerned, is a repudiation of the Judicatum. The closing sentences are significant. "We order and decree, that it is not allowed to any ecclesiastic, to write, advance or teach anything contrary to the contents of this Constitutum, as far as the three chapters are concerned, or after this decision, to inaugurate a new discussion about them. And in case anything has been either done or spoken about the three chapters, against this decree of ours, by anyone whomsoever, we pronounce it null, by the authority of the Apostolic See."¹

The seventh session is of special interest to us, on account of a message of Justinian, read to the Synod by Constantine, who held the office of quæstor of the imperial palace. "You know how much the Emperor has always thought of having the doubts regarding the three chapters removed. For because of this, he has insisted that Vigilius should come to you, and formulate a decision upon

¹ Mansi IX, p. 106. For the whole document from p. 61-106.

this matter, in keeping with the orthodox faith. Although Vigilius has already repeatedly condemned the three chapters in writing, and has done so orally in the Emperor's hearing, before imperial officials, and many members of this Synod, and has anathematized all defenders of Theodore of Mopuestia, and the letter said to be that of Ibas, and Theodoret's writings against Cyril, . . . yet he has refused to do the same in communion with you and your Synod."¹ Then follows an account of the Emperor's refusal to receive from *Servus-Dei*, a messenger from Vigilius, the answer which the Pope had promised Justinian. Following this, the imperial message sums up the evidence against poor Vigilius, by quoting the various documents wherein he had condemned and anathematized the three chapters. Finally the message directs, that the name of Vigilius should be struck off all the diptychs, but says most plainly, that the Synod must not break off communion with the Apostolic See.²

The anathema pronounced at the eighth and last session of the Synod, would seem to include Vigilius, since after mentioning Theodore, the proscribed writings of Theodoret,

¹ Mansi IX, p. 346.

² Mansi IX, 349, 350, 351.

and the letter ascribed to Ibas, it adds: "with their defenders." Of course, there is an avenue of escape, since Vigilius *never at any time defended the errors contained in the writings of any or all of the three above named men*. But technically, Vigilius was a defender of the three chapters. The same anathema is set forth more elaborately in canons 12, 13 and 14 of the Synod.

When the city of Rome had been liberated from the Goths, by the imperial forces, in the autumn of 553, the Romans petitioned the Emperor to send back to them Vigilius their bishop, who after the Fifth Œcumenical Synod, had been banished to Egypt. Justinian consented on one condition, namely, that the Pope should both recognize and solemnly approve the Council. Vigilius agreed to do so, and about seven months after its close, he published his confirmation of the Synod. Besides the testimonies of Photius and the Sixth Œcumenical Council, that Vigilius confirmed the Fifth Œcumenical Synod, we have the additional testimony of two documents emanating from Vigilius himself. One of these was discovered by Peter de Marca, in the Royal Archives of Paris, the other by Baluze in the famous Colbert collection. Both these documents were unearthed

in the seventeenth century.¹ Hardouin, S. J., contends that Garnier, S. J., has proved that the first of these manuscripts is spurious. The great critics have, for the most part, paid little regard to Garnier's arguments, and hence the letter, (it is an epistle to Euty-chius, bishop of Constantinople), has been generally received as genuine. There is no question as to the genuineness of the second manuscript, that namely, discovered by Baluze. The first contains an humble acknowledgment, that it was the enemy of the human race, who had caused him to separate himself from his colleagues, the bishops assembled in Constantinople, but that Christ had enlightened his soul, and had again effected union in the universal Church. He insists that there is nothing disgraceful in acknowledging a fault, and quotes the example of St. Augustine's retractations. Then he proceeds to anathematize the three chapters. The second document is entitled "Vigilii Papæ Constitutum de damnatione trium capitulorum." Hefele thinks that this second "constitutum," (very different by the way from the first), was addressed to the bishops of the West, and "took in hand to remove

¹ For the first Labbe and Cossart V, Col. 596. Mansi has both, IX, 414, et sqq.

their doubts of the condemnation of the three chapters.”¹ This seems very probable, since so many Westerns refused at first to acknowledge the Synod. “Having placed before you,” he begins, “the confession of faith made at Chalcedon, and the letter of Leo on the true faith, and you and the entire Church see that I hold to this faith, I deem it necessary, also, to consider the matters of the three chapters, *and to decide it by an expedient promulgation of the sentence.*” He then proceeds to anathematize the three chapters, and their defenders, setting forth his reasons in considerable detail.

A calm view of the Fifth Œcumenical Synod, impresses one with the fact, that it was convened simply to do the imperial will. There is no other Council in the history of the Church, which shows such a preponderating amount of secular influence. Vigilius was shifty—his most ardent defender must admit that—but he had the courage to resist a great though cruel Emperor.

Justinian showed beyond any shadow of doubt, that he knew the proper place of the bishop of Rome in the hierarchy of the Church. He realized fully the necessity of either the Pope or his representatives at an

¹ Hef., Conc. IV, 349.

Œcumenical Council. Else why was deputation after deputation, entreaty after entreaty, and command after command dispatched to the Placidia, to secure the presence of Vigilius at the sittings of the Synod? And even after the Patriarchs themselves had failed to influence the Pope, the Emperor, as we have seen, sent a body of bishops and imperial officers with further admonition and entreaty. How well Justinian appreciated the value of the Judicatum of the Pope, may be gathered readily from his rehearsing it and emphasizing it as a fact, in his messages to the assembled bishops. Vigilius in turn had a clear concept of the prerogatives of his office. His action upon entering Constantinople, in excommunicating the local bishop, and all who with him had subscribed the imperial edict of the three chapters, pointed out very clearly what he thought of the supremacy of Rome. According to Gregory the Great, Vigilius at this very time, excommunicated the powerful Empress Theodora.¹ His attitude toward the Council, was lofty and masterful. He complained in his *Constitutum*, (the first), that the assembly was uncanonical, "*for not awaiting the sentence of the Roman See, as*

¹ Epp., lib. II, Ep. 51.

the traditions and rule of the Church required.” The sanction of all his Papal utterances, was the “*auctoritas Petri.*” His final confirmation of the Synod, was the approval of one who knew himself to be supreme in the Church. No other hypothesis could explain his utterances. That the Council was held without him, is due solely to the fact that he would have nothing to do with it. Percival says: “The Fifth of the Ecumenical Synods refused to receive any written doctrinal communication from the then pope (Vigilius), took his name from the diptychs, and refused him communion.” Apart from the removal of the Pope’s name from the diptychs, the above statement is entirely false. The Emperor refused to receive the “*Constitutum,*” and send it to the Synod. But the Emperor was not the Council, which neither received the *Constitutum*, nor took any action whatever, as to its acceptability. The minutes of the seventh session prove this, as well as the fact, that the Emperor made it perfectly clear that communion with the Apostolic See should not be interrupted. The statement of Percival concerning the Council’s refusal of communion to Vigilius is purely a gratuity.

We must not lose sight of the fact, that notwithstanding the holding of the Synod without the Pope, there was absolutely no questioning on the Council's part, of any prerogative which Vigilus claimed as the successor of St. Peter. The nearest approach to any thing of this sort, was the utterance of the three patriarchs of the East, who said to Vigilus anent his persistent refusal to accompany them to the Council; "as the Emperor has commanded us, as well as you to deliver an opinion on the three chapters, we on our part will assemble and express our view."¹

Though convoked and held without Papal consent, the Fifth Œcumenical Council was endowed with its special character, by virtue of the confirmation of Pope Vigilus, and the later history of the Council unquestionably proves, that the reason of its acceptance in the West, where in so many places and for so long it was unrecognized, was the power of Rome exacting its recognition.

Endeavors have not been lacking to show, that the dogma of Papal Infallibility has been dealt a death blow by the variations of Vigilus. The contention is perfectly sense-

¹ Mansi IX, 195.

less, and proceeds from a gross misconception of our doctrine. No serious person would contend, that Vigilius was consistent in his action on the three chapters, but no honest critic acquainted with the facts, which we have been investigating, would deny that he constantly admitted the doctrinal errors of the three chapters, though in the case of the attacks on Cyril which are found in the letter ascribed to Ibas, Vigilius gently ascribes them to ignorance. He fluctuated only on the opportuneness of the anathema, now that the three were dead, and because Theodoret and Ibas had been received as orthodox by Chalcedon. The Pope looked upon the condemnation of the three chapters, (i. e. if we take the view set forth in his first constitutum), as the altogether unnecessary digging up of a corpse, and as a slur upon the Fourth Œcumenical Synod. His fluctuation did not concern itself with either a doctrine or a dogmatic fact, but with a question as to the prudence of certain action. When he came to the right view of the question, he acknowledged his former mistake. "The question about which Vigilius could not make up his mind," says Fortesque, with a certain lightness of touch, "was whether it was expedient to condemn men who had died a cen-

ture ago, whose names, in the West at any rate, were hardly known.”¹

It would be a grave mistake to endeavor to minimize the tremendous evil effect of the inconsistencies of Pope Vigilius. The West suffered schism upon schism, which rent many parts of the Roman patriarchate. It would hardly be fair to state, that the Pope was solely responsible for these lamentable divisions, for the West was disaffected toward Justinian, for compelling the Pope to repair to Constantinople, and for retaining him there, practically as a prisoner. Hence the Western bishops viewed with aversion that, which they knew to be a pet scheme of the Emperor. They looked upon the “Judicatum” of Vigilius, as a yielding to imperial pressure. Facundus boldly states in his “Defensio Trium Capitulorum,” that bribery and adulation conquered the poor Pope. The Constitutum, however, was regarded by the Westerns as the declaration of a Pope, who had freed himself from the trammels of the imperial influence, and hence that document was to them, the real Papal utterance. Here comes in the accountability of Vigilius, and dreadful were its consequences, for the various schisms following the Fifth Œcu-

¹ Orthodox Eastern Church, p. 83.

menical Council were not entirely extinguished until A. D. 700.

We may fittingly close this chapter with the words of Pope Pelagius I, who complaining of a spurious Synod held by schismatics at Aquileia, for the rejection of the fifth Council, said that "the ancient rule requires, that in case of doubts arising regarding an Ecumenical Synod, their solution was to be sought of the Roman See, and not by a provincial Council."¹

¹ Mansi IX, p. 712.

CHAPTER VII

TESTIMONIES FROM MINOR SYNODS, 645-649 A. D.

In the latter part of the year 638, the Emperor Heraclius issued a document known to students of Church history as the "Ecthesis." It was an heretical instrument, setting forth the Monothelite doctrine, and demanding submission to it. Most unfortunately, it was founded upon two letters of Pope Honorius to Sergius, Bishop of Constantinople, who composed it for the Emperor. The Ecthesis was not promulgated until Honorius, of unhappy memory, had passed away. His successor was Severinus, who died just two months after his election. St. Maximus, abbot of a monastery at Scutari, gives us a most interesting account of the experience of the delegates from Rome, who had come to Constantinople, for the purpose of obtaining the imperial confirmation of the election of Severinus. When the envoys came into the imperial city, the local clergy promptly presented them with the Ecthesis, with a demand for their subscrip-

tions, and a promise that they would induce Severinus to approve the document. The following words of Maximus, who was a contemporary, are very important for us here. "Having found out the character of the document, since, if they refused, they would have caused the first and mother of the Churches, to remain for a long time in widowhood, they calmly answered: 'We cannot act in this matter without authorization, for we have received a mission to perform, but not a command to make a profession of faith. We promise you, however, that we will report all that you have said, and we will show to him who is to be consecrated, this document; and we will ask him to subscribe, in case he judges it to be correct. Do not, however, place any hindrance in our way now, or treat us violently, by delaying us and forcing us to remain here. For no one has a right to act violently, particularly when faith is in question. For herein even the weakest becomes strong, and the meek man is transformed into a warrior, and by strengthening his soul with the word of God, is defended against the fiercest onslaughts. *This is more especially true in the case of the clergy and the church of the Romans, which from ancient times even until the present, presides*

over all, as the elder of all the churches, which are under the sun. This she has obtained canonically, not only from synods and apostles, but from the princes of the latter, and being numbered in their company, she is not subject to the writings or enactments of synods, on account of the præminence of her pontificate (propter pontificatus provectionem), but in all these things all are equally subject to her, according to the sacerdotal law." And so when, without fear, but with all holy and proper confidence, those ministers of the truly firm and immovable rock, that is, of the greatest and Apostolic Church of Rome, in such a manner, appealed to the clergy of the imperial city, it was seen that they had gained their sympathy, and had acted with prudence, that the others might be modest and humble, while they themselves showed forth the orthodoxy and purity of their own faith from the beginning. Those of Constantinople, reverencing their piety, considered that such an act should be fittingly rewarded; and ceasing further to offer them the document, they promised to obtain by their own endeavor, the Emperor's confirmation of the episcopal election."¹ Maximus tells us that he was informed of the

¹ Mansi X, 677-8.

incident above described, by his friends in Constantinople. This testimony in favor of the Papacy is very striking, and proceeding from a Greek source (Maximus), it is indicative of the belief in Papal Supremacy then acknowledged in Constantinople, the more so, since there is not a shred of evidence, that the position of the Roman envoys, was challenged in the imperial city.

We are not sure, if Severinus had time to condemn the Ecthesis, but we have unquestionable evidence, that his successor John IV rejected it in a Synod held in Rome in 640 or 641. John, like his immediate predecessor, was a short-lived Pope. He was succeeded by Theodore I in 642. Mansi gives us a letter addressed to Theodore, by a Synod held in Cyprus in 643. This document constitutes another glorious oriental testimony for the Papacy, and it sets forth the idea of Papal Infallibility in the clearest terms. "To the most holy and God-confirmed Father of Fathers, Archbishop and Œcumenical Patriarch, Lord Theodore. . . . Christ our God, has instituted your apostolic chair, O holy head, as a God-fixed and immovable foundation. For as the divine Word truly said, 'Thou art Peter,' and upon thy foundation have been laid the pil-

lars of the Church, and He committed to thee the keys of the heavens. He commanded thee to bind and to loose with authority, on earth and in heaven. Thou art constituted the extirpator of profane heresies, as head (*κορυφαῖος*) and leader of the orthodox and unsullied faith. Despise not then, Father, the faith of our Fathers, tossed about by waves and endangered; destroy the power of the foolish, with the light of thy divine knowledge, O most holy one. Put an end to the blasphemies and arrogance of the new heretics, with their novel expressions, for nothing is lacking to your orthodox and apostolic definition and (consequent) preservation of the faith in our midst.”¹ Could the recognition of Papal prerogatives be much stronger?

In 645 and 646, several synods composed of the bishops of Africa and the neighboring islands, were held for the purpose of condemning Monothelitism. We are in possession of a letter from the metropolitans of Numidia, Byzacene and Mauretania, written in the name of the provincial Synods, which had been held under the presidency of these three bishops respectively. The beginning of the letter leaves nothing to be de-

¹ Mansi X, 914.

sired, as a clear testimony for the headship of Peter's successor. Hefele, curiously enough, barely notices the introduction of this epistle, but Mansi gives it in full. "There cannot be any doubt, that there is in the Apostolic See, a great and inexhaustible fountain, sending forth waters for all Christians, whence streams pour forth abundantly, generously watering the whole Christian world; to which see also, for the honor of Blessed Peter, the enactments of the Fathers have decreed most especial reverence, in seeking out the things of God, which should by every means in our power be scrupulously examined, and above all and justly by the Apostolic Chief of bishops, whose duty it is of old to condemn the evil, and to approve the praiseworthy. *For it is sanctioned by the ancient rules, that whatever is done, even in far distant provinces, shall neither be discussed nor adopted, unless it be first submitted to the Apostolic See, so that by its authority, a just sentence may be confirmed, and that the other churches may receive thence, as from its original source, the original doctrine; and that the mysteries of the faith of salvation, may remain in unsullied purity throughout the world.*"¹ If words

¹ Mansi X, 919.

are symbols of ideas, surely the last expressions of the above quotation, definitely point out Papal Infallibility.

Before coming to the consideration of the Lateran Synod held under Pope St. Martin, we shall place before the reader, an extract from a letter of the Greek Abbot Maximus, to a certain imperial official named Peter. The letter was written probably in 649. Pyrrhus, the deposed patriarch of Constantinople, had been converted from Monothelism, after his deposition, but under stress of circumstances, he relapsed into heresy. Maximus, pointing out the necessary course for him, should he desire again to embrace the truth, says: "Therefore if he does not wish to be a heretic, or to be looked upon as one, let him not make amends to this person or that, for this is both unnecessary and senseless. For just as when one is scandalized at him, all are scandalized, so also, when satisfaction has been made to the (proper) one, all without doubt are satisfied. *Let him make haste before everything also, to satisfy the Roman See, for if it is satisfied, all will consent to call him orthodox and religious.* For he speaks to no purpose, who . . . does not satisfy and beseech the blessed Pope of the most holy Church of the Romans, that

is, the Apostolic See, *which from the incarnate Son of God Himself, and by all the holy Councils, according to the holy canons and definitions, has received universal and supreme dominion, authority and power, of both binding and loosing over all the holy churches of God, which are in the whole world.* For with it the divine Word, who is above the heavenly powers, binds and looses in heaven also. If he thinks that he must render satisfaction to others, and neglects to place his case before the most holy Roman Pope, he is behaving like one, who charged with murder or some other crime, does not hasten to the legally appointed judge, to prove his innocence, but foolishly and without benefit to himself, endeavors to prove his innocence to individuals, who have no authority to free him from the charge. . . . Wherefore exhort him to make a becoming statement to the Pope of Rome, in order that by his authority, the case of Pyrrhus may be canonically and properly settled *κ. τ. λ.*”¹ This testimony is surely not in need of a single syllable of commentary. We may, however, be permitted the remark, that a clearer confession of Rome’s supremacy and implied infallibility, cannot be found in the Acts of

¹ Mansi X, 692.

any modern Synod, save the Vatican. This then was the faith of the East in the seventh century, and the ecclesiastical literature of the period *is singularly barren of any attack upon Rome's position.* It is a striking and unquestionable fact, that the heretical and schismatical tendencies of Constantinople, from the fourth century until the great schism, were never supported by any great apologies on the part of her theologians, with the object of defending her action, by attacking, upon theological grounds, the supremacy of Rome, or even by repudiating the necessity of union with the Roman See. Constantinople when united with Rome, *always* confessed the supremacy of Peter's See; when sunk in heresy and schism before the final break, she never defended her position.

The Emperor Heraclius, shortly before his death, rejected the Ecthesis in a letter to Pope John IV. The Monothelite heresy continued to distress the Church notwithstanding. Paul, bishop of Constantinople, formally withdrew the Ecthesis in 648 or 649, but very shortly after, this tricky ecclesiastic persuaded the Emperor Constans to substitute for it the “τύπος περὶ πιστέως.” The Typus approved neither the Monothelite nor

orthodox doctrine, and forbade all further discussion of one or two wills, and one or two operations. The imperial decree did not make the open profession of either Monotheism or orthodoxy very inviting, for it was reinforced with a startling array of penalties, to be inflicted upon those who should brave the imperial anger by disobedience. Pope Martin, however, who was made of the stuff of which saints and martyrs are composed, assured the Emperor, not long after he had been made St. Peter's successor, that under no conditions would he in any way, recognize the Typus. Fidelity to his word, eventually cost Martin his life; but won him the martyr's crown, and a place upon our altars. He died as a result of the nameless brutalities of the Greeks, and *mirabile dictu*, the schismatical Greek Church, honors him to-day as a saint. The issuance of the Typus, marks the crisis in the history of Monotheism. It was clearly necessary for Rome to rise in her spiritual might, and decide forever the question of the wills of our Lord. The Popes—poor Honorius excepted—had not failed to express the orthodox doctrine, but it was reserved for Pope Martin, first *to solemnly promulgate* the authoritative condemnation of the heresy. Martin

convoked a Synod at the Lateran in 649.

The proceedings of this important Council, were opened with a speech of the chief notary of the Apostolic See, in which he requested the Pope, who presided, to announce the scope of the Council to the assembled bishops, "above whom," said he, "and above all the bishops who are in the whole world, you shine forth by your great and Apostolic Presidency."¹ "Christ has commanded the shepherds to be vigilant," begins the speech of Pope Martin, "and this applies to us, and particularly must we regard the purity of faith, since certain bishops, who are not worthy of the name, have attempted lately to poison the confession (of faith), with novel expressions. . . . These men have contradicted the doctrine of Leo and of the Council of Chalcedon. . . . "Pyrrhus" (formerly Bishop of Constantinople) "in particular, by threats and adulation, led astray many bishops to subscribe that impiety,² and afterward he journeyed hither, and presented to our holy see an epistle anathematizing his previous error. "Paul" (Bishop of Constantinople and successor of Pyrrhus), "has gone further than his predecessor, confirmed the Ecthesis, and contradicted the

¹ Mansi X, 870.

² Monothelitism.

true dogma. *Therefore he has been deposed by this holy see. . . . He has done what no heretic heretofore has dared to do, namely, he has destroyed the altar of our holy see in the Placidia palace,*¹ and has prohibited our representatives from celebrating there. . . . There have come to us complaints from all sides, to put down the false doctrine by the apostolic authority.”² The whole speech is rather long, and it would not be to our purpose to reproduce it in its entirety here. The extracts above given, however, are sufficient to point out clearly that Martin had a distinctly Papal view of his own see and its prerogatives.

In the second session, on October 8, 649, there was introduced into the Synod a bishop from Palestine, Stephen, whose see was at Dora. In a document which he handed to Pope Martin, and which deals with the troubles occasioned by Monothelitism, in the patriarchate of Jerusalem, he speaks as follows:³ “Sometimes we asked . . . for the wings of a dove, according to holy David, that we might fly away, and tell these things to the *chair which governs and pre-*

¹ The Roman envoys at Constantinople lived at the Placidia.

² Mansi X, 870.

³ Mansi X, 893.

sides over all, that is to yours the head and highest, for the curing of the whole wound. For from old, nay, from the beginning, it has been doing this with power, by its canonical or apostolic authority, for the great Peter, chief of the Apostles, was evidently deemed worthy, not only to receive the keys of heaven *alone and apart from the rest*, to open it to believers, or justly to close it against those who do not believe in the Gospel of grace; but because he was also first entrusted with the feeding of the sheep of the whole Catholic Church, for 'Peter,' saith He, 'lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep.' Furthermore, he possessed in a particular and special manner, a faith in the Lord, stronger than all and unalterable, for his own conversion, and the confirmation of his brethren, when tossed about, having been endowed by God Himself, made man for us, with sacerdotal power and authority."¹

"Nothing could be more confident," says Dom John Chapman, O. S. B., "than this beautiful exposition of the writer's faith in the promises of Christ to Peter. It is noticeable that all the three principal Petrine texts are quoted, showing that then as now, they were recognized as the *loci classici* upon the point, and Stephen goes on to say that

¹ Mansi X, p. 893.

this was the faith of St. Sophronius himself, (the patriarch of Jerusalem), as indeed, was indicated by the words of that saint.”¹ Stephen describes a thrilling scene enacted by Sophronius and himself, before his departure for Rome. He narrates that Sophronius took him to the summit of Calvary, and there adjured him in the most solemn manner, to speed from one end of the world to the other, in order to make known “to the Apostolic See, where are the foundations of the holy doctrines,” the distress of the orthodox in the patriarchate of Jerusalem, and to beg assistance “for the imperilled faith of Christians.” Thus we are furnished with unquestionable testimony, as to how the orthodox Christians of Palestine regarded the Apostolic See in the seventh century. This testimony goes excellently with that of Maximus, for the faith of the orthodox at Constantinople, at the same time and upon the same point. These two testimonies taken together, form a great bulwark of evidence in favor of our general contention.

It is unnecessary for us here to touch upon the remaining sessions of this important Synod; but there are certain letters of Pope

¹ Dublin Review, July, 1906, “The Condemnation of Pope Honorius.”

Martin extant, which were written immediately after the close of the Council, two of which are very much to our purpose. The first of these is to John, Bishop of Philadelphia, appointing him Papal vicar in the East, with the commission of *appointing bishops, priests and deacons*, throughout the patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem. Martin instructs John to depose certain bishops, who had been irregularly appointed, and to require professions of the orthodox faith from others, as a condition for their continuance in office. The second letter is a formal sentence of deposition against Paul, Bishop of Thessalonica, who failed to furnish Rome with a satisfactory repudiation of Monothelism. We may add that this was immediately followed by a letter to the clergy and laity of Thessalonica, warning them to abstain from all intercourse with the deposed bishop, till he should mend his ways; and unless this reformation should take place shortly, a new bishop must be chosen for the see.¹ These letters make evident the fact, that Martin both claimed and exercised universal jurisdiction, and looked upon it as an *ordinary* prerogative of his see.

We have seen, that in the middle of the

¹ Mansi — for all these letters, X, 790-835.

seventh century, there came almost simultaneously from Africa, Cyprus, Constantinople and Jerusalem, professions of faith in the Papacy which would be adequately orthodox at the present day, notwithstanding the Vatican decree. The Supremacy of the Pope is clearly stated in these testimonies, and his Infallibility is set forth in a far stronger manner than by mere implication.

The words of the Greek Abbot Maximus quoted above, which make union with the Apostolic See the criterion of orthodoxy, vividly recall to the mind the famous expression of the same idea, by Irenæus in the early morning of the Church's history: "Because of its greater authority, it is necessary that every church, that is, the faithful everywhere, should resort to this church (the Roman), in which by universal consent, the apostolic tradition has been preserved unimpaired."

CHAPTER VIII

THE SIXTH ŒCUMENICAL SYNOD,
CONSTANTINOPLE, A. D. 680

The Sixth Œcumenical Synod distinctly marks an epoch in the development of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility; and at the same time, furnishes one of the most startling facts of Church history, namely, the condemnation of a Pope for nothing less than heresy. This Council was not originally intended to be an œcumenical assembly. It was convoked by the Emperor Constantine Pogonatus, with the full knowledge and consent of the Pope. It convened on November 7, 680, in a hall of the imperial palace. From the Acts we learn, that this hall was a domed apartment or chapel, hence the term "in trullo." The number of attendants is quite uncertain. There are 174 signatures attached to the minutes of the last session. The Emperor Constantine addressed a letter to Pope Donus, on August 12, 678, in which he sets forth his ardent desire for union between Rome and Constantinople, expressing

deep regret at the same time, anent the disruption caused by the lamentable vitality of Monothelitism. Constantine addressed the Pope in this document as “*ὀικουμενικὸς παπᾶς*,” œcumenical or universal Pope. He states that, though a general conference would be most desirable, yet this was not, for a number of reasons, feasible. He asks the Pope, however, to send representatives “thoroughly informed and invested with all authority” to Constantinople. These he says should confer with Macarius, bishop of Antioch, and Theodore, bishop of the imperial city, with a view of settling forever, the question of the wills of Christ. When this letter of the Emperor arrived in Rome, Donus was dead, but his successor Agatho willingly accepted the Emperor’s suggestion.

Several Synods were held in the West, by way of preparation for the forthcoming gathering at Constantinople. Of these the most notable was held in Rome, under the presidency of Agatho himself. These various Synods formally condemned Monothelitism, thus giving expression to the general orthodoxy of the West. The Synod held in Rome (680), was of special importance, since from its members, were selected the deputies, who were to represent Rome and the

West at Constantinople. Agatho selected three bishops, Abundantius of Paterno, John of Reggio, and John of Portus; two priests, Theodore and George, the deacon John, the Roman subdeacon Constantine, and a priest of Ravenna, Theodore, as a representative of the church of that city. The priests Theodore and George, with John the deacon, were the Papal legates in the strict sense. These deputies carried to the Emperor and his brothers, the two co-regents, letters from Agatho and the Roman Synod. The letter of Agatho is very long, far too long to be produced in its entirety, but of inestimable value for our main contention, which shall be made evident, by a number of extracts. After commending the Emperor's zeal for the unification of the Church, the Pope refers to the envoys and their mission, emphasizing the fact, that they are invested with all necessary authority, which authority, he says, must be limited to the exposition of the tradition of the Apostolic See. "Most Christian lords and sons, . . . we have had a care to send to you our fellow servants, Abundantius, etc. Among men living in the midst of barbarians (nationes), and earning their living by physical labor, with considerable distraction, how could a full knowledge of

the Scriptures be found, unless what has *been canonically defined by our holy and apostolic predecessors*, and by the venerable five Councils, we keep with simple hearts; and preserve without distortion, the faith, which has come down to us from the Fathers. . . . To these commissioners, we have given the testimonies of some of the holy Fathers, whom this Apostolic Church receives, so that they, (the commissioners), may try to give satisfaction, as to what this Apostolic Church of Christ, their spiritual mother, and the mother of your God-built empire, believes and preaches. . . . Hence we have bestowed upon them the authority or the right, with your most peaceful majesty, to give satisfaction with simplicity, whenever your clemency shall give order; *it having been placed upon them as a restriction, that they dare not add to, subtract from, or change anything, but that they expose in all sincerity, as it has been taught by the apostolic pontiffs, who were our predecessors, the tradition of this Apostolic See.* Ut nihil profecto præsumant augere, minuere vel mutare, sed traditionem hujus apostolicæ sedis, ut a prædecessoribus apostolicis pontificibus instituta est, sinceriter enarrare." Then follows an exposition of the Catholic doctrine

upon the wills of our Lord, after which Agatho continues in the following expressions: "I beseech you with a sorrowful heart, and copious tears, and a mind distressed, deign to put forth your most clement right hand, to the (support of) the apostolic doctrine, which the co-laborer of your religious endeavors, the blessed apostle Peter, has delivered, that it be not hidden under a bushel, but that it be preached to the whole world more loudly than a bugle; because the true confession thereof, for *which Peter was declared blessed by the Lord of all, was revealed by the Father of heaven; for from the Redeemer of all he received, by three commands, the duty of feeding the spiritual sheep of the Church; and under his protecting shield, this his Apostolic See has never deviated from the path of truth, in the direction of any error, and its authority as that of the Prince of the Apostles, the whole Catholic Church and the Œcumenical Councils have embraced with fidelity, and in all things followed, and all the venerable Fathers have clung to its apostolic doctrine, through which they, as the most approved lights of Christ's Church, have shone; and the holy and orthodox doctors have honored and followed it.*

. . . This is the rule of the true faith,

which this spiritual mother of your most peaceful empire, the Apostolic Church, has, in prosperity as well as in adversity, ever held and protected with vigor; which, it shall be shown, by Almighty God's help, *has never erred from the path of Apostolic tradition, nor has she been corrupted by yielding to the innovations of heretics, but from the beginning she has received the Christian faith from her founders, the princes of the Apostles of Christ, and until the end remains incorrupt, by virtue of the divine promise of the Lord and Redeemer himself*, which he spoke in the holy Gospel, to the prince of his disciples, saying: 'Peter, Peter, behold, Satan has sought to have you, that he might sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. And thou being converted, confirm thy brethren.' Let your peaceful kindness consider, therefore, that *it is the Lord and Redeemer of all*, whose faith it is, *who promised that Peter's faith should not fail*, and urged him to confirm his brethren; and that it is known by all, that *the Apostolic pontiffs, the predecessors of my lowliness, have always faithfully done this very thing*, of whom my lowliness wishes to be the follower, since by divine appointment I have received this ministry, although I am infe-

rior to them, and of all the least." Then follows a lengthy argument, in which Agatho, upon the grounds of Scripture and the Fathers, refutes the heresy of the Monothelites. Thereafter he asks, "Who does not loathe and fight against and fly from such blind errors, if he wishes to save his soul, and offer a right faith to the Lord at His advent? Therefore the holy Church of God should be freed . . . from the errors of false teachers, and the evangelical and apostolic uprightness of the true faith, which has been established upon the firm rock of this Church of blessed Peter, the prince of the Apostles, which by his grace and guardianship, remains free from all error,¹ (this faith I say), all priests and rulers of the clergy and the people, should confess in unison, and with us proclaim it as the true expression of apostolic tradition, that they may satisfy God and save their souls." ²

In the second document, namely, that of the Roman Synod to the Emperors, we find the following tribute to the faith of Rome. The fathers call it "the light which rising from the source of all light, was preserved by the princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul,

¹ "Quae ejus gratia atque praesidio ab omni errore illibata permanet."

² For the whole document, Mansi XI, 233-286.

and their apostolic successors to the present Pope, unobscured by any foul mist of error, not disfigured by the clouds of false teaching, nor darkened by the past heretical depravities, as by murky clouds.”¹ (Nulla hæretici erroris tetra caligine tenebratum, nec falsitatis nebulis confœdatum, nec intermissis hæreticis pravitatibus, velut caliginosis nebulis perumbratum.”)

To call the doctrine of Papal Infallibility a novelty, in the face of Agatho’s letter, and that of the Roman Synod, is to confess one’s self a hopeless victim of prejudice. Agatho speaks of the inerrancy of Rome, as something known to all, something which the Fathers confessed and acknowledged, through which in fact “they shine as luminaries.” There is no avenue of escape from the Pope’s meaning; and it should be observed in this connection, that he exercises this infallibility, by defining before the Council, *that for the consideration of which, the Council was to meet*. If no general acknowledgment of the “Petrine claims” existed in the Church both east and west, we would very naturally expect to hear the voice of protest in the Synod itself, against such tremendous assumptions on the part of

¹ Mansi XI, 286, et sqq.

Agatho. We search in vain, however, for a record of even the feeblest objection. But why expect protest? The action of Agatho was not novel. It was but a reënacting of the part of Cœlestine at Ephesus, and that of Leo at Chalcedon. In case the unfortunate behavior of Vigilius towards the Fifth Œcumenical Synod, called for a vindication of the Papacy, it surely received a glorious one at the hands of Agatho.

Though the Sixth Œcumenical Synod was not originally intended to be œcumenical, as we have seen, yet at its very first session, the Fathers declared it to be such. The Emperor attended the first session in great state, *but in no wise can be considered a member of the Synod*. His conduct of the business, as Hefele insists, “had to do solely with the external, with so to speak, the economy and business of the Synod. With the inner affairs he did not interfere, and left the decision of these to the Synod alone, and distinguished steadfastly and expressly, between himself and the Synod.”¹ The Papal legates unquestionably stood at the head of the Synod, as its spiritual presidents, hence they subscribed before every body else. This is proven from both the Greek and Latin

¹ Hef. V, 151.

Acts.¹ The legates sat upon the left of the Emperor, which was the position of honor. The proceedings were begun by a speech of the legates, addressed to the Emperor, in the course of which they said: "Since then during the past forty-six years, more or less certain novel expressions contrary to the true faith, have been introduced by those, who at different times were bishops of your imperial and God-protected city, namely Sergius, Paul, Pyrrhus and Peter, also by Cyrus who was the archbishop of Alexandria, and Theodore, bishop of Pharan, together with their followers, and because these things have brought about in large measure confusion everywhere in the Church, for they taught dogmatically that there is but one will in the incarnate Lord Jesus Christ, one of the Holy Trinity, and one operation; and since your servant, our Apostolic See, has fought against this often, and prayed against it, but has not succeeded, however, even to the present time, in recalling from such a depraved doctrine, those who have followed it, we beg your God-crowned fortitude, (to command), that those of the most holy Church of Constantinople, who hold these opinions, shall inform us as to the source of this new fash-

¹ Mansi XI, 194-923.

ioned expression.” This speech of the Papal legates inaugurated a debate upon the wills of Christ, between the legates and the Monothelites, which was carried over into the second session, which was held Nov. 10, 680. During this session the Acts of Chalcedon were read with the famous “*Epistola dogmatica*” of Leo. During the reading of the latter, the legates interrupted with the observation, that the Council of Chalcedon called the Leonine letter “*firmamentum orthodoxæ fidei.*”

The third session, November 13, is of special interest to us, by reason of the fact, that two supposed letters of Pope Vigilius to the Emperor Justinian and the Empress Theodora respectively, in which the Monothelite doctrine of one operation in Christ was contained, were proven to be forgeries. This occurred during the reading of the Acts of the Fifth Œcumenical Council. These Acts were evidently in bad shape. The legates protested twice that they had been falsified. The first protest has nothing to do with our present subject. The second was elicited by the reading of the supposed letters of Vigilius. “Vigilius did not teach that,” cried the legates, “and the second book of the Acts has been falsified like the first. These are

not the letters of Vigilius. As the Fifth Ecumenical Synod recognized him, then that also must have taught, what he is said to have done, namely, 'unam operationem.' But read further on in the Acts, and nothing of this sort will be discovered."¹ Such indeed was the case, as investigation proved. The contention of the legates was both recognized and justified by the Council and the Emperor. The time of the fourth session, November 15, was entirely taken up with the reading of the letters addressed to the Emperor and his co-regents, by Agatho and the Synod of Rome. With these documents we are already familiar.

At the seventh session, Feb. 13, 681, the Roman legates and deputies presented to the Council for acceptance, their confession of the two wills and the two operations in Christ. This the hitherto Monothelite patriarch of Constantinople, George, accepted at the eighth session, March 7, 681. He was followed by all the bishops subject to him. These included the metropolitans of Ephesus and Heraclea. Fifteen of these bishops expressed their adhesion to Dyothelitism, individually, and the rest rose *en masse* and

¹ Mansi XI, 221, et sqq.

pronounced a common assent to the orthodox doctrine.

At the eleventh session, March 20, 681, the synodal letter of St. Sophronius of Jerusalem, to Sergius of Constantinople, was read. Speaking of the "Epistola dogmatica" of Leo, Sophronius says: "I receive . . . the God-given and inspired letter of the great, illustrious and saintly Leo, the light of the Roman Church, or rather of the Church which is beneath the sun, which he, clearly under the influence of the Holy Ghost, wrote against the iniquitous Eutyches, and the detestible and perverse Nestorius. . . . And together with these inspired words and characters, I accept all his letters and teachings, as coming from the mouth of Peter the head (*κορυφαῖος*), and I kiss them and embrace them, and salute them with all my heart."¹

The thirteenth session, March 28, 681, furnishes us with the remarkable procedure of an Œcumenical Synod anathematizing a Pope for heresy. There are few facts of Church history that have developed a richer literature, than the condemnation of Pope Honorius. Efforts have been made to show that it never took place, on the ground that

¹ Mansi XXIX, 461, et sqq.

the Acts are spurious. Other attempts have had for their objective, a demonstration of the fact, that the Sixth Council was not œcumenical *in the act of condemnation*. Some again have tried to prove, that the Synod misunderstood the letters of Honorius to Sergius, Bishop of Constantinople, upon which his condemnation is based, and that these letters, being actually orthodox, the Council in anathematizing Honorius, *erred in facts dogmatico*, and that the anathema was not the act, therefore, of an œcumenical Infallible Council. The opponents of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, have devoted themselves with much enthusiasm, to attempting to demonstrate that Honorius was condemned for teaching heresy *ex cathedra*, which were it true, would deal a death blow to our doctrine. The best and sanest endeavors in the matter, have been those which, while admitting the heretical character of the letters of Honorius, and his condemnation as a heretic, because of those letters, prove that he taught no heresy *ex cathedra*. One of the most entertaining writers upon the subject is Baronius. To save the Pope, Baronius is willing to go to any length. He assumes, and endeavors to prove, that the Acts of the Sixth œcumenical Synod have

been hopelessly falsified. The attempt is little short of ludicrous. Baronius is thoroughly confused upon some of the most important details of the contemporary history, and brazenly assumes wholesale forgeries, without a particle of respectable evidence, to bolster up his bold but utterly untenable hypothesis, which Hefele dissects with a master-hand, and then throws aside as worthless.¹

The theory of Pennacchi,² namely, that the letters of Honorius were perfectly orthodox, but that the Synod could not understand them, would indicate that the bishops composing the Council, were an imposing assembly of fools.

The Sixth Œcumenical Synod, unquestionably condemned Honorius as a heretic, and Pope Leo II, who confirmed the Council, reiterated the condemnation. The documents in the case are unimpeachable, and the words of the Council and the Pope, surely constitute evidence of the first quality. The Synod, in its sentence of condemnation of the Monothelite letters of Sergius of Constantinople to Cyrus of Phasis, and to Pope Honorius, as well as the letters of Honorius to Sergius,

¹ Hef. V, 191, et sqq.

² Pennacchi De Honorii I Romani Pontificis causa in Conc. VI, pp. 378, 181.

and of the persons of Sergius, Cyrus of Alexandria, Pyrrhus, Paul and Peter of Constantinople, and Theodore of Pharan, closes its list of worthies with the name of Pope Honorius. “Cum his vero simul projici a sancta Dei catholica ecclesia, simulque anathematizari prævidimus et Honorium, qui fuerat Papa antiquæ Romæ, eo quod invenimus per scripta, quæ ab eo facta sunt ad Sergium, quia in omnibus ejus mentem secutus est, impia dogmata confirmavit.” “And with these we decide that Honorius also, who was Pope of old Rome, shall be cast out of the holy Church of God, and be anathematized with them, because we have found through letters, which were written by him to Sergius, that he followed his view in all things, and confirmed his impious dogmas.”¹ Pope Leo II in his confirmation of the Sixth Œcumenical Synod, thus expresses himself: “And in like manner we anathematize . . . Honorius, who did not illumine this Apostolic See with the doctrine of apostolic tradition, but by profane treachery allowed its purity to be polluted. Τῇ βεβήλῳ προδοσίᾳ μianθῆναι παρεχώρησε.” The Latin translation of the Greek original, is unfaithful in the last portion of the above sentence. The Latin reads:

¹ Mansi XI, 550, et sqq.

“profana proditione, immaculatam fidem vertere conatus est;” “who attempted to corrupt its spotless faith.” The two renditions are very different, since “παρεχώρασε” implies at most neglect, but “conatus est” implies a positive attack upon the purity of orthodoxy.¹ How one can deny, in the face of the two quotations just given, that the Synod actually condemned Honorius for heresy, is extremely difficult of explanation. The language of Honorius to Sergius, is unquestionably heretical; yet as one inspects his famous answer to the bishop of Constantinople, the conviction gradually forces itself on the mind, that Honorius was very much confused. To put it in common phrase, he seems not to have known what he was talking about. That he was orthodox in intention, hardly admits of any doubt, but he was expressly a heretic, and the Council had to deal only with his expressions. Under the circumstances, it is difficult to see, that there was any other course open to the Council beside that which it pursued.

The contention that Honorius taught heresy *ex cathedra* is utterly worthless. The Vatican decree states, that the Pope teaches *ex cathedra*: “Cum omnium Christianorum

¹ Mansi XI, 726.

pastoris et doctoris munere fungens, pro suprema sua Apostolica auctoritate, doctrinam de fide vel moribus, ab universa ecclesia tenendam definit." "When in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine of faith or morals, to be held by the entire Church," then he teaches *ex cathedra*, and as a consequence *infallibly*. There is no evidence whatever, that the letter which Honorius addressed to Sergius *alone*, was intended as a decree. The form of the letter is entirely at variance with that with which the solemn utterances of the Popes have always been invested. There is no appeal to Papal authority, the Petrine commission, the jurisdiction of the See of Rome. Honorius addresses only *one*, *he defines nothing*, and clearly advocates a cowardly policy of silence. "If the letter of Honorius to Sergius, is to be *ex cathedra*," says Dom John Chapman, "*a fortiori*, all Papal encyclicals addressed to the whole Church at the present day, must be *ex cathedra*, quod est absurdum."¹ Furthermore, if the Council intended to condemn Honorius for teaching heresy *ex cathedra*, it would

¹ Dublin Review, July, 1906, op. Condemnation of Pope Honorius.

have given the lie direct to Agatho's letter to the Emperors, in which Rome's constant inerrancy is insisted upon. This document the Synod accepted without modification, which it could never have done, in the hypothesis, that it regarded the utterance of Honorius to Sergius as *ex cathedra*. The Acts do not reveal the remotest objection to Agatho's pronouncement, which was received with profound reverence by the Synod, as we shall see further on. The consciousness of Agatho upon the constant fidelity of Peter's successors to their great trust, as that consciousness is set forth in his letter, is of itself a valuable argument against the *ex cathedra* hypothesis in the case of Honorius. Was Agatho ignorant of the history of his own see during the sixty years immediately preceding his election?

“Honorius was fallible, was wrong, was a heretic,” says the learned Chapman, “precisely because he did not, as he should have done, declare authoritatively the Petrine tradition of the Roman Church. To that tradition he made no appeal, but had merely approved and enlarged upon, the half-hearted compromise of Sergius. The Roman tradition had been asserted with authority by Popes Severinus, John IV, Theodore, Mar-

tin and their successors; and Martin had sealed his testimony, with his sufferings and death. *Neither the Pope nor the Council consider that Honorius had compromised the purity of Roman tradition, for he had never claimed to represent it.*¹

“Therefore just as to-day we judge the letters of Pope Honorius by the Vatican definition, and deny them to be *ex cathedra*, because they do not define any doctrine, and impose it upon the whole Church, so the Christians of the seventh century, judged the same letters, by the custom of their own day, and saw that they did not claim what Papal letters were wont to claim. The grounds of both judgments are in reality the same, viz., that the Pope was not defining with authority.”²

At the eighteenth and last session, September 16, 681, the solemn decree of faith was read in the presence of the Emperor. It was subscribed first by the Papal legates, then by the bishops, and finally by the Emperor. In this decree we find the following reference to the letter of Agatho to the Emperors. “This holy and Œcumenical Synod has faithfully (πιστῶς) accepted, and with uplifted hands has greeted the letter of the most holy

¹ Italics ours.

² Loc. cit., Jan., 1907.

Pope Agatho to the Emperor.”¹ In the λόγος προσφωνητικός, addressed to Emperor by the whole Council, we find another striking reference to the same letter of the Pope. “With us fought the Chief of the Apostles, for to help us, we had his imitator and successor, who showed us in his letter, the mystery of theology. Rome proffered you a divinely written confession, and caused the sunlight of doctrine to rise by the document from the West. The ink shone and Peter spoke by Agatho.”²

The Synod addressed a letter to the Pope from which we take the following extracts. “Grave sicknesses require powerful remedies, as you, most blessed one, know; and hence Christ our true God, who is the Creator and Ruler of all things, has given us a wise physician, namely, your God-honored holiness, to expel vigorously, the poison of heretical contagion, by the medicine of orthodoxy, and to give health to the members of the Church. Therefore to thee, as to the bishop of the first see of the Universal Church, *we leave what must be done*, since for your standing ground, you take the firm rock of the faith, as we know from reading your true confession in the letter, which your

¹ Mansi XI, 631.

² Mansi XI, 658.

fatherly blessedness sent to the most religious Emperor; and we acknowledge that *said letter was divinely written*, as by the Prince of the Apostles, and by means of it, we have cast out the heretical sect, κ. τ. λ." The Synod further declares, that it had slain the heretics with anathema, "*in accordance with the sentence already pronounced against them, in your letter.*" Agatho is addressed by the Council as "venerable and sacred head." Again "Illuminated by the Holy Ghost, and *instructed by your doctrine*, we have cast forth the detestable teachings of impiety. . . . We pray your paternal holiness to confirm our decree with your honorable rescript." The letter makes a final reference to the Pope, as one who has preserved the faith pure, and has kept careful watch over the flocks committed to him by God.¹

The Emperor in his edict of confirmation, after reviewing the work of the Synod in vindicating the orthodox teachings, says: "These are the teachings of the voices of the Gospels and Apostles; . . . these have been preserved incorrupt by Peter, the rock of the faith, the head of the Apostles."

Pope Agatho died January 10, 682. The

¹ Mansi XI, 683, et sqq.

Sixth Œcumenical Synod had completed its sessions, but the legates of Rome had not as yet left the imperial city. The Emperor gave them a document to present to the new Pope Leo II, whose election was already known at Constantinople. The letter is largely a description of the proceedings at the Council just closed. The Emperor's appreciation of Agatho's letter, is much to our purpose here. "We commanded it, (the letter) to be read in the hearing of all, and we saw in it, as in a mirror, the likeness of the sound and incorrupt faith. . . . And with the eyes of our intellect, we saw so to speak, the very ruler of the Apostolic choir, the president (*πρωτοκάθεδρος*), Peter himself, proclaiming the mystery of the entire dispensation and saying, by this letter, to Christ: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,' for this sacred epistle set before us in words, the whole Christ. We all accepted it voluntarily and with sincerity, and embraced it, as though it were Peter himself, with the arms of our soul." The Emperor then refers to the contumacy of Macarius, former bishop of Antioch, who was deposed at the Synod. "He utterly refused," says Constantine, "to agree to the all holy writings of Agatho, as though he

were rebelling against the chief, Peter himself." Macarius and his few adherents were sent to the Pope by the Emperor's command, "committing them," says the Emperor, "to your paternal judgment in all that concerns them." "Glory be to God," he continues, "who does marvellous things, who has kept the faith safe and unharmed among you. But how could He not do so, upon that rock, on which He founded His Church, and foretold that the gates of hell, all the snares of heretics, should not prevail against it? From it as from heaven, the word of the true faith flashed, and illuminated the souls of the lovers of Christ, and melted frozen orthodoxy."¹

Pope Leo II confirmed the Synod in a letter of considerable length, addressed to Constantine. It bears the date of May 7, 684. Making reference to the attitude of the Council to the letter of Pope Agatho, Leo says: "The holy and great synod, carried on by God's favor and yours, has accepted it (the letter), and embraced it in all things with us, beholding in it, the unsullied teaching of the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, and discovering in it, the marks of sound piety." Let the reader note in the following passage

¹ Mansi XI, 713, et sqq.

of the same document, the motive of Leo's approval of the Synod: "*And since it (the Synod), has taught perfectly, the definition of the true faith, which the Apostolic See of blessed Peter the Apostle, (whose office we though unworthy hold), accepts with reverence, therefore we, and through us this revered Apostolic See, do entirely and with perfect agreement, consent to the definitions promulgated by it, and by the authority of the blessed Peter do confirm them, just as we have been confirmed by the Lord Himself, upon the firm rock, which is Christ.*"¹

Curiously enough, as Father Chapman observes, more modern Councils enjoyed the function of defining matters of faith. This was preëminently true of Trent and the Vatican; but in the case of the Synod now under consideration, *the Pope defined and the Council accepted.* The theological examination, which the Council made of the grounds upon which the orthodox doctrine of two wills and two operations rested, cannot be considered anything more than a verification of Agatho's citations. This the legates invited, by calling upon the Monothelite representation to set forth the grounds of their heresy. In opposition to the statements of Macarius of An-

¹ Mansi XI, 726.

tioch and his clientele, the letter of Agatho, and the verification of his patristic references were placed. Furthermore, the Council accepted not only the dogmatic definition of two wills and two operations, which was contained in the letter, *but the entire letter itself, which constantly insisted upon Roman inerrancy.* The evidence supporting this proposition, has been laid before the reader in a straightforward manner. There has been little attempt at commentary. Such an attempt, in view of the abundant and direct evidence brought forward, would be in a sense an impertinence. The writer feels permitted, however, now that the evidence has been gathered, to state several propositions, which follow cogently, from what has been laid down.

1. The Pope insists upon the infallibility of his see. He declared that such has been its prerogative from the beginning, and that such would be its prerogative until the end.

2. The Council accepted the dogmatic statements of the Pope and the Roman Synod, and made them its decree *de fide.*

3. In its letter to the Pope, the Council declared him to be its teacher in matters of faith, and assigned its adherence to his teaching, *to the fact that he was Peter's successor.*

4. The imperial edict confirming the Council unequivocally states that the teaching of the Council, was the voice of the Gospel, which had been preserved unsullied by Peter, rock of the faith, and Chief of the Apostles.

5. In his letter to the Pope, Constantine declares that Christ obligated himself, to ensure the infallibility of the Roman See. "How should he not do so, on that rock, upon which he founded his Church, and foretold that the gates of hell, and all the snares of heretics should never prevail against it?"

6. Leo II when confirming the Council, gave as his principal reason, that the Council had upheld and followed the teaching of the Apostolic See.

In conclusion, we may say without fear of successful contradiction, that if there is any phenomenon at present existing in the world, which bears any likeness to the Church of the seventh century, as it is pictured at the close of the Sixth Œcumenical Council, that phenomenon is beyond all legitimate question, the Roman Catholic Church.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

With the testimonies which I have laid before the reader, testimonies which are gathered from original sources, the object of this little book has been accomplished. Looking back over the history of the first six great Synods of the Church, we are forced to the conclusion, that no honest student of that history, can escape the realization, that the Papacy was not only a colossal fact, but a controlling force, in its relation to those old assemblies of the Church's shepherds. It is true that the Papacy does not *obviously* express itself with great emphasis, in the cases of the first and second Councils. But we have shown conclusively, by indirect evidence, that Rome presided at Nice, and by direct evidence, that the Nicene decrees were sent up to the Chair of Peter for confirmation. We have seen, too, that this was done more fundamentally than for any other reason, *because it was necessary*. In the case of the second Council, it has been made clear,

that solely by Rome's acknowledgment, did it become recognized as an Œcumenical Synod. The Council of Ephesus, a thoroughly oriental Synod, completely ignored it, though it had styled itself œcumenical at its first session.

The influence of Rome at Ephesus, Chalcedon and Constantinople, is beyond any reasonable controversy. The declaration of Papal Supremacy, on the part of the legates who presided at Ephesus, could not be made more definite, now that this doctrine has reached its full development. Leo defined in matters *de fide*, and sent his definition—the famous *Epistola Dogmatica*—to Chalcedon, where it was solemnly received as a dogmatic decision. No one would risk calling into question Leo's consciousness of a right to the presidency of the Synod, and none may deny that his representatives did preside. If Vigilius did not preside at the Fifth Œcumenical Synod, it was solely because he would have nothing to do with the assembly; notwithstanding the repeated and urgent requests of both Council and Emperor. The history of the troublesome period immediately following the Council, and extending until the dawn of the eighth century, proves beyond reasonable doubt, that the œcumenical character of the

fifth Synod, was due to Papal confirmation, and that by Rome's influence alone, was its recognition forced upon the West. The Sixth Ecumenical Synod brings us face to face with the full expression of Papal Supremacy and Infallibility, as unmistakably as Florence and the Vatican promulgate these two doctrines respectively. The letter of Agatho to the Emperor, which the Synod adopted, the letters of the Council to the Pope and the Emperor, and those of Constantine and Leo II to each other, do not give us *tot verbis* the formulated decrees of Florence and the Vatican; but by no amount of specious argument, can the clearness of these two doctrines as set forth by the sixth of the great Synods be obscured, just as the declaration of Papal Supremacy, and the implication of Papal Infallibility, at both Ephesus and Chalcedon may not be called into question.

The reader should not lose sight of the fact, that the Councils which we have examined, with the sole exception of the Roman Synod under Pope Martin I, were overwhelmingly Oriental in their representations. Prone as were the Greeks to schism and heresy; jealous as they were of the throne upon the Tiber; zealous as they were for the glory

of that other throne upon the Bosphorus; yet it is from their confessions that we have the most important conciliar testimonies for Rome's prerogatives, that the first seven centuries of our era furnish. Their docile reception of Cœlestine's condemnation of Nestorianism and its originator, their acclamations in favor of Leo's fulmination against Eutychianism, "Peter hath spoken through Leo"; and their profound veneration of the doctrinal pronouncement of Agatho, which they declare to be the "divinely written" message to the Council, and the "light" of the assembly, "the definition of the true faith,"—all these make the Anglican acceptance of the first six Œcumenical Councils, a simple absurdity. There is no more sympathy discoverable between the first great Synods of the Church and Anglicanism, than there is between Anglicanism and Trent or the Vatican. An examination of the early Synods, even such a cursory one as we have made, proves that Anglicanism is utterly cut off and distinct from Catholicism. She is essentially like her sisters, the other Protestant sects. She has still, it is true, a few threadbare rags of her former Catholicity; and some of her more earnest sons are making endeavors—serious ones, too, God knows

—to “do them over” so to speak; to stretch, to piece, to patch and fill in; and are striving to convince themselves, that their efforts have made whole again, the garment of her Catholicity; but it is all a miserable, though pathetic failure. It is consoling to know, however, that these earnest efforts have quickened a spirit of investigation, and have developed a desire for truth, which in hundreds of cases have led to the gift of faith. The utter repudiation on the part of the vast majority of the Anglican bishops, of the endeavors of these “advanced members” as they are sometimes called, should weigh heavily against Anglicanism itself, in the minds of these “restorers.” As a matter of fact, the Ritualistic contingent, is a church apart, having doctrines and practices which reveal no identity with the church of the Thirty-nine Articles, yet declaring itself to be part of that church. The Anglican Church is surely a house of confusion. When the Pope was dispensed with in England, a large body of Catholic doctrine went with him; and any effort to bring back that doctrine, without bringing back the Pope, is doomed to failure. This is a stubborn truth, which Ritualists do not seem able to grasp. The twaddle about pre-Reformation Catholicity in Eng-

land, being in any sense non-Papal, deserves no serious consideration. Dom Gasquet, O. S. B., in his admirable book, "The Eve of the Reformation," brilliantly refutes any assumption along that line. No serious historian has had the temerity to formulate the proposition, that the Catholicism of England before the rebellion of the lustful Tudor, was anything apart from what is known to-day, specifically, as Roman Catholicism.

A document has come down to us from the early part of the sixth century. It antedates the Fifth Œcumenical Council by forty years, and is known as the "Formula of Pope Hormisdas." This formula was not prepared for a Synod, though it was signed by both Greeks and Latins at the Eighth Œcumenical Council, 869, as well as at those of Lyons, 1274, and Florence, 1439. It came into special prominence also at the Vatican Council.

When the Emperor Justin I, and the Patriarch John, of Constantinople, had grown utterly sick of the wretched schism, unrest, tumult and insurrection caused by the Monophysite heresy, they both wrote in 518 to Pope Hormisdas, begging him to receive them into his communion. Rome and Constantinople had been separated for thirty-five years. Hormisdas sent legates to Constanti-

nople with the formula, then known as a "Libellus," and instructions, to demand as a condition for reunion with the Apostolic See, the signatures of the bishops of the East. The Emperor, John the patriarch and the chief bishops subject to Constantinople, signed without delay. In 519, all the Eastern bishops signed. I have chosen two excerpts from this famous document, as a closing word of this little book.

"Prima salus est regulam rectæ fidei custodire, et a constitutis patrum nullatenus deviare. Et quia non potest Domini nostri Jesu Christi prætermitti sententia dicentis: Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam, etc.; hæc quæ dicta sunt rerum probantur effectibus, *quia in Sede Apostolica, immaculata est semper servata religio. . . . Sicut prædiximus, sequentes in omnibus Apostolicam Sedem, et prædicantes ejus omnia constituta, spero ut in una communione vobiscum, quam Sedes Apostolica prædicat, esse merear, in qua est integra et verax Christianæ religionis soliditas.*"

"The first condition for salvation (literally the first salvation), is to guard the rule of the true faith, and in no way to depart from the laws of the Fathers. And the saying of our Lord Jesus Christ: Thou art Peter, and

upon this rock I will build my Church, cannot be ignored; these words are proved by their effects, because *in the Apostolic See, religion has always been preserved immaculate*. . . . Following in all things the Apostolic See, and teaching all its laws, I hope that I may deserve to be in that one communion with you, which the Apostolic See maintains, *in which is the entire and true solidity of the Christian religion.*"¹ Thus a Pope in the early days of the sixth century.

In bringing this humble work to a close, the thought arises, that with an eloquence simpler than that of the Councils, a style limpid as clear running water, and a power divine, the great central fact of the Church, to which I have devoted these pages, was preached most strikingly, before Nice or Ephesus or Chalcedon or Constantinople: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock, I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. To thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Thou being converted confirm thy brethren. Feed my lambs, feed my sheep."

¹ Mansi VIII, 407.

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